

Introduction - What is it about?

Ever noticed how humans look back at history with shock and judgment. We call people from past eras monsters for things like slavery, colonial conquests, religious persecutions. Yet we ignore the same kinds of hypocrisies happening right now in our own time.

You stand in judgment over the slave-owners of centuries ago. You see them as barbaric and cruel, almost a different kind of being. But here you are today, wearing clothes probably made by hands in faraway factories that endure conditions not so different from indenture. Or you quietly accept practices that bring long-term harm to vulnerable children, all wrapped in the language of compassion and progress. The same ordinary hands do it. Yours. Mine. The neighbours'. We carry out the suffering or look away. We dress it up as necessity, as kindness, as the way things have to be.

This is not because you are bad. It is not because they were evil. It runs much deeper. Every generation believes the same thing. We have finally reached moral clarity. The past was blind. We see clearly now. We condemn the dead to feel clean. And then we become the monsters the next eyes will judge.

Have you ever felt that small quiet nagging inside. Something feels off. This does not quite sit right. Yet you push it aside. Everyone else is nodding along. The group needs it to be right. Belonging matters more than doubt.

That quiet is real. The thing that drowns it again and again across centuries is what we are going to look at together. Not with anger. Not with despair. Just with eyes wide open.

Why does this keep looping. Why do the same patterns simply put on different clothes generation after generation. And what happens when you finally stop looking away.

Take a breath. The mirror is waiting.

It is About This!

Take a moment and sit with that quiet inside you. The one that sometimes whispers something is off, only to be pushed down so the day can keep moving. That whisper is the clue. Because the pattern we just glimpsed is not random. Have you ever sat outside in the sun, in the quiet, watching bees buzzing around or ants trailing in lines? I was doing that one day, just letting my mind wander.

I was contemplating a beehive. The hive is not just a structure the bees build. Those little insects come together into something bigger. An emergent superorganism, existing at a different level altogether. The bees do not know the hive as a whole. They follow simple instincts. Local signals. Yet the colony as a whole decides things, finds food, defends itself, and adapts to crises. It behaves like it has a mind of its own that none of the bees can see.

But what kind of mind? Does it show some emergent intelligence? Smarter than any single bee, perhaps. Yet without thinking the way we do. Without our sense of consciousness.

But it got me thinking. What if we are like the bees? Humans are social creatures too. Way more complicated than bees or ants. Our brains link through words, stories, traditions, and now all this digital hum. What if populations combine into a larger collective mind? A seemingly blind force with no centre.

If we are part of a superorganism like that, could it help make sense of things that seem to have poor answers? I have often wondered why obviously pathological personality types like narcissists and psychopaths keep emerging from the gene pool. Why wouldn't evolution weed them out? Why does politics feel like an endless tug-of-war, pulling us in circles without real resolution except for the idea that those that came before were ignorant beasts? Why does our moral compass shift so wildly over a few years, and why do we try to deny it? What was monstrous yesterday becoming normal today and vice versa. Surely from the future, we are all monsters! Why do we repeat history's horrors, dressed only in new clothes, as if we learn nothing.

And God? If we are cells in a larger blind thing, what does that do to the idea of a central mind watching over us? A "divine plan"? This purpose from above too complex for us to see or understand but also at the same time totally believable?

Those questions linger. They sit there in the sun with you.

Maybe this force is blind and just moves around bumping into things. Like some kind of blind worm in the dark soil. No eyes, no plan, just persistence. Adjusting when it hits a wall. Keeping the whole catastrophe going somehow. As our imagination is only taking its very first glimpse here, maybe this grubby worm might evolve into something more sophisticated as we press on.

And think about the ants again. Their hill gets flooded or destroyed—everything swept away. Yet they do not panic or give up. They form living rafts with their own bodies to float the colony to safety. If the queen is lost, they raise a new one. Then they start building again. A new city, the same pattern, as if nothing had happened. No plan or memory of the flood. Just persistence! The colony endures, even when the old structure is gone.

What if the colony does not just get food? What if it raids weaker hives, enslaves other ants, swarms and destroys threats to persist? What if those pheromone trails sometimes loop the ants into endless death spirals, circling blindly till exhaustion claims them? We seem driven to do that too, before rationalising it away to our wonderful selves.

And those individual bees and ants — the workers, soldiers, drones, queens. What if our genome keeps throwing out "different" minds like that? Autism for intense focus, psychopathy for fearless decisions, narcissism for bold leadership, dyslexia for visual-spatial edge, OCD for vigilant checking — traits that do not always thrive individually but sometimes give the herd an edge in crises?

What would our version look like to something that could see it? Not the sprawling cities, advancing disposable tech or polluting litter. Those are just like the anthill, the trace left behind. The real superorganism is the vast web of our interconnected minds, ideas spreading like pheromone trails, culture humming unseen. Why don't we see more of it? Maybe evolution hides it behind a veil, so we keep playing our parts — acting like individuals, just like the bees and ants.

Is this what old stories like the Garden of Eden were getting at? That bite of knowledge lifting the veil on the machinery. That horrific twist away from simple innocence that you can never unsee.

Keep wondering and it starts to look like we are some kind of augmented ape. Hacked by evolution with a brain upgrade. Connected through what we think are our own minds. But really a bit like bees. Working away in our roles. Oblivious to the larger structure. Chasing resources, dominance, sex. Dressing those drives in stories of progress and purpose. To feel like we have risen above it all. We still behave like augmented chimps. Vicious when the herd smells weakness, quick to cull the slow or different so the pack keeps moving.

The stories fade. Generations rewrite them. Believe they are final. Have you ever caught yourself in that loop? The roar winning. The quiet fading. Yet deep down sensing this larger twist pulling the strings.

Maybe this is all just a dream under the sun. But once you muse on it, the questions keep coming. And the pattern starts to feel real.

This is not about answers landing heavy. It is about wondering clearly. The chapters ahead will explore these questions, one devastating turn at a time.

Summary of Chapter 1: The Augmented Ape – Our Primal Foundation and Evolutionary Deception

The mirror cracks.

This chapter forces us to meditate on what we really are: augmented apes. Primates with a brain upgrade that lets us weave beautiful stories of superiority, civilisation, and progress—while chasing the same old instincts for hunger, dominance, and survival.

The sour realisation hits fast: evolution did not erase the ape. It amplified it. Every triumph we tell ourselves begins to taste like ash when ordinary cruelty stares back from the mirror.

Through our closest cousins the chimpanzees, we see betrayal in action. Weakness is targeted, alliances fleeting, the loud conformity— (we name it the “Roar”)— enforcing erosion to keep the group moving. In our human herds, it is no different. Discrimination, oppression, silence, disgust at the sick or different, dressed as necessity.

The brain upgrade unlocks awe as much as it rouses horror. An amplified Augmented Ape, master of self-deception. Oblivious of its terrifying capacity for annihilation as it hides behind words like success, justice, progress, and love.

Sit with that.

The Ape is dangerous, intelligent, stupid and afraid.

Yet something small flickers beneath the Roar.

The journey deeper begins now.

Chapter 1: The Augmented Ape. Our Primal Foundation and Evolutionary Deception

The Mirror moment

To begin, we need to look again at what it means to be human. Step away from the idea that we are the divine summit in God's effort to bring something wonderful to the universe, or evolution's finished masterpiece we have so often been told. The truth may be something less grand, more akin to the nature we used to see all around us. We may be very much more a part of nature than we like to feel... and not above it.

Diverging alongside other primates over millennia, enduring relentless survival pressure, the ancient body and brain remain largely untouched. As apes we embody those same deep instincts. Hunger, fear, dominance, lust, alongside an enlarged prefrontal cortex. This crowns us with the sensation that we exist differently to the animals around us. Heaven's gift of transcendence? No. A hacked deviation, enabled to invent deceptions that cloak the same old primate drives in narratives. Narratives that also intertwine us in a very deep and profound way to the others in our tribe. Stories that whisper we are above it all. Civilised. Set apart from the wild things. The herd needs those stories. They bind us tight.

Did your awareness bump against something here? It is not often we recognise this graft did not erase our ape. It put us in clothes with an obligatory large mirror to hide behind.

This realisation sours the taste of every story we tell about ourselves. Every triumph. Every moral certainty. Every quiet unease.

Sit with it. Feel how ordinary you suddenly are...

Primate Roots - Chimps and the Raw Roar

Let us take a closer look at our *closet* cousins the chimpanzees. They survive in troops with unstable alliances, relentless politics, raw hierarchy. If any member dares show weakness, illness, injury, low status, the group does not simply ignore it. It often attacks. Lower-ranking chimps bite, chase, beat the faltering one toward the dangerous edges of the territory. Former grooming partners join the pile-on. Alphas exploit the moment to remind everyone who is on top. Anyone who survives this push to the fringe becomes the first to be picked off by rival tribes. Weakness is targeted. Opportunity is seized. The loud conformity of the troop rises to enforce it. Hierarchical status adjusts as weak spots are eradicated. The group stays fast. These manoeuvres are primal, ferocious, and blind. No malice in the human sense. Just the ape instinct administering the congregation.

We are not so different in our herded workplaces, families, friend groups, national identities. Dare show hints of weakness through infirmity, doubt, difference, failure, and the loud conformity intensifies. Alphas above exploit it. Peers below betray it. The whole pack circles. The throng is not always violent. Usually, it swarms in silence and exclusion. Gossip and allegation amass to annihilate the member. The loud

conformity dresses it up. "They weren't pulling their weight." "They brought it on themselves." "We have to think of the team." This is our shared blind ape instinct. Attrition disguised as necessity.

Think what happens when weakness presents as disease. A cough that lingers. A limp that slows the pace. A mind that fogs and falters. The herd feels it before it thinks it. Disgust rises quick as an instinctive sour in the gut. Not reasoned hatred. That comes later, cloaked in a compassionate narrative. For now, it is just the old primate signal. This one carries risk, disease, delay. Death encroaches closer to the pack. The loud conformity dresses it up in modern veils of concern, boundaries, self-care, quiet exclusion. Underneath the ape is still twisting away. Stepping back and pushing harder. Shunning with Malicious gossip. Subtle sabotage so the group can keep moving faster.

Can you be honest with yourself about that disgust that rose in you toward someone slower, sicker, different? Was it aimed at you, even when the words were kind? Did you catch the quick flip where compassion curdled into suspicion? Sit with it. It is the ape under the mirror, hungry, wild, and afraid. Just following orders.

The Brains Clever Graft - Augmentation and Illusion layer

Let us think more about this brain upgrade as another of evolution's sneaky little tricks.

On one side it unlocks fascinations no other beast interacts with. Think about how awe-inspiring language is. So much more complex than the grunts, barks, and unlikely songs of our ancient ape ancestors. Words that weave stories that become animated in our minds. Mythologies reaching across generations, cultures, and long-conquered territories. Chronicles that turn a handful of humble hunters into proud nations.

Imagine if you can, anything at all outside of a story narrative. Raw sensational existence without a thread providing continuity of meaning. Imagine a list, isolated from any meaningful context, slipping away from memory on the tide of unendurable boredom. See how quickly the mind drifts back to story. It cannot help itself. Only a compelling narrative can lay down the one-dimensional path that collects and holds all the facts you store.

These narratives are the only bridge between unconnected minds. Picture the alien visceral sensation of encountering an uncontacted tribe. These strangers could become familiar acquaintances with nothing more than a few shared sentences or gestures. That is, if you shared any common internal narrative. In reality, without that bridge, one would likely kill the other. That is the double-edged sword of the graft at work.

These adaptations allowed humans to flood the world and lay waste to all the large mammals. Thrive in ice wastes and burning deserts. Build towers that scrape the sky.

But the other side cuts deep. The same clever graft that makes all this possible also makes us exceptionally good at lying. Mostly to ourselves. The Ape is not erased, it is amplified with the same old Ape drives, chasing status, sex, and safety in the herd.

Cloaked in beautiful words like "success, love, justice, progress." Existing perpetually on the right side of history.

Sit with that. Like how the towers scratch the sky, our chronicles run deep into our DNA. An ape amplified, voracious, feral, anxious. Yet somewhere beneath the Roar, something small flickers. A quiet nag. A whisper that something is off. Easily drowned most of the time, but there.

The journey deeper begins now.

Chapter 2 Summary: The Cycle of Monsters – Ordinary Hands, Temporary Truths

Think about the story you tell yourself.

Monsters are out there. Obvious. Different. Born wrong. You are the decent one. The one who would have stood against it if you'd been there.

It feels obvious.

But what if the truth is quieter than that?

What if the hands that did the worst things looked exactly like yours?

Very different to the cartoonish villains in books. Ordinary people. One step, then another. Hesitation turning into routine. Belonging drowning doubt until the quiet voice inside barely whispers.

The patient mechanics of capitulation feels so different to the evil we're taught to expect. It hums now in group chats, workplace silences, and the subtle tightening of a circle when someone can't keep up.

And sometimes, the quiet question survives.

You know what you have done?

Chapter 2: The Cycle of Monsters. Ordinary Hands, Temporary Truths

The Mirror Moment

A quiet chat in a desolate building with an old friend now in his sixties. Over cold coffee, he discloses the chronic regret that has festered for fifty years. In an all-Christian school heavy in the Roar of conformity, he joined the herd bullying the lone Jewish boy. The standard gas jokes of the time, casual cruelty dressed up as "just how things are." The boy's frightened eyes downcast, shoulders in their now usual hunch under the weight, history, and isolation. The pack laughed, drowning any quiet internal doubt.

It weighs heavy on him now, the old child's mortification. But why only now? There is something in the air now resurrecting the once *quiet voice* that gently nagged at him back then.

The **Roar** of that era, baked into cruel school norms and unspoken prejudices, drowned out any *quiet voice* of compassion. Turning ordinary kids into unwitting "eroders" of those at the edges of the herd.

Think back to the slave-owner cracking the whip across a sweat-soaked back of a now "contacted" tribe. Blistering in the fields, human property chained, families torn apart as they were introduced to "civilization." We saw that almost in real time before doubting the history where the camp guard herded families into gas chambers. Those ordinary hands flipping ordinary switches making ordinary mountains of corpses because "orders".

Feel the righteous disgust boil. "I could never... I wish I had been there to stop it!" But pause here, in this mirror moment.

Add this to the reflection. How do you look in the mirror, clothes stitched by hands in faraway factories enduring slave-like conditions. Today's **Roar** calls it "necessary progress" or "affordable convenience." Facts stare back. Children labouring in cobalt mines for the battery in your phone as you are scrolling past the migrant crisis news.

Can you feel the opposite of a shock surprise revelation as you read this?

Think about all the times you have been part of something like that? If you can. A group pile-on at work, a silent nod to exclusion in a social circle. That small quiet nagging inside, only to be pushed aside because "everyone else is doing it." That is the same quiet drowned in the slave-owner, as well as the guard that certainly existed.

The Myth of the Monster

The comforting story we tell ourselves is simple and naive. There are monsters and there are good people. Monsters are born different, twisted from the start, evil to the core. Good people like us somehow are beyond that line (no matter how many times we cross it). We watch documentaries about the Holocaust, read about the slave trade, see grainy footage of lynchings, scroll past the persistent modern-day

equivalents on our phones, casually horrified. If only we could rid the world of these monsters. Wipe their disgusting smiles off the face of the earth, they are nothing like us?

Consider Reserve Police Battalion 101, the “Ordinary Men” Christopher Browning studied in his book of the same name. Average middle-aged working-class German, truck drivers, bakers, office clerks, family men, who had never fired a shot in anger. We can know they were “ordinary” as all the violent, psychopathic, or ideological fanatics were drawn to the SS and other such divisions. In 1942, these reservists were sent to Poland with orders to round up and shoot Jewish villagers. No special training, just orders. Commanders had even offered them the unusual chance to opt out, with no punishment, just a quiet release. Few took it. If you read the book, you can learn this was because they never wanted to let their colleagues down. That is the **Roar** in the group all around them.

At first many were hesitant, with some vomiting and others silently crying. The Roar, ever patient, relentlessly took them there one small drunken step at a time. “Everyone is doing it.” “These are the orders.” “If you don't do your bit, someone else will have to.” “letting comrades down!” One by one, yielding till by the end they had murdered over 38,000 men, women, and children. Most were shot at close range in pits they had to dig themselves. Not because they were sadists. Not because they hated Jews more than the average German did. But because the **Roar** drowned the *quiet* voice screaming this was wrong.

My friend in the schoolyard? He was not born cruel. He was not a monster waiting to emerge. He was an ordinary boy in an ordinary school, with the **Roar** of the time's norms. Anti-Semitism still half-normalised, a bit like today, where difference is targeted. Violence feels like belonging. The *quiet* voice was there as it is now. A faint, twisting in the gut that you can try silence with extra cruelty on the victim you blame. But belonging with all its vehemence is so much more satiating. So, we never stop yielding! Again, and again.

The monster myth protects us for a while as the weak are trampled upon and forgotten in their horror.

The Roar's Mechanism – How It Happens

Let us add one more layer to what we saw in Chapter 1. The **Roar** is not a booming voice controlling drone apes. In the same way that our disguised primal instincts drive us to shift alliances, betraying the weak to edge closer to the centre. Similarly, the **Roar** has its own competing trajectories, splintering and clashing like rival forces testing which path survives. Almost like it has a life force of its own.

In our minds we can imagine a troop of fifty chimps that have fragmented into two main subgroups. One faction backs a brutal rising alpha (the Roar of aggression), another is behind a clever alliance-builder (the Roar of strategy). They ferociously war for control, betraying the weak or isolated as the internal hierarchy of the troop adjusts. The blind mathematics of group survival mechanism at work in the bloodied flying fur and screaming of the canopy. For the survivors of the defeated, they are

either exiled or exist at the dangerous edge of the colony, and the troop persists with a newly invigorated core.

In the politics of human apes, pro- and anti-factions clash, with each amplifying its own Roar. Sometimes this takes the form of fear and conformity on one side, change, and rebellion on the other. In the benign case war takes place in the abstract, until one curtails the other via an election. Sometimes the shift is through unrest, social collapse, hot war with all its death. In the schoolyard of my friend's memory, **mini-Roars** competed. The dominant Christian conformity of the time drowned quieter doubts to betray the Jewish boy as "other" in its effort to "fortify" the herd.

When it happens, the disgust and fear rise quickly in us as an instinctive sour twisted hatred. Our primate signal co-opted for moral culls, dressed as "concern" or "boundaries" that flip compassion into suspicion and then betrayal.

This devastation and renewal arrives in a temporary, horribly obvious truth of the age, rich in ready-made excuses, as we override our previously lauded morals. "It's the particular year!" "For the greater good, to right a previous injustice!" "Those disgusting rabble deserve it after what they did in the past!" The Roar shields the emotion. This allows nuance to be the first casualty, before embracing brutality without horror or guilt. Often with pride and joy. The herd moving forward, faster, unburdened

The *quiet* voice inside us lifts that shield, forcing the awful question: "What have they... we... I done?" Most of the time, the competing **Roars** are too loud. The *quiet* voice gets drowned below the waves of adrenaline, hatred, fear and belonging. All nicely wrapped up into the fragile permissive ideology of the moment we are now subscribing to. It waits, faint and persistent, pulling down on your delicate ego for the right moment to bump the path forward in a better direction.

Friendship – A Mirror Moment

There is a learning moment here if we dare to face it. We usually learn how transactional our friendships are as we find ourselves at the edge of them. That warm family-like feeling while you're the laugh or the sober ride home. Become chronically ill and watch that party move on. In that quiet time when your phone never rings, you realise what you never saw in front of your eyes. How easy and quick, and what it felt like pushing the others out that went before you. Like the defeated chimp with the dull coat, appetite gone and flat eyes, waiting for its neighbour's shove. There is a weird freedom if you don't beg or chase, just let go. No resentment or rage in the awareness as you move sideways or down.

In the same way, don't form too much attachment as you find your way moving toward the centre of the tribe either. The centre is just the loudest spot where the **Roar** is thickest. You feel chosen, alive, safe. The moment your contribution drops, a new favourite with a new story and new energy emerges. The vibe shifts. The circle closes behind you. It's the same equation. Only the direction changes. So, give what you can while you're there but hold it lightly. The herd doesn't love. It moves. And you can dance with it or beside it without pretending it's forever.

Erosion & Restoration – The Full Cycle

We have seen how the **Roar** operates: patient, relentless, splintering into competing forces that test and prune until one path survives. But the mechanism is not one-sided. There is erosion — and there is restoration.

The **Roar** erodes. It betrays, isolates, discards. In the chimp troop, the weak are shoved to the edge or attacked outright — not from hatred, but from the blind math of speed and survival. In human tribes, the same happens: the colleague's schoolyard pack turned on the Jewish boy to fortify the centre; the Battalion 101 men yielded step by step until murder became routine; the workplace faction gossips and sabotages to gain favour.

We have all been part of that erosion. We have laughed to drown the doubt. We have stayed silent when someone was shoved to the edge. We have added one small jab, one nod, one scroll-past — and felt the quiet nag twist, only to push it down because belonging felt safer. We have been the **Roar** ourselves.

Ordinary hands. Our hands.

As you read this, you hear a *quieter* voice that restores. It does not roar back. It does not demand statues or vindication. It lifts the shield and forces the question: "What have I done?" Then it acts quietly, locally, at great cost.

Imagining my friend was able in his aged competence and physical prowess to return to that schoolyard. A proud YouTube moment, standing defiant, screaming about the injustice of it all. A moment certain to earn him the mark of a traitor, deserving of more violence. He would be eroded fast, ostracised, and soon regret ever stepping out of line.

The quiet pivot is smaller, subtler, more survival shaped. A quiet word to the boy during recess ("Ignore them, come sit with me?"). A deflection in the moment ("Come on, he's not bothering anyone"). A whisper to one ally ("what if this ever happened to us?").

These moves do not rewrite history in one stroke. They do not get statues. They create a tiny pocket of restoration making one person a little less eroded.

The **Roar** erodes for speed. The quiet restores for persistence.

We have been the monster more often than we can face.

Creator's Note: Dancing the Coil While Hearing the Roar

I am aware of the paradox this work presents. It warns that "greatness" is often a seductive call from the **Roar**. A subscription promising peace through impact, but delivering imbalance, isolation, and erosion. Yet here I am, creating a large-scale philosophical meditation and album, stepping onto an intellectual mine of my own making. If the insights champion the unknown enlightened finding serenity in ordinary wonder, then why am I stepping on this at all?

The answer is simple and human. Since August 2022, long COVID (ME/CFS) has kept me ill most days with brain fog, exhaustion, and a life stripped of the busy routines I once filled my life with. Everything slowed. The roar of constant motion fell silent. In that emptiness, this project has become the first intellectual thing that has lifted my spirits. It gave half-formed ideas shape and solidity. For the first time in a few years, I have had periods where I can think clearly, explore, and create again. The quiet joy of putting words to the musings has become the real reward. Like always, there is no external reward, but the process fills a void that illness had brought. Life feels mostly empty when fog steals the days. I take excitement where it blooms.

So, I dance when I can on these pages