

Moving From the Marvel Comic Fantasy to A Masculine Army

Men don't give birth but, make no mistake, we are pregnant. Instead of sperm and egg, masculine conception occurs when deep aspirations of being someone great and doing something great are fertilized by a compelling vision of a man.

Yes, it's that simple, that profound, and that complex all at the same time. And just like a woman in her third trimester is physically obvious, we are equally "prego" when it comes to our dreams of glory. Just ask the guys who make a living off us marketing superhero movies and accessories.

The Avengers was a big hit at the box office this year, and the third installment of the *Batman* trilogy intrigued moviegoers. So what does the Marvel Comics brain trust know? They know the most important thing about the male gender one needs to know—we want to see the glory.

We start dreaming real early. My dad bought me a coonskin hat. I sang the Davey Crockett anthem more like a prayer than a song. But, he lost his appeal soon and that gave way to a plastic Batman helmet and pajamas.

I sang that theme song and still can. He was eventually knocked of his throne too (Kapow!) by even more mythical strong men masquerading as Minnesota Vikings, Pittsburgh Steelers, and San Francisco 49ers. I made my mom get me their helmets and pajamas too.

I was drawn to these men. But why? I was pregnant with masculine aspirations that needed a way to give birth. I was searching for a way to express this stuff inside me. These snapshots were the early rumblings of a magma boiling deep within—like the steam on a hillside that suggests to a volcanologist that something's coming.

Men and magma. It's so perfect.

- It's a superheated substance and force seeking a channel of expression.
- It percolates and bubbles for a looooooong time—millenniums are not unusual.
- It represents the essence of a volcano—its energy, color, and dangerous potential.
- We want to see that bright orange spectacle. It is rare and oddly beautiful.
- When that volcano erupts and its insides actually spill out, it changes the landscape forever.

Our aspirations as men are like that magma. They are deep inside, pushing up from within, longing for expression, and when they surface—for better or for worse—they impact everyone in our blast zones.

Think Krakatoa or Mt. St. Helen's. No man is immune to an explosion. It's this magma in all of us that butters Marvel Comics bread.

Our visions of being someone great and doing something great are baked into our DNA from God. But like any good super-hero movie, the hero will have to overcome some force, some evil or some substance that saps his power and inhibits his ability to defend the weak and give the bully a taste of his own medicine.

As we age, the disappointments mount, cynicism replaces idealism, and nobler ways of being give way to cultural visions of masculinity that promise acceptance and approval but deliver immaturity and pain. Our dreams of youth get hijacked. The realities and gravities of earth burst our bubbles of greatness and glory shake loose our grip on the ideal.

When that happens start the process we all loathe as men: settling. We “move on” to fashion our dreams around a lesser manhood built on making up our losses and licking our wounds in a time when the topic of a dangerous and good brand of masculinity makes men quake with fear over appearing intolerant or, God forbid, masculine.

Throughout history, the “masculine malaise” moves men to seek inner relief and grasp at whatever assuages our male self-loathing. We want meaning but don’t know where to find it. By default, we turn to broken male culture to define masculine meaning and promptly start borrowing trouble like schoolboys.

Watching our film and frustration is the Evil Opportunist who meets our lack of fulfillment and identity as men with offers of false greatness and glory—the rip off kind that hurts people or just neutralizes men. The message is: be great through indulging yourself, impressing others, and increasing materially.

If you have any doubts about that playbook, dust off the Gospel of Luke (chapter four) and witness the Son of God in weakened state being offered false visions of greatness. Good thing Jesus didn’t settle for the false dreams of self-preservation, self indulgence, and self importance.

Here’s the thing: Neither should we!

Like Jesus’ turning hour, every man has a turning hour. On the other side are the divine hopes and aspirations connected to your life but they take courage to embrace. The faint of heart need not apply.

Dreams fashioned around a broken sense of manhood are tough to dislodge from the hearts of men. This means a beach landing is required, a knockdown drag-out war to regain a foothold on the beaches of your masculine soul. It means becoming aware that there is a nasty and intentional campaign of positive reinforcement in our culture messing you’re your identity and

destiny.

In your head is this thought: "I have what I thought was the dream but my life is disintegrating and my relationships are fragmenting. Is this really the dream?" There is a clear disconnect between your dream and the quality of your relationships with God and people. The birth pains are being felt and the magma is bubbling. Uh-oh, it's that elusive "more" calling again.

Well men, it's time we name it: it's called eternity. It's the stuff of the soul. Deep within your masculine soul speaks up and says: "You are more than what you have become and you can't become the man you were created to be by remaining who you are."

It also makes you thirsty for the ideal again after getting pipped by the false fountains of cultural masculinity. On this topic, who would know better than the wealthiest man on planet earth writing a retrospective and referendum on swimming in the shallow end of masculinity—King Solomon. He reflects on that elusive more and the struggle to find it when he reflects: "He has planted eternity in the human heart, but even so, people cannot see the whole scope of God's work from beginning to end," (Ecclesiastes 3:11 NIV).

These are the words of the dude who swallowed deep at the fountain of cultural masculinity. There is plenty of pleasure, plenty of power and plenty of possessions. But now, with the clarity only hindsight can give, he grieves and laments over selecting the wrong vision to find meaning as a man. He speaks for hundreds of millions of men roaming planet earth who sense the same dilemma.

Fortunately, men in big numbers are reconnecting masculinity and eternity all over the world. The comic strip fantasy is becoming a reality in what we call The Kingdom of God. A transcendent purpose is being discovered moving men from the

Marvel Comic fantasy audience to a masculine army of spiritually activated men who are truly dangerous with goodness. It's what we have wanted since we were five years old.

A Sleeping Giant is rising.

Click here for the original article at .

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