

THE CHANGELING

Life is its own journey, presupposes its own change and movement, and one tries to arrest them at one's eternal peril. Laurens Van der Post

Who will change old lamps for new? Anonymous

Can success change the human mechanism so completely between one dawn and another? Can it make one feel taller, more alive, handsomer, uncommonly gifted and indomitably secure with the certainty that this is the way life will always be? It can and it does! Moss Hart

A woman has to work twice as hard as a man to achieve the same level in any hierarchy. Fortunately it is not difficult. Charlotte Whitton paraphrased.

Currently I am a non-descript historian. I hope my interpretation of a pivotal event in human history will elevate my status in that profession. I have learnt that if one is too close to an event in time, any reading of it is usually challenged with accusations of bias and revisionism. If the event dates back a long time, once again, one is often charged with writing fiction since the only sources one relies on are accounts by other past historians or some of the participants in the event, with their own axes to grind. I feel that what I am about to recount is as fair an evaluation as possible of what transpired many years ago. Much remains unknown. Legends and myths arose. Because of its importance I keenly believe that as much truth as possible must be revealed so that a real appreciation of what took place will lead us to a better understanding of who and what we are. I know that those who wish to maintain patently false beliefs will be horrified by what I am about to report. So be it! I have done my homework over many years.

My interest started when I came across an autobiography of a scientist who lived many centuries ago. He piqued my interest because of his character, his scientific contributions and especially his ideas, which at the time must have seemed somewhat bizarre and revolutionary. His name was Dr. Milton Darwick and he was considered to be a top-notch biochemist and physiologist. He specialized in genetic engineering, cloning and stem cell research. His contributions in these areas were largely empirical and while not outstanding were relatively important. He probably would have received more recognition and esteem had he not been arrogant, outspoken, capricious and lacking any sense of civility. He certainly was not boring, as witnessed by the large attendance at his lectures. Perhaps his outstanding trait was imagination. He had no problem expressing ideas that on the surface, appeared to be so outlandish, that he was often considered to be manic-depressive.

It was during one of these periods that he came up with a bewildering idea that eventually led to a shift in biological thinking approximating what happened when Relativistic and Quantum Theories awed the world of Physics. He was fascinated by the success in curing various medical disorders by organ transplants. He started by wondering whether there were unperceived problems with the procedure other than the difficulties associated with organ rejection by the immune system. These had largely been resolved. Stem cell research had not advanced to the point of being able to clone

new organs to replace those that were deficient. If it had, it is most likely that we would be living in a very different world than the one we now occupy.

The question that Dr. Darwick posed was, in simple terms, the following: "Does an organ that has resided in a particular person's (the donor's) body for a relatively long time acquire any of that person's persona or character? Has it adapted to the donor's life style, behavior patterns, and perhaps, most importantly to that person's intangibles such as the capacity to love, hate, feel envious, feel pride, intelligence, greed and compete. Further, Dr. Darwick noted that no one had taken into account the fact that the donor's organ also contains the donor's DNA. The impact, if any, on the organ recipient had been ignored. He postulated that there must be some effect but could not figure out exactly how to measure it.

Despite his negative reputation, Dr. Darwick had disciples. They were of like mind with him regarding his views about transplants and were determined to prove that he was correct. To do this and over a period of years, they surreptitiously and unethically performed multiple transplants on sets of individuals. Some of the results seemed promising, they never were able to achieve conclusions, scientifically, in total accord with their hypothesis. Dr. Darwick died a frustrated man. However his acolytes kept his ideas alive. Shortly after his demise, one of them who had been carefully studying and analyzing all of the previous work, got a bright idea. He noted that the psychological and physiological differences between the various organ recipients and the donors had never been clearly established and that there had never been a clear set of baseline data amassed about them. Thus there had been no objective way to make any clear determination about any changes in the recipients' makeup. His idea was quite simple. Let all the organ recipients be females and all the donors male.

Before engaging in a host of experiments, a single prototype test was attempted. A seriously ill young woman who actually needed a multiplicity of transplants became the recipient from a young man who had died in an auto accident. Discernible and encouraging results were observed. Not only did the young woman survive but she exhibited character traits that she had never before shown signs of. She became the darling of the 'Darwick Movement' and has remained so to this day, long after her normal demise. She was always and is referred to as "The Changeling". She overcame her previous shyness and timidity and in due course assertively and uncompromisingly made a name for herself as an author, musician and orator. She became politically active, successfully championing the cause of the poor and underprivileged.

Long before our Changeling's progress into a world often hostile, a very wealthy philanthropist became enamored with the work and decided to fund it fully. However, the results with the Changeling were viewed as a partial success. It was only one instance and not enough had been known about her previous history. Also the ethics of only using females as the recipients and males as the donors were constantly being raised. What finally was decided was that recipients and donors should exchange organs and careful monitoring of the consequences to both should be analyzed. Around a thousand such experiments were carried out with both parties, true guinea pigs, receiving substantial sums of money for their participation.

The results were absolutely astounding, totally unforeseen and bordering on the miraculous. Actually, two phenomena occurred. The second was perceived fifteen years after the first. The former was immediately apparent. The women involved became more

aggressive in terms of their outspokenness, political involvement, competitiveness, and in artistic, cultural, scientific and business creative activities. In a nutshell they became more like men, at least as men have been perceived, even though they retained much of their positive female traits such as being mothering, nurturing, loving, caring, considerate and thoughtful of how others feel. The males, on the other hand, became a lot less antagonistic and in many competitive situations strived for a win/win result. The famous or perhaps infamous Vince Lombardi quote that, "Winning isn't everything. It is the only thing", was largely abandoned. Again and in other words the difference between males and females was predominantly reduced. These results were not true in every case but in a preponderance of them.

A hiatus occurred. First, since the number of couples that had exchanged organs was quite limited, the immediate social impact was just about zilch. However, when word got out about these experiments there was a vociferous public outcry resulting in legislation that outlawed them. Indeed some of the scientists involved were charged with 'Crimes against Humanity' and were incarcerated. Exactly when the second event actually occurred and what it was, is still a mystery. Whether it was triggered by the first, whether the two were independent, whether there were other factors in conjunction with the exchange of organs is still the subject of much research that so far has led us nowhere.

It seems that a universal simultaneous mutation took place, affecting the whole human race. This had never happened before or since. There are plants that blossom or die at exactly the same time no matter where they are or under what conditions. Incredibly, the members of both sexes started behaving in a manner similar to those who were the subjects of the organ transplantation experiment.

Need I say more? We now live in a world where the sexes are truly equal, where women have taken their rightful place professionally and politically, where a woman's passion for excellence now prevails, where peace and tranquility have triumphed, where wealth, to a very large degree, is distributed on the basis of need instead of greed, where the results of competition benefit everyone, where crime has been lessened to such an extent that the need for crime fighters has just about disappeared, where war as a means of solving disputes has vanished and where finally, respect for all living things has become the order of the day, resulting in natural environments that are a true joy.

Finally, would anyone care to hazard a guess as to what sex I belong to?

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