

## Night Journey 82: Revelation in the shadow of God

The painting's narrative is dependent upon the iconic images of Pieter Bruegel's Blind leading the Blind figures 1568, a figure from Michelangelo's Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel 1541 and the dead olive tree from Salvador Dali's The Persistence of Memory 1931. Bruegel's blind figures illustrated the Parable of the Blind in the Bible's Matthew 15:14 which states "And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." The implication is that we, individually, are responsible for our own choice of conduct and moral character must not be relegated to leaders imbrued with self-aggrandizement and greed.

In the painting the leading figure is a politician riding a carousel horse that goes nowhere except in circles metaphorically repeating history again and again with the same false promises of national greatness whereby the ideological end justifies the means which too often includes unspeakable atrocities. Governmental leaders are dependent and empowered by a compliant subjugated people capable of turning a blind eye to immoral deeds and injustices inflicted on others not of their race, nationality or ideological and religious beliefs. The injustices we pretend not to see will eventually be turned upon us taking away our own civil liberties. It is we the people who blindly follow our leaders into a police state where civil servants blindly enforce the unrighteous decrees emanating from unbridled greed.

We live in a world that worships greed in all of its manifestations. The accumulation of wealth is valued over life itself. For centuries the nations of the Northern Hemisphere have impoverished the inhabitants of the Southern Hemisphere through colonization and economic slavery intended to strip the southern hemisphere of its wealth and natural resources. Greed has no conscience and knows no boundaries. It only wants what it wants at any cost. Over the centuries the cost of greed has risen to the point of human annihilation on a global scale. The few who control political and economic power prefer profit over human lives. Their reckless wantonness is altering the inhabitability of the planet displacing millions of the world's population causing mass migrations, wars and starvation.

The map on the floor reflects the rising sea water temperatures which is believed to have the most significant impact in climate change. Salvador Dali's dead olive tree was used as a symbol meaning the death of peace in his painting The Persistence of Memory. Dali's death of peace symbol is placed on the global map to signify there can be no peace in a world that is becoming less inhabitable with dwindling resources insufficient for sustaining life.

The final figure on the right is from Michelangelo's Last Judgement. The figure in Michelangelo's painting is being dragged into hell by a monster. In our world we are the monsters who have created our own hell. The Phrase "in the shadow of God" is a Kierkegaard term meaning man kills God and ascends to his throne to rule as God over creation. If we believe in human omnipotence, then we must become better demigods who no longer worship and serve greed. In the painting greed is represented by the love goddess Venus de Milo and the dollar bill Washington head. Their combined symbolism is the love of money. The Venus de Milo figure was chosen because greed cannot hold and embrace liberty and justice. If humanity is to survive, we must not deify the seven deadly sins nor can we imagine ourselves as demigods. We are humans that must act humanely if we are to circumnavigate our current World predicament. For generations we have blindly followed our leaders and it is now time to open our eyes as Diogenes and fully participate in defining the fate of humanity.