

# REQUIEM OF THE HUMAN SOUL

## EXCERPT: THE ACCUSATION

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### The Accusation

Harry Shields turned to Naomi.

“Counsel Aramovich, unless there is anything to add, I suggest we adjourn our session for the day.”

Naomi looked across at me. I could see the turmoil in her eyes. The kindness, the caring. But I could see that she felt powerless, that she couldn’t do anything to stop my humiliation, once again, at the hands of Harry Shields.

“Is there anything, Eusebio, that you’d like to add to the record before we adjourn?” she asked me.

And at that moment of defeat, something happened. Some synapses went off in my brain that had never fired before. You can call it what you want. An epiphany. A stroke of brilliance. But the truth is, I really don’t get strokes of brilliance. I will believe, to my dying day, that Dr. Schumacher’s spirit was with us in that room, and there is no-one in history better qualified than Julius Schumacher to know which synapses to turn on when they’re needed. And that’s what I think he was doing to me. Not just for me. But for the human race that he’d given his life trying to save.

It was clear to me, and my voice was now calm. No hint of anger.

“Yes, Naomi, there is something I would like to add.”

The room was silent.

“You see,” I continued, calm and strong, “every accusation that Harry Shields has made since this PEPS session began, every argument he’s made against the continued existence of my race, has been based on the idea that, because d-humans have an altered genetic structure, they’re innocent of the crimes of their ancestors, but because we ‘Primals’ have the same genetic structure, the guilt of our shared ancestors remains with us.”

I was talking like someone possessed. I’d never been clearer, more logical, in my life. Harry and Naomi could see that. They were silent and, for once, Harry was listening intently, concentrating hard.

“On that basis,” I continued, “we should hold Ojimo Nkruma, our safari guide yesterday, guilty for the atrocities committed by General Tobo, because of their shared genetic make-up. I suppose the children of the Nazi concentration camp commanders should have been strung up and hanged along with their fathers at the Nuremberg trials in the twentieth century. It’s an absurd argument that just doesn’t stand up to reason.”

“No, you’ve got it all wrong, Eusebio.” Harry Shields’ voice sounded anxious. Suddenly, he was speaking more quickly. His pomposity had evaporated. “You’re focusing on guilt, which has nothing to do with what we’ve been discussing in these hearings. You are no guiltier than I am of the terrible things the Primal race has done in the past. The point is, your genetic make-up, and that of all other Primals, permits these horrors to happen.”

I was unfazed. I knew where I was going.

“Harry,” I said, “you and your society are obsessed with genetics. That obsession has caused you to miss the real cause of evil in our world. It’s not our genetic make-up. Sure, that can lead to a predisposition towards certain behavior. But we still have free will. We can choose what we do with our lives, with our minds, with our bodies. You know that. No, the real cause of both good and evil in

our world is what Dr. Julius Schumacher discovered over a hundred years ago – the CONDUCTER – the control we all exercise over our own consciousness.”

Harry kept trying to parry every move I made.

“Look, I think this session is going nowhere. We don’t need any academic discussions on the nature of free will to move forward on this hearing.” Harry turned to Naomi in his usual tactic to avoid dealing with me directly. “Counsel Aramovich, I reiterate the Primal witness is unable to back up his absurd proposition accusing me of somehow being responsible for the atrocities of the Spanish conquest. I therefore move that we bring this session to an end.”

“Counsel Shields, I don’t think the Primal witness has had a chance to finish his line of reasoning yet.”

Thanks, Naomi, I thought to myself. But quite honestly, at this point I don’t even need your help. I know she can read my thoughts through the neurographic scanner, so I don’t bother to speak them.

“Harry, have you read the book written by Dr. Julius Schumacher called *On Being Human?*” I was on track and I wasn’t going to let Harry trip me up.

“Yes, of course I have,” came the response. “It was part of the background research on your Humanist society, Eusebio.”

“Then maybe you remember the section where Dr. Schumacher describes the dominance achieved by the prefrontal cortex over the other areas of human consciousness?”

“I remember that part in general, but not necessarily every detail,” Harry answered. “But I really fail to understand what this has to do with today’s session.”

“Please, Counsel Shields,” Naomi intervened, “Let the Primal witness follow through on his discussion.”

So I continued. “Well, Dr. Schumacher identified ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia as the time when the prefrontal cortex began to dominate, but then an event occurred in the collective consciousness of Eurasian society which solidified its control forever. Do you remember what that was?”

“No, actually, I don’t recall.”

“It was the alliance between the prefrontal cortex with the basest elements of the animate part of our consciousness: the primal desire for power.”

“From the beginning of time, humans have always killed other humans, just like they’ve killed other animals. For food, for power, for sex, for any of the basic animate motives that exist. Just like cheetahs have always killed Thomson gazelles for food. But, a thousand years before Christ, and maybe even earlier – nobody knows for sure – a new idea emerged in Persia, in our so-called ‘cradle of civilization’.”

“What was that idea, Eusebio?” Naomi asked in an encouraging voice. She clearly wanted me to keep going down my path.

“It began with the great prophet, Zarathustra, and led to the religion known as Zoroastrianism. But more importantly, it also led to the monotheism of Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It was the idea, expressed for the first time in history, that there was a single God and this God was involved in a struggle for good against evil.

“For the first time in history,” I continued, talking calmly, almost in a trance, “a duality had entered human consciousness. The struggle for good against evil. And this was the historic opportunity for the prefrontal cortex. Now, it could latch on to monotheism. And even better, whenever a tribe or a kingdom wanted to go looting, kill their neighbors and steal their possessions, they could do it for a higher purpose. They could do it in the battle for good against evil.”

“Of course, it took a while, but once Christianity took over the ancient power of Rome, this idea really got going. And it changed history forever. Now, when humans killed other humans, they believed they were doing it for a greater purpose. Not just for power, not just for vengeance. No, they started to believe they were killing other humans for God. That they were actually doing something great and purposeful while they killed other soldiers, raped their women and massacred the innocent overrun by the tides of brutality. This was how the Muslims found themselves creating the greatest empire in history. Then came the Christian reaction, called the Crusades. So, for the first time, on a large scale, the prefrontal cortex, which had conceptualized this notion of an abstract all-powerful God, began to link this abstraction to the primal urges of human beings to fight for power and status. This is the alliance I’m talking about.”

Harry Shields was getting increasingly irritated.

“Look, Eusebio, fascinating as this is, you seem nowhere nearer answering the basic question. What relevance does this have to your earlier accusation of me?”

“Well,” I continued unfazed, “as we entered the Age of Reason, and the scientific method began to gain power, it was time for the prefrontal cortex to switch allegiance from one set of abstractions to another. This was easy enough, since the scientific method was itself a creation of the prefrontal cortex, just like monotheism.

“Now there was even less room in human consciousness for dissent. Those few people whose errant minds permitted a more balanced perception of the world were now marginalized, dismissed as freaks: yogis, witch doctors, tree huggers – none of them taken seriously by the world at large.

“So now, Europeans could kill both in the name of God and Enlightenment. The ‘white man’s burden’ of the British colonialists. The ‘manifest destiny’ of the Americans as they laid their railroads and murdered the Indians. The light to be brought into Africa’s ‘heart of darkness’.”

I looked across at Harry.

“I bet you’re beginning to see now, Harry, where this is going. With your superior intelligence, I’m sure you’ve already got it.”

I couldn’t resist the dig. Harry just looked back at me with a stony silence.

“Do you want to finish the story for me, Harry? No? Okay, I’ll do it then. We can fast forward into the twenty-first century. Colonialism is over, because now every country in the world has bought into the ‘scientific method’ in one form or other. Now, the alliance between the prefrontal cortex and the forces of greed takes the form of globalization – spreading the values of freedom, democracy and free trade. Once again, the bottom line is the same: get rich, get powerful and do it believing that it’s all part of the greater good. Your greed is morally unassailable.

“Well, Dr. Schumacher never made it beyond that period. He was shot in the head on the streets of New York. So, I guess I’ve got to fill in the gaps now, based on what you and Naomi have told me in the past few days. It’s pretty easy. I don’t have to be a genius to do it.”

At this point, both Naomi and Harry were watching me intently. I continued calmly. I didn’t want to blow it right at the end.

“I guess your Global Aggression Limitation Treaty was the next step in the domination of the prefrontal cortex. Now, it’s using its new weapon, genetic optimization, to literally make sure that each

new d-human mind that comes into existence is structured with the prefrontal cortex fully in control.

“But that left a few messy loose ends. The Rejectionists. And those pesky Primals, those “chimps”, still kept reproducing. So here we are now, at the end game. The Proposed Extinction of the Primal Species. The PEPS proposal. This hearing.”

I raised my hand and pointed my finger accusingly at Harry.

“Yes, that’s why, Harry Shields, I’m accusing you directly, you and everyone who’s working behind the scenes to put you here, I’m accusing you and all the neatly trimmed, business-suited, clean, elegant, legalistic rationalizers and legitimizers of conquest, colonialism, capitalism and killing – I’m accusing you all of being party to the greatest conspiracy of genocide, destruction, and devastation of the human spirit, that the world has ever seen. There’s no difference between you and Christopher Columbus, writing in his diary, *‘With 50 men we could subjugate them all and make them do whatever we want’* - other than he was braver than you: he risked his life and was ready to watch the agony his victims felt when he cut them to pieces.”

I was done. The room was silent. Game, set and match to the Primal race. At least as far this session went. I thanked the spirit of Dr. Schumacher for visiting me. I began to feel his presence depart, and once again, I was just Eusebio Franklin, history teacher. I knew there was no way I could have said that all over again.

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