

13. Evil Me, Evil Me, 13x Evil Me!



ChatGPT, 2025

*And when you've taken down your guard
If I could change your mind
I'd really love to break your heart
I'd really love to break your heart*
Tear For Fears (Withers B, Mills DM, et al 1985)

Hello, dear reader. This is not the tale I was originally writing, so my apologies. That tale is currently archived online and still in my subconscious, and for now, that's where it will stay. Indeed it may never be seen by anyone other than my therapist, myself, and *Evil Me*.

I tried to write it, but it became a slog walking upriver. Worse it set off dissociation and inevitably the discomfort of the suppressed now relived again. So back in the box, behind the steel shutters hastily built during childhood and reinforced over almost half a century.

And this is not turning into a treatise on horror, many have done so much better than me, whether *Danse Macabre* (Stephen King, 1981), *Clive Barker's A-Z of Horror* (Stephen Jones, 1997), or *The Book of Horror* (Matt Glasby, 2020). Even more complex, I think, is that horror is a personal experience, whether *internal*, within your psyche, or *external*, reacted to during or after the horrific event. Beyond this we all have a threshold, perhaps, to the nature of horror we can tolerate, to withstand, during it and for the rest of our lives beyond it.

We all face horror in our world, through to potentially existential, to ourselves or others, known or unknown to us, or we face the horror within, possibly echoes of an event, maybe what even came before us, in our DNA. Or, the horror we faced during our early life onward, with its resultant damage to our minds, feelings and maybe, sanity?

And, though I cannot make up my own mind on this point, we invent horror. Is it to distract from the horror that could be so much worse in our own lives, a way to exorcise from within, or just a cheap theatrical thrill? Likely, it's all of these, and more. Common stories, urban myths, faerie tales, legends handed down via voice or arts, whether the supernatural, beyond the realms of the human experience, or indeed very human in nature, the stalker or slasher, the depraved and insane. All of these and much else can make some or many of us skip a beat, hypervigilant to the rapid movement in the periphery of our vision, our name called distantly and via a whisper, trembling limbs, sweating

and pallid in flight, fright, freeze or fawn. The fear of the unknown, or sadly the too familiar, our worst nightmares, phobias, and vulnerabilities.

My horror, what I had originally attempted to write about, was both human and supernatural, and very much, at least for me, from what I experienced, suffered, defining what I believe is the nature of evil itself. *Pure, untainted, unadulterated, vintage, evil*. To be in fear every moment, scared, threatened and so in pain, physically, psychologically, emotionally, and psychically for years, nay, decades. And such evil, well that leaves a *taint*, a *residue*. One that I locked away, something I call, *Evil Me*. For fifty years. And for fifty years more, should I be so fortunate in longevity.

Evil can be all pervading, it can beguile, it can manipulate, it can be slight, the aura of a flickering candle light witnessed in a mirror, in the dark. Or thick enough to seep throughout the air of your home, like a blanketing mist, to surround you like a coat, but not one that keeps you warm and feeling less vulnerable in the rain. It's constantly there, even if the demons of your personal concentration camp are not.

One learns to live in fear, humans, especially children, can be remarkably resilient. But the taint, the residue, scars and persistent fear continues. Always. All the time. It's there. In your head, in your heart, in the shadows that give evil shelter. And it taints even more around you, even if the horror has abated, it twists, it manipulates, and it tears what you struggle to have in your life. Large teeth and talons, the beast will strike, whether you realise, or even if you try to fight it. And fear consumes you, your energy, your soul. Horror may damage, but the fear and how you react, ripples through time and space, across the lake of your life. Horror is a stone, small or large, and the fear pollutes in waves.

Many of us are damaged, far more than we and others may realise. And the majority at the hands of humans, what evil is wrought. We have seen it throughout history, heard the screams, and we watch it on obsidian screens, whether in places like Gaza, Ukraine, or Sudan. Evil is sniggering, relishing all the pain, the outpouring of grief, loss, shame, and eventually when we may succumb. Many think suffering defines us, it is the test of our kind by gods, god, or spirits, our resilience to trials of life, to death of hope. May that be the case, is fear, pain and horror what chisels us from stone, sharper edge, stronger blows, versus what happens that is good?

Horror, sustained, constant fear, no doubt shaped me. I knew little of *good* or *happiness*. Life abnormal, maladaptive responses, the loss of what could have been, a life taken, a changeling made. I am not who I may have been. Neither is anyone who has faced horror and remains in fear. Horror builds by layers, fear is the mortar and glue.

On my thirteenth birthday, I received a mobile of planes, no celebration. I lost ten pounds from my pocket when going to the shops when my 'father' waited in the car. 'Mother' was working, a caring profession, how cosmically funny and ironic. The evil hung heavy in the house, brooding like my 'father', and fear was sufficient as a weapon for a young, battered and whimpering child. All birthdays, Christmas and holidays were no break for evil, from punishing me. One believes you were born for such a purpose, to be the sacrifice made to evil and the two demons you ought to be able to trust.

I know horror, we became friends, tangible and far from imaginary, and still I live in fear. Evil was my constant companion, and so it remains. And though it may have broken me many times, and hurt the ones I loved and love, I will continue to fight. For we can persist, remain resilient in facing our horror and the evil behind.

But what, I think, makes it so much worse, is to see the horror external on those digital, scrying screens. To see the fighting, the killing, rape, starvation and mass shame and pain. Evil can be within

us, it can manifest horror, instilling fear, and damaging all that may be cherished and close. Wrought inside us, or outside, to hurt, maim and destroy.

We all need to address our individual horrors, and the horror we all may face as one, to stop the fear that will then plague us and cause us to run. However times evil may visit upon us, whether a few or thirteen times, we must have it in us to fight. I believe that's what may actually define us, even give some purpose for our short lives.



Gaza, 2025