

The Avenger Becomes the Raper

“Every veil secretly desires to be lifted, except the veil of Hypocrisy.”

Richard B. Garnett, nineteenth-century army officer

“A man who moralizes is usually a hypocrite, and a woman who moralizes is invariably plain.”

Oscar Wilde, playwright

Later in the book of Samuel, we see the same Absalom, who was angry with the sexual assault and violation of his sister, commit similar acts of infringement and incest against his father's wives. In the early Hebrew culture, concubines were not simple “hothouse harlots” but were held to be the unofficial wives of a person (Genesis 35:22, 49:4). About six years after the rape of Tamar, Absalom seemed to have been relatively reconciled with his father, David, for killing the firstborn son and rightful heir, Amnon. Absalom started a conspiracy against David to usurp the throne from him. The resulting rebellion against David forced him to escape from Jerusalem, the capital city of his kingdom. He took all his household members with him but left behind ten concubines to look after the palace (2 Samuel 15:16). When Absalom and his army took control of the city and the palace, one of the court ministers advised him that if he slept with his father's concubines or wives, the whole kingdom would know that he had insulted his father beyond hope of reconciliation and would throw their support to him. So Absalom set up an open tent on the palace roof where everyone could see it and gave an exhibition of him having incestuous action with his father's “wives” (2 Samuel 16:21–22).

Just before this chapter, it is written that Absalom was praised as the most handsome man in all of Israel; he was flawless from head to foot, and he had a very rich hairstyle (2 Samuel 14:25–26). He is also described as a dad and family man with four beautiful kids. Though I am not very certain on how raping his father's wives would lead to people throwing their support to him, I am supposing the intention was to impress the female populace and young crowds with his sexual skills and stamina by “drumming” on ten women at the same time. Since ancient times, good looks, a fit body, a family-man image, or the simple ages-old gimmick of a stylish hairdo seemed to work effectively to garner votes and attract the masses. The current (or recent) leaders and celebrities of the Western world are living proof of this concept. It does not matter whether one publicly rapes his father's wives or, drunk with wealth and power, encourages another man to sexually assault a woman by telling him to just “grab ‘em by the pussy (Victor 2017),” the foolish crowd forgets all this and is hypnotized by the wicked hairdo and starts casting their free votes of support toward them. But what do I know? I am merely a distillate-drinkin', wife-whackin', ignoble “Indian” man and an irksome immigrant fella, while you folks are the innately immaculate, entirely enlightened Elysian elves. But I am also tall, dark, broad-shouldered, and handsome with a rich hair texture. Give me one hairstylist and one media spokesperson, and I'll show you that I am the most eligible candidate to become the next king or president. Why? Because “touch” you and “touch” me, that's why! Just like you, I am born neither to lord over nor serve under but to do both in a humble way. As an infinitesimal part of the Infinite Nature, it has become my nature to point out and shout where I see filth and injustice. For if I was ever shown kindness and mercy, I'd have done the same, but now let me do this and then vanish from the game.

After the defeat and death of Absalom in the battle for power, David returned to his palace. And as if it was the concubines who had committed the acts of incest and defilement, it is written that he rejected and placed them in seclusion, and that even though their needs were provided for, “they were shut up to the day of their death, living in widowhood” (2 Samuel 20:3, NKJV). Though it seems terrible for these women, and our Sisterhood culture threatens us to think only that, I want to explain why it was not so awful. Kings during those times had tens of wives and hundreds of concubines (1 Kings 11:3; Song of Songs 6:8). For these ten concubines of an aging king like David, who would have been in his late fifties when these incidents happened, the time with Absalom could have been the most fun they'd had in a long time. But to those concubines who felt shamed and violated, the poor consolation is the relatively less trauma induced in the usurpation because ten of them were forced at the same time into the action against one handsome prince. Secondly, many of these women probably chose the king only for the strong protection, luxurious lifestyle, cozy comfort, and promising future for their kids that he would provide more than actual love, affection, and romantic sex directly from him. It is not possible for one human male to meet all the physical and emotional demands of numerous Sapiens females and their offspring. They clearly knew this, yet they went for David. Thirdly, the unmet needs of these royally connected women would have been fulfilled somewhere, either through heterosexual couplings with other men or homosexual bondings among themselves and other women.³⁶

36 Vatsyayana, the sage who wrote Kama Sutra circa 300 CE, notes habitual homosexual acts in a king's harem: "The women of the royal harem cannot see or meet any men on account of their being strictly guarded, neither do they have their desires satisfied because their only husband is common to many wives. For this reason, among themselves they give pleasure to each other in various ways as now described: Having dressed the daughters of their nurses, or their female friends, or their female attendants, like men, they accomplish their object by means of bulbs, roots, and fruits having the form of the Lingam (phallus), or they lie down upon the statue of a male figure, in which the Lingam is visible and erect. Some [k]ings, who are compassionate, take or apply certain medicines to enable them to enjoy many wives in one night, simply for the purpose of satisfying the desire of their women, though they perhaps have no desire of their own" (Vatsyayana and Burton 2021, bk. 5, chap. VI). Also, some parts of this book on erotic arts are known to have been commissioned by courtesans, presumably for their own use (Doniger 2010, 301, 329, 333–34). Another verse reveals that the royal ladies would use their female attendants to get men disguised as women into their apartments (Kama Sutra 5.6).

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