

Night Journey 51: The Minotaur and Inner Demon

An indiscriminant, outward action of violence is the manifestation of an inward desire to self-inflict violence. One commits horrific crimes knowing the consequences of the self-destructive, counter-violence to be employed against them.

Violence brings awareness of existence to individuals ignored and alienated by society. Children are not born genetically violent. A baby that is born unloved and deprived of human contact will die soon after birth. Hatred, with its psychological and physical violence, is taught and learned from the cultural and social conditions of living experiences. Acts of violence are not entirely individual acts, but rather actions in response to and caused by society.

This painting's subject is divided into four elements: (1) Picasso's Minotaur, (2) 5-year-old Asher Girard's finger painting of a demonic face, (3) the content on the table, and (4) the content in the darkness. The Minotaur symbolizes any person or thing that devours and destroys. The demon is an emotional expression of an inner, evil passion or influence. The experiential qualities of life are reflected in the child's drawings on the table. One drawing expresses joy, love, and happiness, and the other expresses hatred and anger. The academic rendering of the eye represents a mature view that counters the child's view of the drawings. A single eye suggests a single view of how one sees oneself and society, based upon learned experiences. The empty glass becomes the symbol for the empty life. Those with an empty life live in darkness, and individuals who live in darkness use violence to escape that darkness. What resides in darkness in the painting is what opens the door to violence.