



# Why scandals shock us, and should not



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A scandal is not a new revelation. It is a long-overdue and grudging declaration of our inability to keep ignoring what was already there all along. The question, then, is not why the scandal surfaced, but how it remained hidden at all. And why something so obvious and axiomatic required loud exposure before it could be acknowledged.

The Epstein files revealed nothing that should have required revelation in the first place. They merely confirmed an old pattern: that power, wherever it accumulates, tends to be used for consumption, gratification, and dominance. The names were new; the principle was ancient. Yet the public response treated it as a rupture, as though something unprecedented had occurred.

Why does it take a scandal for this to be recognised? How does a culture succeed in presenting those who dominate attention as figures of decency or merit? That is the question worth examining. Not "How could they?" but "How did this belief come to be accepted at all?"

The shock itself is revealing. It is not evidence of their fall so much as evidence of the illusion that had been maintained.

## Events and Principles

There are two ways to learn about the world. One is by reacting to events as they erupt. The other is by understanding the principles that govern how things unfold, whether or not those events have yet made themselves visible.

Consider a ball of radioactive material. Nothing seems to happen. Then one day, the critical threshold is crossed, and there is a catastrophic explosion. Would anyone choose to be educated this way? The principle of critical mass was always available. The explosion merely confirmed what it had been saying all along.

So it is with the human mind. We keep waiting for scandals to educate us. Every few years, another file leaks, another network is exposed, another set of names tumbles into public view. And each time, the same ritual follows: shock, moral outrage, op-eds, and then forgetting.

Yet the principle was always there. The unexamined, animalistic ego, when given power, uses that power for its own consumption and gratification. This is not cynicism. It is plain observation, available to anyone willing to look without sentimentality.

If one relies on events, shock is guaranteed, because most misdeeds never come fully to light. If one understands the principle, shock loses its grip, because what unfolds is recognised rather

than discovered. We participate in our own deception because we need the illusion to continue.

Celebrity culture quietly suggests that fame indicates virtue. Corporate branding makes profit appear as service. Philanthropy launders reputation into respectability. The entire machinery runs on a single fuel: the need to believe that the ladder being climbed leads somewhere noble.

The ego cannot tolerate questioning this. So it constructs heroes. It needs its billionaires to be benevolent, its celebrities to be wise, its leaders to be principled. The idol must appear flawless if worship is to continue.

When the clay is exposed, idol-worship itself is rarely questioned. A new idol is found, and the ritual resumes. The system reliably produces individuals of the same kind.

## The Gorilla in the Necktie

Homo sapiens emerged from the jungle. The intellect has arrived. Language, culture, and technology are new. But the centre from which all this operates has largely remained the same. Modern capacities are governed by a deeply animalistic centre. The tools are advanced; the master they serve is prehistoric.

Human beings now account for over a third of all mammal biomass on this planet. Almost all the rest consists of animals bred for our consumption. What remains for wild mammals is a sliver. What is useful to us is multiplied into billions. What is not useful is pushed towards extinction. This is the principle that governs the world when the ego is left unexamined: greed and power. Real nobility, real decency, are precisely what the ego cannot tolerate.

Now place this unexamined centre in a boardroom or a political office. The suit is expensive, the vocabulary sophisticated, the smile professionally practised. Yet behind that smile are the same teeth. A gorilla in a necktie. That is what one is looking at when one looks at a person of power who has not undergone a genuine inner transformation. Everything around him exists to serve his appetite. And if someone has accumulated at that scale, what was it accumulated for? For consumption, for territory, for the ancient satisfactions of dominance.

If there is a fixer available who can procure whatever the appetite demands, the appetite will make use of him. None of this should require a scandal to understand. It is obvious from first principles. The exceptions do exist: the Buddha, Kabir Saheb, and a handful of sages scattered across history who genuinely stepped outside the pattern. They are exceptions precisely because transcending the ego requires sustained inner work, not verbal agreement or moral posturing.

Apart from such exceptions, selflessness should not be assumed. Good intentions are not transformation. Philanthropy is not renunciation. The ego can wear any costume, including the costume of virtue. The vocabulary updates; the centre remains.

## Principles Over Events

The diagnosis is clear enough. But where does responsibility lie?

How did one allow oneself to be convinced in the first place? What within demanded that power and goodness go together? When such questions are honestly pursued, they lead somewhere. They lead to the examination of one's ego, one's hunger for heroes, one's reluctance to see the animal in oneself. The scandal is out there; the inquiry is in here.

Without that inward turn, scandals change nothing. A few individuals are condemned, the system is preserved, new idols are found, and the next shock is awaited. The pattern repeats because the pattern-maker within is never examined.

The Doomsday Clock now stands at eighty-nine seconds to midnight, the closest it has ever been to civilisational collapse. And still, celebrities are worshipped, admiration loudly declared. The tragedy is not that a few billionaires escaped to private islands while the world burned. The tragedy is that the crowd below kept defending, kept imitating, kept applauding. When escape becomes possible for the few who have consumed the earth, the crowd below will still be waving. That is the depth of the delusion.

The system does not run on conspiracy. It runs on aspiration, on what is admired, imitated, and quietly desired. A "like" is not innocent. It is a small but steady investment in the very system one claims to oppose.

What can change something is the refusal to be shocked in the first place, not out of cynicism, but out of clarity. When the principle is understood, the event becomes mere confirmation.

The unexamined ego, when given power, uses that power for gratification. It consumes, exploits, and dominates because that is what it does. The same ego that produces monsters also operates at smaller scales, given less opportunity. The difference is one of degree, not of kind.

Examine the centre from which one operates, and something real has been done. Condemn others while leaving that centre untouched, and nothing changes; only noise is added to noise.

So the question is not, "How could they?" The question is, "Why was it ever believed otherwise?"

And beneath that lies the more uncomfortable one: what within needed that belief?

The principle was always available. The only question is whether one is willing to see it, and to see oneself in its light. That seeing is not comfortable. But it is honest. And honesty is the only ground on which anything true can be built.



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