

Rage Of The Tortured Child

"That tiny ember of rage flared bright and on dry regrets caught hold."

I went to an opening at Hosfeld gallery in San Francisco recently. The art did not register in me. This strand of poetry did.

The Leadership literature is rife with stories of children from broken homes, tortured childhoods, abuse and abandonment, all leading up to destinies larger than average lives. Many psychiatrists say that it is almost necessary to have a feeling of inadequacy in the past driving you, to continue performing and reaching for more, more, and more.

Imagine this. A boy of five waits for his mother after school. All the other children from his kindergarten class have left at least an hour back. The mother does not show up. She has forgotten. The scene gets repeated day after day after day ... She is not quite there. She is never there.

This child grew up to become one of the most admired CEOs in the technology business.

Examples abound. Steve Jobs and Larry Ellison are both raised by adopted parents, subconsciously longing for validation and belonging. Along the way, over-compensating, both with extraordinary achievements, and unbearable antics.

Said once, a monk in Calcutta: "Discontent is Divine".

A tormented, tortured soul fights and fights to prove its worth to the rest of the world. Mostly, to himself.

The world needs to acknowledge that he matters, for some internal little voice keeps on sabotaging, keeps on reinforcing the insecurities of a lonely childhood.

Business Week cover stories provide a little validation. Wall Street Journal features provide some more. But the ego keeps on needing to be fed. It needs to be reassured.

No amount of achievement heals the hurt, broken little child. No conquest, however great, can silence the demons.

Hence, the discontent continues to drive greater and greater achievements ...

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About the Author

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