

The Demigod Photographer

Is man permitted to strive to become a demigod in this modern world?

It seems that we've lost touch with myth, story, and meaning in this modern world of ultra-processed food, social media, and endless news headlines. We are bombarded with distractions that cloud our mind and perception. That haze that you feel — that tired feeling of waking up each day — is meant to delay your ability to tap into the divine essence within you, something beyond a human being.

You are a demigod.

When I consider the teachings of Christ, I always come back to this thought he shares: to be **in the world, but not of it**.

The more I've spent the past 2½ years working in a park, surrounded by nature, carving my own path and values for how I would like to spend my time — working and playing, essentially returning to the Garden of Eden each morning — I realized that God set me apart.

I'm not telling you that I'm a chosen one. I'm telling you that you are too

And so each morning is a blessing, and this overwhelming feeling that flows through me is a mixture of joy and sorrow. It's a feeling that's indescribable with words — where the joy is so overwhelming and beautiful that it almost makes you feel sorrowful, because you're unsure that others can feel this sensation.

Eros and Agape

When you look at a beautiful human being, it's inevitable that you will feel some sort of lust of the flesh — erotic love.

We are biological beings with hormones firing, who have the ability to sense with touch, taste, sound, and smell. These base-level senses give us pleasure and pain.

When I eat a delicious steak, grass-fed, directly from the Amish of Lancaster, I fill my tongue and mouth with pleasure.

When I pull my weight up on a bar, or wear my 40-pound plate carrier and go for a walk uphill, there is friction. There is pain. But through that pain, through that suffering, I become stronger.

I am an animal. I am a beast.

And so I am an animal. I eat the flesh of other animals and gain strength and nourishment from the energy they provide me.

When I wake up in the morning and bask in the glory of the sun, my cells are replenished. The cholesterol within my cells synthesizes vitamin D. My testosterone increases. My muscles grow. My overall strength and power increase.

And so, with this strength — this physiological power that I feel within my body — this joyful feeling, this gay and jolly attitude toward life simply has me grateful for another day in this beautiful place.

From this state of abundance, you begin to love so freely.

Love starts to flood through you and reaches its ceiling.

If somehow you kiss the face of God, you're the luckiest man on earth and will never forget **agape**.

While you recognize the flesh of others, when you look into their eyes you can see and feel their soul.

Because all living things are made in the divine image of God, when you are looking through the eyes of another human being, you are witnessing, feeling, and experiencing the divine love of God.

The Spirit of Transformation

When Hercules descended into Hades and conquered Cerberus, he was eventually lit on fire and ascended to Mount Olympus alongside the gods.

When Christ died on the cross, he descended into hell, and on the third day he rose to heaven.

And so the story of the **descent and the ascent** is an architectural story that I believe we neglect much too easily.

We disregard the mystical, the spiritual, because our iPhones are tangible, physical — a scrying device that allows you to commune with fallen angels.

Thank you, Prometheus, for your divine gift of fire, for we are currently at the precipice of incredible transformation.

But with the rapid advancement of technology, we have neglected the God that dwells within our physical bodies.

And so through fasting, and separating your physical body and mind from the modern world of distraction and consumption, you deprive yourself of base-level physical needs — belonging and satiety.

But in this deprived state, during the descent into hell, you are reborn again.

And when you conquer the beast that dwells within your mind, you eventually rise.

When you rise, you gain perception beyond your eyes.

You no longer look at life for what it is, but recognize the dream.

When you are aware of the dream, and the body as a machine, you begin to feel deeply and see much more clearly.

The Photographer as Übermensch

Photography is my superpower, and the streets are a battlefield.

I wield my camera as a sword, striking through the heart of chaos and reflecting the soul of the street through the photographs that I create.

The problem with the mortal photographer is that they are looking at a man, or some old lady on a Bryant Park bench who has an interesting outfit on, or makes a unique gesture, and they believe that is what makes a great photograph.

The New York City street photographer frolics through Washington Square and hopes to find a unique character to uplift in a photograph — telling a visual story about what it's like being a troubled youth, or making a portrait of a man in old age as a reminder of the transience of life.

But the **demigod photographer**, the **Übermensch**, is no longer looking at life in front of him as fact, or considering the content within the frame they make as a story.

The Über photographer — the demigod photographer — treats his life as the living work of art.

He simply **follows the light**.

Banishing Myself from the Garden

And so I banished myself from the garden.

I can no longer stay in paradise forever.

I may have been clever in my ability to play the game within modern society in my own unique way, but it's time to destroy again so that I can create.

Don't get me wrong — paradise is great.

But chaos is even greater.

And now that I am a child again, nothing can break my spirit or my love for life.

When you have an insatiable love for life — when you are possessed by God, enthusiastic and eager for the day — no mortal, no tangible thing disturbs your mind or body.

From this divine peace and understanding comes equanimity and clarity.

And when you feel so deeply, when you experience such pure love, you grow wings and fly like the Holy Spirit — like the dove.

Icarus fell from the sky. The Übermensch will land on Mars.

And so let us strive to go beyond this modern world and this material plane.

Eventually, when your mortal flesh perishes, Saint Michael will take you up on his wing.