

INITIAL SITUATIONS other than loneliness are also worth attention. In the story of the Kurupira who ate all the hunters, the hunters had especially good luck, and their camp was full of the apes they had killed. Next day they went hunting again, but at night the Kurupira and his wild animals came and ate them. This seems to hint that by killing too many animals the hunters have annoyed the Kurupira, who is the Master of the Woods. Perhaps, though the story does not say *so expressis verbis*, what from a human standpoint is particularly good hunting luck has gone a bit too far, beyond the usual measure, transcending the natural limit, and so the hunters have possibly attracted evil. Either they became secretly inflated through their good luck or, to put it more simply, they annoyed the Master of the Woods by taking too much away from him. This would not be surprising, for in most primitive societies there are certain rules for hunting. Too many animals may not be killed at a time. There are taboos. A certain number of animals must be spared if you do not want to disturb the natural balance of things and attract evil onto yourself, or the revenge of the spirit which protects the animals in general.

We are now becoming aware that man is capable of disturbing the biological economy of his surroundings, thereby attracting evil in reaction. We begin to wake up to the fact that we too have annoyed Kurupira, to such an extent that probably all our bones will soon be broken. By contaminating the waters we

destroy the animals and the biological balance of nature. This seems to have its roots in the very earliest days.

When man began to use weapons he made use of an illegitimate trick. He no longer fought the animals on a level of equality and fair play. From the beginning this must have given him a bad conscience, a feeling that he must be wise and spare certain animals. For example, in old China the hunting rule was that the animals might be driven together by men to three corners of the horizon, but the fourth corner had to be an open space to give them a chance; God would inspire them to escape in the right direction if their time hadn't come. I read in the paper that the Swiss government has issued a similar rule. Where men hunt in groups and there are beaters to drive the animals out of the bushes, one of the four directions of the horizon has to be left open so that some animals may escape; you may not make a ring and slaughter them all. Switzerland with its new hunting rules has returned to an old Chinese custom, probably without knowing it, for it is simply natural wisdom.

So you see the problem of evil in the realm of folklore which I am now discussing is unlike a differentiated or specific religious problem of evil. What we call evil on this level differs from theological ideas, for it belongs to the realm of purely natural phenomena. This is tremendously important in psychology, for I think I am not optimistic if I say that in ninety percent of the cases where one has to cope with evil, one is confronted with this natural evil on a psychological level, and only very rarely with a more absolute and deep-rooted phenomenon of evil. Eighty or eighty-five percent of the phenomena are just the Kurupira, Mrs. Trude, and such archetypal figures, which still exist in our psychological nature.

It is for this reason that fairy tales are so important. We find in them rules of behavior on how to cope with these things. Very often it is not a sharp ethical issue but a question of finding

a way of natural wisdom. This does not mean that these powers are not sometimes exceedingly dangerous.

I want to go into more specific illustrations of the manner in which human beings meet these powers. We have seen that not infringing taboos and keeping within the rules of the tribe seems to be one of the most usual ways of trying to avoid evil. But for more specific details I want to give you a Russian fairy tale called "Vasilisa the Beautiful." It is a more elaborate parallel of the Mrs. Trude story except that here the girl is not eaten, but finds a way out of trouble.

VASILISA THE BEAUTIFUL³⁶

There was once in a faraway kingdom a merchant and his wife. They had only one daughter, called Vasilisa the Beautiful (the word *Vasilisa* means queen, but it is just an ordinary name). When the girl was eight years old the merchant's wife called her and said she, her mother, had to die but she would leave Vasilisa her maternal blessing and a doll. Vasilisa was to keep the doll with her always and never show it to anybody; if she was in trouble, she should ask it for advice. Having said this, the merchant's wife died.

The merchant afterward married a widow with two children of about Vasilisa's age. The stepmother slowly turned hostile to Vasilisa, but the doll always comforted her.

One day the merchant had to leave the country for a long time. During his absence the stepmother moved with her three daughters to another house standing near the primeval forest in which, in a clearing, was the house of the Baba Yaga (the great Russian fairy tale witch). Nobody was ever allowed to approach her, and whoever fell into her hands was eaten like a chicken. The situation suited the stepmother because she hoped that Vasilisa would one day cross the Baba Yaga's path.

One evening the stepmother gave her three daughters candles. Ordering them to embroider, to knit, and to spin, she left them and went to bed. In time the candles burned down. One of the girls took her knitting needle to clear the wicks but purposely used it in such a manner that the light went out. Then she said she didn't mind because she could do her embroidery without light, and the other said she could knit without light, but you, the two girls said to Vasilisa, must go to the Baba Yaga and get fire so that we can have light again, and they pushed her out of the room. The girl went to her room and asked her doll what to do. The doll said not to be afraid but to go where the others sent her, and to take the doll with her and it would help her.

Vasilisa walked all through the night. Then she met a rider dressed in white, sitting on a beautiful horse covered in white, and the moment he passed her, day broke. After a while she met a second rider, dressed in red, riding a horse covered in red, and at that moment the sun rose.

Having walked through the night, Vasilisa then walked through the whole of the next day. In the evening she arrived at the clearing where the Baba Yaga's house stood. Around the house was a fence made of human bones, with posts made of skulls. The bolts on the doors were made of the arms of skeletons, and the locks were made of a skeleton's mouth from which the teeth stuck out. Vasilisa was terrified. She stood nearly fainting and as though nailed to the ground, when suddenly a black rider on a black horse galloped by and it became night. But the darkness did not last long, for soon the eyes in all the skulls on the hedge began to glow, and the whole clearing was light as day. Vasilisa stood shivering with fear, but soon she heard an uncanny humming noise, and the trees began to rustle and out of the wood came the Baba Yaga. She sat in a mortar and rowed with a pestle, and with a broom she removed her traces. When she came to the door she sniffed the air and said, "Ugh! It smells of Russians! Who's there?"

Vasilisa went to meet her and bowed and said, "It's I, Grandmother. My stepsisters have sent me to you to fetch fire."

"Good," answered the Baba Yaga, "I know them. Stay with me for a time and then you shall have the fire."

Then she spoke some magic words. The door opened, and the Baba Yaga entered the courtyard, and the door shut behind them. She then ordered the girl about, telling her to bring her food and heat the stove. And she ate a lot, leaving a little cabbage soup and a bread crust for Vasilisa, practically nothing. Then she lay down to sleep, but she told Vasilisa that next morning when she went out, Vasilisa was to sweep out the yard and the hut, cook the midday meal, do the washing, and then separate the mildewed from the good corn. All had to be finished by the time the Baba Yaga came home. Otherwise she would eat her.

The girl asked her doll for advice, and the doll told her not to be afraid, to eat her supper and say her prayers and lie down to sleep, for "Morning is wiser than evening."

Next morning when Vasilisa woke up and looked out of the window, the eyes in the skulls were already closing. The white rider rode by and the day began. The Baba Yaga went off and Vasilisa went over the whole house, admiring all its treasures. Then she wondered which piece of work she should begin on, but the work had all been done by the doll, who was just separating the last black from the white corn seeds.

When the Baba Yaga came back in the evening she found everything done and was very angry that there was nothing with which to find fault. Then something very strange happened, for she cried out, "My faithful servants, grind the corn for me," and three pairs of skeleton hands appeared and took the corn away.

She gave Vasilisa her orders for the next day, saying she should do as she had done the day before, but in addition she should clean the poppy seeds. The next evening when the Baba Yaga came, she called up the hands again to press oil out of the poppy seeds.

While the Baba Yaga ate her supper, Vasilisa stood silently by. The Baba Yaga said, "What are you staring at without saying a word? Are you dumb?"

The girl answered, "If I may, I would like to ask you some questions."

"Ask, then," said the Baba Yaga, "but remember, not all questions are good. To know too much makes one old!"

Vasilisa said, "I'd only like to ask you about the things I've seen: On the way to you a rider dressed all in white passed me, sitting on a horse. Who was that?"

"That is my day, the bright one," answered the Baba Yaga.

"And then another rider overtook me, dressed in red and sitting on a red horse. Who was he?"

"That is my sun, the red one."

"And then at the gate a black rider came."

"That was my night, the dark one."

And then Vasilisa thought of the three pairs of hands, but she didn't dare ask and kept silent.

And the Baba Yaga said, "Why don't you ask me some more questions?"

And the girl answered that those were enough, adding, "You said yourself, Grandmother, that knowing too much made one old."

Then the Baba Yaga replied (and this is important), "You did well to ask only about what you saw outside and not about what you saw inside the hut. I don't like it when the dirt is brought outside the hut. But now I want to ask you something: How did you manage to do all the work I gave you?"

"The blessing of my mother helped me," answered Vasilisa. (She didn't mention the doll.)

"Oh, that's it, is it? Then get away from here, blessed daughter. I don't need any blessing in my house!"

And the Baba Yaga pushed Vasilisa out of the hut and chased her out of the gate. Then she took one of the skulls with flaming

eyes from the hedge and put it on a pole and give it to Vasilisa, saying, "This is the fire for your stepsisters. Take it and carry it with you."

Vasilisa hurried away from the Baba Yaga and ran through the dark forest, lit by the light of the skull, which only went out when dawn broke. On the evening of the next day she reached home. When she approached the gate, she thought of throwing away the skull, but a hollow voice said, "Don't throw me away. Take me to your stepmother."

So Vasilisa obeyed, and when she brought the fire into the room, the glowing eyes of the skull stared unceasingly at the stepmother and her daughters, burning into their souls, and the eyes followed them wherever they went to hide. Toward morning they were burnt to ashes, and only Vasilisa remained unhurt.

In the morning Vasilisa buried the skull in the earth, shut up the house, and went into town.

The second part of the story I will tell very briefly. Vasilisa went to stay with a nice old woman who bought thread for her with which she was to make linen. The linen she made was so beautiful that it was used to make shirts for the king. Through that she became acquainted with him and he married her. When her father, the merchant, returned, he was very happy over her good fortune. He lived with her in the palace, and Vasilisa also brought the positive old woman with whom she had stayed (so she has two parents again), and the doll she carried with her to the end of her life.

As we are concentrating on the dark aspect of things and on evil, I am skipping this happy ending.

You see here the similarity of the Great Witch figure. With Mrs. Trude there was a quaternity of figures, the witch plus a green, a black, and a red man: the charcoal burner, the butcher,

and the hunter. Here it is the day, the night, and the sun who are the three riders.

In the Russian version one can see clearly that the Baba Yaga is the great Mother Nature. She could not talk about "my day, my night" if she were not the owner of the day, of the night, and of the sun, so she must be a great Goddess, and you could call her the Great Goddess of Nature. Obviously, with all those skulls around her hut, she is also the Goddess of Death, which is an aspect of nature. (One is reminded, for instance, of the Germanic goddess of the underworld, *Hel*, from which our word *hell* comes. She lives in a subterranean hall where the walls are built of worms and human bones.) So she is a goddess of day and night, of life and death, and the great principle of nature. Also she is a witch, which is why she has a broom, like our witches who ride on broomsticks. She goes around in a mortar with a pestle, which makes her resemble a great pagan corn goddess such as *Demeter* in Greece, who is the goddess of corn and also of the mystery of death. The dead in Greek antiquity were called *demetriois*, those who had fallen into the possession of *Demeter*, like the corn falling into the earth. Death and resurrection of the wheat was supposed to be a simile for what happens to man after death, so those skull hands which took the corn and the poppy seeds had to do with the mystery of death. Later I will go into this further.

Here one sees a great difference from the Mrs. Trude story. There, the girl penetrated Mrs. Trude's house out of sheer curiosity, infantile daring as I called it, and she got turned into a piece of wood and was burnt away by the great witch. But Vasilisa would never have dared, inspired by infantile daring, to go into the realm of the great witch; she was pushed there by the evil stepmother and her stepsisters. The girl in the Mrs. Trude tale had no magical protection, nor had she looked for any. With her infantile daring she did not even think of anything of the

kind. Vasilisa, however, takes her mother's blessing and the magic doll with her.

One sees, therefore, that actually the great battle between life and death, good and evil, the girl and the great nature witch, becomes a secret magical contest as to whose magical powers are stronger, the girl's or the great witch's, and the two respect each other's power mutually. Vasilisa does not ask the last question about the witch's secret, and the witch either does not notice, or pretends not to notice, the girl's great secret. So they can part *partie remise*. Keep this in mind, because I will concentrate on the magical contest later, as it is one of the most important problems.

At first the witch became very annoyed with Vasilisa because she didn't ask questions, so she expected and seemed to want questions. The words "Why don't you ask me any questions?" having been shouted at the girl, Vasilisa asks three and swallows the last one. This fourth question referred to what she saw inside the witch's hut. The riders are connected with the witch, but Vasilisa had seen them outside. So we must assume that those skeleton hands have to do with the innermost secret of the witch, who said something very strange, namely: "It is good that you didn't ask about the inside things, because one should not carry the dirt out of the hut." This is like our proverb which says one shouldn't wash one's dirty linens in public, and she means it in this ordinary sense. This is an interesting point. The witch has dirty linens and obviously is slightly ashamed of it, because if she were completely unshamed of the evil, she wouldn't care if Vasilisa brought it out. But, like an ordinary human being, she felt slightly awkward about her dark side and therefore was grateful that the girl tactfully did not poke into this dirty-linens business.

This shows that the Baba Yaga is a slightly split figure, not completely at one with herself. There is a secret something of

goodness in her, just enough to make her slightly ashamed of her dark side and to give her a feeling that it oughtn't to be carried out of the hut. She is not completely a nature demon; there is a tinge of humanity in her domestic character. She is slightly human and so capable of ethical human reactions. Just here the girl must not poke, because if she had touched this blind spot in the Baba Yaga, the latter would have howled in rage and devoured her in fury. A similar thing can happen to an analyst who dares mention the shadow side of an analysand; he or she often gets eaten right away in an outburst of affect. Naturally, with a fellow human being you dare do such things sometimes, but with a goddess, if you dared to put your finger on the dark side, you would certainly disappear from the surface of the earth.

We can conclude from this story that the Baba Yaga is not totally evil; she is ambiguous, she is light and dark, good and evil, though here the evil aspect is stressed.

This motif, that one should not poke into the dark side of the divinity, whether a male god or a female goddess, is widespread in folklore. There is, for instance, an Austrian tale called "The Black Woman."¹⁷ A girl becomes the servant of a black witch in the woods.* There is a forbidden chamber, as in the Bluebeard story, into which she may not go. She has to clean the house for many years. As always in these stories, she eventually opens the door of the secret forbidden chamber and finds in it the black witch, who, through her cleaning, has already turned nearly white. The girl shuts up the room again but is then persecuted by the witch for having transgressed the taboo, and, strangely enough, in the original versions, the girl absolutely

*In the original German, phrases such as "the black woman" (*die schwarze Frau*) or "the black witch" are not meant to refer to a person of African descent or another dark-skinned ethnic group, as the English would imply.

—Editor

denies having seen anything. There is an infinite number of such stories. In the main story she sees the black witch turned nearly white; in another story she sees a skeleton nodding all the time over a fire; in another she sees a goose, in another a petrified feminine figure surrounded by petrified dwarfs, and so on. Always the goddess who sat in this forbidden chamber persecutes the girl, takes away her children, and brings every kind of misery over her, pressing her, "Have you seen me in the chamber?" And the girl lies in a determined way, lies and lies, till finally the goddess turns and says, "Because you have lied so consistently, because you have not given away my dark side, I will reward you," and then she does so on a big scale.

So, contrary to our Christian morals, these stories say that there is a form of tactful lying about the evil or the dark side of these great divinities which is not immoral. On the contrary, to be capable of having seen into that abyss of evil and pretend not to have seen it is the highest achievement. This version shocked later Christian European storytellers so much that many of the modern versions transform it and the girl is persecuted because she lies. Finally she breaks down and tells the truth, and then the Great Goddess rewards her. But this is an artificial version, changed by later writers who did not understand the old motif and were shocked that the child should be rewarded for consistently not telling the truth.

In the Austrian story the black woman is slowly turning white, but it is having seen the evil which is the problem, not having seen the transformation. For example, in one variation the witch says, "Child, have you seen me in my misery?" And the child says, "No, I didn't see anything." That is the same motif. The witch is ashamed of her darkness, of her misery, or of being stuck in the filth and misery of the mystery of evil and death, and does not want the child to mention it or bring it into the open.

In the story of Vasilisa the secret lies in the skeleton hands which remove the seeds. Because poppy seeds have a slightly soporific effect, they have always, from antiquity, been ascribed to the gods of the underworld. The poppy has to do with Hades and the mystery of sleep and death; and the corn, as I said before when mentioning Demeter, also has to do with the mystery of death and resurrection. So it is strange, in a way, that this should be such a shameful secret; it does not feel so evil, it feels more awe-inspiring, the untouchable, terrifying secret of the gods, which man should not try to penetrate, unless forced to do so.

It is obvious that what looks like lying is rather a gesture of reverence, of respect toward the otherness of this divinity. We can compare it with situations which occur sometimes between two human beings. In *Man and His Symbols*, Jung tells of the case of a man who, if I remember rightly, came to him with severe compulsions. He came always for short periods of analysis, because he came from a foreign country and could only stay for about three or four weeks each time. This man made a very consistent pseudo-analysis. Jung saw in the first therapeutic hour that he was hiding some kind of secret and had all the symptoms of a bad conscience. For some strange reason, Jung had a kind of feeling inhibition from telling him right out about it, so the man did a swindle analysis for ten years, and Jung always felt very awkward because they talked about dreams and this and that, yet it was all a swindle. But Jung did not poke into the affair because he noticed that the man's symptoms slowly cleared up and he got better each time he came, which normally doesn't happen if you make a swindle analysis. Finally, after many years, the patient said, "Now, Dr. Jung, I want to tell you how grateful I am to you for not ever having asked me before, for I just couldn't have told you, and it would have ruined the analysis." Then he confessed some rather awkward sin he had

committed which he couldn't face. He had to build up a relationship to Jung and rebuild his own self-esteem and energy before he himself could face what he had done and share it with the analyst. So Jung, who had only followed a kind of irrational feeling in not poking into the secret of this man, was rewarded by seeing after the event that his feeling had been right. It is important for all therapists who may be unwisely tempted to use confession drugs to know about their patients' secrets.

The underworld gods are usually the gods of the great mystery. There is the great secret in all religious systems, and always this parallel of not opening the forbidden chamber, of not looking, with sometimes the exception of having to do so. However, I could tell you other stories where it is just the opposite, where the secret had to be disclosed. That's why I said earlier that it is always a paradox; it is always a yes and a no.

As far as I can see, this paradox is not historically conditioned. On a most primitive level both rules already exist: the opening of the door as the right thing, or something a chosen hero may do, and its opposite. In certain periods in history it might be that the one has more often to be done than the other, but as far as I can see, it is an archetypal motif from the beginning, which does not have to do with specific evolution. It is an archetypal pattern that one must, or must not, penetrate that secret, and it means walking on the razor's edge, for it may cost you your head if you do the wrong thing. An analyst who stands a swindling analysis for ten years does absolute harm to himself and the patient! He *should* say, "Now come on, don't beat about the bush! What's the matter with you? You are telling me rubbish!" and so on, but to take his money and pretend not to notice anything for many years is plainly immoral, from the therapeutic standpoint. But in the case which Jung tells, it was just the other way around. He would have destroyed the rapport if he had asked one minute sooner! So the terrible conflict is to

find out which situation it is now. Is it the one where I have to poke into the forbidden chamber, or must I pretend not to have noticed, even if I have done so?

It seems to be a question of balance. We might even go one step further and say it is a question of the possibility of relationship, or confidence. Between such a great goddess and an eight-year-old girl there couldn't be a relationship, really. There couldn't be mutual confidence. The two positions are too far apart—the great nature goddess and a little harmless girl—so that is probably why there the secret has to be kept; while in a state where the human being has become more conscious, the Godhead can also show more of its secret. It is a great puzzle.

In another Russian story the Baba Yaga shows her positive side more, and I want to tell this story as an amplification, first because it illustrates how a man might cope with her differently from an eight-year-old girl, and secondly because it shows her relatively positive side.

There is a Russian story, called "The Maiden Czar,"³⁴ where the hero rides to the end of the world, to the kingdom under the sun, to find the beautiful Maria with the golden plait and bring her home. On his way he comes three times upon the hut of a Baba Yaga. It is a rotating hut, standing on chickens' feet, and by using a magic verse he makes it stop and then enters. In it he finds a great Baba Yaga poking the fire with her nose, combing silk strands with her fingers, and watching the geese on the field with her eyes. When the hero, Ivan, enters, she says, "Have you come voluntarily or involuntarily, my little child?" Ivan bangs with his fist on the table and says, "You old witch, you must not ask a hero such questions! I want something to eat and drink, and if you don't serve me a good meal, I shall box your ears, so that!"—and then comes an obscenity, which I am not translating! And the Baba Yaga turns very nice and serves him a wonderful dinner, makes a bed for him, and the next

morning shows him the next step. This happens three times, so that she becomes an absolutely protective and helpful goddess who even shows him the way.

That is the difference between a man and a girl's way of treating the Baba Yaga. Ivan is a grown-up man, while the girl is an absolutely helpless young creature. But it also shows here that the Baba Yaga is not evil at all; she is just plain nature. If you know how to cope with her, she is all right. It's up to you which side of her you experience, and here comes the first intimation in these stories that somewhere the problem of evil has to do with man, that evil is not right out in nature, a just-so story, as I represented it to you at the beginning. Here we begin to touch the problem on a higher level, where it has begun to dawn on man that evil is not only a nature phenomenon, but is dependent on man's attitude and behavior.

The Baba Yaga addresses Ivan as "little child"! He is a grown-up young man, and so you see what the Great Mother does. She tries to reduce him to infantile helplessness. Though it sounds very nice, "Have you come voluntarily or involuntarily, my little child?" is a real hit below the belt. She wants to depotentiate him and treat him like a small boy, and then she would have nicely eaten him for supper. But he is up to her and does not take this wicked stab. He answers back, and then she becomes amiable.

In both these Russian stories, the Beautiful Vasilisa and the Maiden Czar story, there is great subtlety. It is in a tiny conversation, just a few sentences of the story, that the whole problem of good and evil is decided. It means walking on the razor's edge to be able to say the right thing, or have the right reaction at the crucial moment, for that turns the whole problem.

I want to dwell briefly on one more small motif in the story, the fiery skull which Vasilisa takes home and which burns the stepmother and the stepsisters to death. These fiery eyes which

persecute them wherever they go have been amplified in mythology and generally are associated with a bad conscience. There are Jewish traditions in the Midrashim where, after the murder of Abel, the eye of God followed Cain all over the world and he couldn't escape it. There is also a beautiful poem by Victor Hugo in which Cain, after the murder of Abel, runs away into the woods, and all over the place, and hides, and everywhere God's eye follows him; finally he digs a grave and buries himself alive, drawing the tombstone over himself, but in the dark—a typically pathetic Victor Hugo touch—"L'œil de Dieu le regardait toujours!" There you see the same motif of the eye pursuing the evil deed absolutely and inescapably. In that way the eye represents the original phenomenon of a bad conscience with its terrifying effect.

As I mentioned before, Jung in his article on "The Conscience" pointed out that the original phenomenon of conscience is an immediate experience of the voice of God within oneself, or a manifestation of the Self within the psyche, if you want to put it into psychological language. Here there is this immediate phenomenon; the stepmother and the stepsisters are destroyed, not by the girl, but by bad conscience, their own evil, so to speak, in an immediate form.

There is another item which one might miss if one didn't watch the text closely, and that is that after the skull with the fiery eyes has destroyed the stepmother and stepsisters, Vasilisa buries it and leaves the place. She doesn't stay with it or keep it to burn up other enemies later on. She could have said, "Oh well, this is very useful! I'll put it in my bedroom drawer, and whenever somebody annoys me I can take it out and use it against them!" But she gives it up; she doesn't keep its power. A magical power of revenge has been placed in her hands by the witch, a revenge which takes place though she hadn't intended to use it that way; it just happened so. She didn't know it would

burn her sisters and stepmother, but afterward she buries it and leaves the whole problem. She detaches from it completely.

Here we return to another rule of wisdom which we find in fairy tales. Everything of evil tends to produce a chain reaction, whether it be suicide, or revenge, or paying back evil; the emotional chain reaction tends to go on in some form, and therefore it is wiser to interrupt it. When the right moment comes, one has to stop being caught up in the chain reaction and bury it, leave it alone, detach one's own integral personality from it, and give up the power. It would have been very human to say, "Aha, that serves them right," but then Vasilisa herself would have been caught up in the evil thing she had used, the evil medicine, to use African language. But we hear nothing of any triumph. She buries the skull and leaves at once. This is very difficult to do, because if one has once learnt not to let evil catch one, one can often experience that it hits or lashes back onto the people who produced it. Not to triumph or think, "Ah, that's the way to do it, just turn it back onto the other," but to detach and step out of it at the right moment, is of paramount importance. It is a rule as imperative to follow today as it was in the Stone Age.

I would like to amplify on those hands which take away the corn and the poppy seeds. The terrifying secret of the hidden side is frequently associated with death. In this primitive form the skeleton represents death. I told you of another story where the girl opens the forbidden door of the room in which there is a nodding skeleton. Primitives associate death with evil, and there are Indian tribes in North and South America who will never touch a corpse. A dying man is put in a separate tepee or hut, and as soon as he is dead the hut is shut, or walled up, or burnt, and people keep away from it. The phenomenon of death and corpses releases tremendous and genuine primitive fear.

One does not know whether it is the fear of evil or of death; it is the same thing.

In Egyptian mythology and in some African tales death is personified as the enemy which kills at the end of life. We still have this in the word *agony* (Greek *agon*), which means battle. Nowadays this is rationalized in the idea that the dying person fights for life, for breath, but originally the battle was with the invisible enemy, death. Edmond Rostand reproduced the same conception in his play *Cyrano de Bergerac*, in which the last enemy Cyrano has to fight is death.

Till nature invented man, practically no warm-blooded creature died of old age. In nature, when the physical forces fade to a certain degree, one is eaten, or one dies of hunger and cold, or of thirst, if in the desert. So in spite of present-day civilization, our pattern of behavior, our instinctual adjustment to death still functions in the age-old way, representing death as that last thing which cuts your throat, which bites one to death as it did in the past.

In his book on the life of the Kalahari Bushmen, Laurens van der Post describes how the old people run along in the desert with their tribe as long as their strength permits. When they can no longer keep up, the tribe gives them food and water for three or four days, says goodbye, and leaves them, and they quietly settle down to wait for death. Naturally, eighty-five percent of the time they are eaten by the wild animals of the country. That is death under natural conditions. Death prolonged by chemicals as we have to undergo it now in hospitals did not exist, and we are not yet adapted to it.

If you think back to such natural original conditions, you realize how closely being overcome by evil or by the enemy, being eaten, and death are connected. It is as if one's life were a radiant light which keeps the lions and tigers, and even one's fellow human beings, at bay, but when that light dims and vital-

ity fades, then all that darkness breaks in and gets one, so to speak. So the last battle is always defeat by the dark side—that is, on the physical level. That probably accounts for this great closeness of the symbolism of death and evil, and is why we in German still combine *Tod und Teufel* (death and the devil). A German proverb, for instance, says: "He fears neither death nor the devil," taking the two things as a kind of twin couple.

But it seems to me that this biological angle is only the substructure of something which goes even further. In my experience, though nobody can judge what is really evil or good and I wouldn't dare to say, what impresses one as really evil in human beings, if one looks at it naively, is a kind of psychological death wish.

I want to tell you of a case because I think it illustrates a very important factor. Barbara Hannah and I each had a difficult case with which we couldn't cope. We each had a woman analysand very much obsessed by the negative animus and so, in those past times when Jung was still our control analyst, we asked for help. By chance, he saw those two ladies, one after the other, on the same afternoon. He was very nice to both of them, as he always was in such one-hour interviews, and accepted them completely. In any case the woman was quarreling with the male analyst, the medical supervisor of the case, and she told Jung all about that. To make a long story short, Miss Hannah's case went home and drew a beautiful picture as a kind of reaction to what she had got from Jung. My analysand went home, rang up the medical doctor analyst and told him everything Jung had said against him, plus a bit more, making mischief with it.

Jung said that this was very important, because if one gave psychic energy to anyone, one should always see what they did with it. If there was a slight, or momentary recovery, even if that collapsed again, one could go on giving compassion or concern, giving energy to the case; while if it had a contrary effect, then

one would know that one was feeding the demon of that person and that the person didn't get what one gave. He did not condemn my case, but it was as if her evil animus were sitting in front of her mouth, and whenever one gave her a good bit, he got it. In effect the demon got fatter and she got thinner.

In such a case, if one goes on treating the person with Christian charity, love, and concern, one is acting destructively, and that is a mistake which many naive young psychiatric doctors make. In their Christian tradition, but also in the tradition of physical medicine (the Hippocratic oath!), it is absolutely imperative that one be always charitable; such people don't notice that they are feeding the devil and making the patients worse instead of better. Therefore, if one sees that the devil snaps up everything one gives, one can do only one thing—turn off the tap and give nothing.

Jung told me—it was my very first case, and I was terrified to do it, I even disobeyed for a week before I could make up my mind—to kick that lady out of analysis, telling her what a cheating, lying devil she was. But one is kind of lovingly attached to one's first case, so for a week I hesitated, and then I did it. The plain result was that from then on she was much better. After many years of no treatment, she was practically all right! The kick in the pants did it, and after eight years I even got a letter from her thanking me.

In this case it was not only that her demon was eating everything she was given so that one couldn't get anything into her, neither human feeling nor psychological food. It was much worse, for one saw how the animus was working everywhere against life. If she got life energy from Jung, she tried to hurt the other medical doctor by making mischief out of what Jung had supposedly said against him. She was working for destruction, for what I would call a psychological death atmosphere.

Such a thing can begin on the simple level of the spoilsport.

When people are having fun, somebody turns up with a sour face and tries to put a wet blanket on it; if one person has a nice present, the other makes a jealous remark, spoiling it. These are minor manifestations of something which tries to destroy the flame of life. Whenever psychic life, pleasure—in the highest sense of the word—being alive, that burning fire or spiritual elation comes up, there are always people who try to cut it with envy or criticism, and that is an aspect of real evil. If I notice this kind of demonic desire to destroy all psychological life, then I prick up my ears.

So, in a way, evil *is* a skeleton. It is that spirit of "no life and no love" which has always been associated with the essence of evil. It is destructiveness for its own sake, which everybody has in himself to some extent. But some people are completely possessed by it, as was this woman. This kind of death-devil is best simply starved to death. One hands back what the person is, what he or she does, and one gives no life. One stretches out a skeleton hand to shake the skeleton hand; one gives no blood, no warmth, nor life, and that makes the devil turn back to where he came from.

Before we go on I want to point out again that in dealing with evil in fairy tales and folklore material the ethical conflict is treated with a kind of natural wisdom rather than with religious awareness of the problem of good and evil. This is very different from the Judeo-Christian tradition which has worked for two thousand years sharpening our conscience to a much more acute awareness of evil and trying to establish absolute rules of behavior. This, it seems to me, is quite all right when used as an instrument for the acquisition of higher consciousness for *oneself* and a more subtle conscience about the problem of good and evil. But if we apply it to other people, it produces the effect I tried to describe before: the evil gets more and more hooked into others, causing chain reactions of vengeance and punish-

ment, heaping coals of fire on their heads and drilling into them that they ought to have a bad conscience, until they turn really wicked out of that repressed bad conscience. All those abominable effects have made us into the most restless and disagreeable crowd of people on the planet. In my opinion this is directly linked with higher morals which we use in a wrong way, namely on other people instead of purely on ourselves.

Nature wisdom has this disadvantage: if one uses it too much on oneself, it creates a certain relativistic ethical attitude of calling white a bit black and black a bit gray, till finally everything is a kind of soup in which everything gets both lighter and more shadowy, and there is no moral problem! This naturally is not right and we cannot return to unconscious unawareness of sharp differences of behavior. But, as Jung wrote in *Aion*, before Christianity, evil was not quite as evil. The rise of Christianity added a kind of spirit of evil to the principle of evil which it did not have before. The sharpening or differentiation of ethical reactions into too clear-cut black and white lines is not favorable to life. So, after having dealt with fairy tales for many years, I think that it is probably better to treat evil outside oneself according to the nature wisdom rules of fairy tales, and to apply the sharpened conscience only to oneself.

I want now to tell you two stories which will lead us into the paradox of charity. Should one be charitable with evil or not? This is a modern question in the form of the problem of the death punishment which some countries still impose, or want to abolish. The modern version has its political and religious backgrounds, which we will not discuss, but we shall look at the problem from this simple folklore level.

In our story Vasilisa displays this natural wisdom. With the Baba Yaga it is quite clear that with such unequal partners there could be no balance of power. It would not have been wise for Vasilisa to carry outside the things from the Baba Yaga's hut,

poking about there and looking at the Baba Yaga's shadow instead of at her own. Traditionally, that would be skipping the enormous difference between a deity and a human being, but on top of that there is a lack of religious respect for the divine figure. The same thing occurs in Jung's *Answer to Job*. Job insists on being right. God might have thought that Job thought he was wrong, and God does have that reaction and attacks Job about it, but Job does not say, "Ah yes, but I think you have fallen into your shadow!" That would be treating God as if he were sitting on a school bench with him. Job answers, "I will lay mine hand upon my mouth"; he makes a gesture of reverence. It is not man's task to rub God's nose into his shadow, so to speak. That would mean an inflation and an absolute unawareness of psychic realities as they are. Then Job says, "I know that I have an advocate (*Anwalt*)¹⁰ in heaven"—I know that he who stands up for me is in heaven, meaning God himself. That would be equal to saying reverently, "This is between God and himself." And then God changes his attitude because Job does not throw it back at him or poke into it.

That is a very complicated and specific situation, but if we take the situation of two human beings, then, in a way, if you do *not* point out the other person's darkness to him, you do not take away his chance of finding it himself. If you say that he or she has done this shadow thing, then you put yourself above the other. But if you say nothing, the other can go home can find out for himself. If the feeling relationship is not well established and there is uncertainty and the other is afraid that you are too powerful for him, then very often it is better to leave it alone, because then the other has the honor of finding out, and that stabilizes his prestige. So sometimes not to point out the shadow means respecting the integrity of the other person's personality. You respect that person as an ethical being, able to find it out for himself. As soon as you have a very good relationship you do

not need such complications anymore. Then you can say, "Ah, now there you were in the animus," and there is no prestige problem between you. Among friends you can say, "Oh come on, don't be such a damn fool," and the other doesn't experience that as a loss of prestige, for each respects the other.

So I would say it depends very much on the relationship. As long as the partner is in any way uncertain or in danger of losing his self-esteem, it is better to leave it alone. Job did that with God, he was just respectful enough; he really took it that he was a louse who could not reproach God. That was a turn to humility, to really not feeling entitled to reproach God.

After Vasilisa has refused to answer the fourth question, the Baba Yaga says, "Now I am going to ask you a question! How did you manage to do all the work I gave you?" We know that the magic doll did it, but Vasilisa keeps her secret as well as the witch did hers and says, "My mother's blessing helped me." She doesn't tell the whole story, only half of it. She got her mother's blessing, plus the doll, and she mentions only the blessing.

The Baba Yaga gave her the skull, then threw her out of the room and out of the gate and then took from the fence the skull with the flaming eyes, put it on a pole, and gave it to her, saying, "This is the fire for your stepsisters. Take it and carry it home." Vasilisa came originally to fetch fire, or the sisters ordered her to get it, so the witch gives the girl exactly what the stepsisters wanted. One could say that she is the function for transmitting evil to the evil sisters, but it doesn't look like revenge. They get what they wanted!

If we put that into psychological language, they refused to become conscious, and unrealized consciousness becomes a burning fire, coals of fire on their heads! That is why, according to Jung, not becoming conscious when one has the possibility of doing so is the worst sin. If there is no germ of possible consciousness within, if God made you unconscious and you just

stay that way, then it doesn't matter; but if one does not live up to an inner possibility, then this inner possibility becomes destructive. That's why Jung also says that in a similar way one of the most wicked destructive forces, psychologically speaking, is unused creative power. That is another aspect. If somebody has a creative gift and out of laziness, or for some other reason, doesn't use it, that psychic energy turns into sheer poison. That's why we often diagnose neuroses and psychotic diseases as not-lived higher possibilities.

A neurosis is often a plus, not a minus, but an un-lived plus, a higher possibility of becoming more conscious, or becoming more creative, faked for some lousy excuse. The refusal of higher development or higher consciousness is, in our experience, one of the most destructive things there is. Among other things, it makes people automatically want to pull back everybody else who tries. Someone who has un-lived creativity tries to destroy other people's creativity, and somebody who has an un-lived possibility of consciousness always tries to blur or make uncertain anybody else's efforts toward consciousness. That's why Jung says that if a patient outgrows his analyst, which happens frequently, he has to leave the analyst, because the latter will probably try to pull the patient back onto the old level.

The desire to prevent other people from becoming conscious because one does not want to wake up oneself is real destructiveness. And having the possibility of becoming conscious and not taking it is about the worst thing possible.

HOT EVIL



VASILISA'S DISCRETION contrasts with other fairy tales, in which entrance into the forbidden chamber, or asking the forbidden question, finally leads to a higher development of consciousness. The actual moral of the story of Vasilisa is to let sleeping dogs lie; not to penetrate into the mystery of iniquity unless there is an urgent reason for doing so.

If Vasilisa had asked the fourth question, the witch would have exploded in anger, and to do that is a kind of defeat, which she would have resented. The one who gets angry has lost. This seems to be related to another set of stories with the motif of the "getting angry" contest, which usually is found in Nordic and German fairy tales. I have not come across this motif in many other countries, but I think it describes a feature which might be of general importance, so I will discuss an actual version of this type, called "Getting Angry."

GETTING ANGRY⁴⁰

There was once a peasant and his wife who were very rich and very stingy. They had not even a child—they were too stingy for that! As this stingy peasant grudgingly paying a servant his wages, he went to a poor brother and said he should let one of his three sons come and work at the farm. The arrangement should be that whichever got angry first would have to pay the bill, irrespective of whether master or servant. If the master got