

# ADVERSUS VERITATIS CONTEMPTORES

**A meditation on the practice and propagation of untruth,  
its power over innocent, confused, and desperate minds,  
its evil tactics, its grave consequences for the greater community,  
and the way toward defeating such evil.**

Dedicated to

Christopher C. Cuomo, who regularly reminded us of the alarming stakes for our nation—for its democracy and its soul—and ultimately for the whole world, in permitting the cancer of unceasing falsehood and malicious invective to go unchallenged. His stark warnings and his perceptive citing of Voltaire on the imminent danger of falling for what is patently absurd, inspired this writing.

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# The Darkness

*Those who can make you believe absurdities,  
Can make you commit atrocities*  
–Voltaire

## Ignorance

blooms, blissful, in the fallow fields of minds uncluttered by divergent points of view,  
a tempting fruit most prized for its naïve unwariness by scoundrels hastening to harvest it,  
eager to exploit it for their own self-serving aims and add it to their arsenal of lies.

When plucked, it's like a supple lump of clay, malleable and yielding,  
but once seduced by fool's-gold fantasies spun by renegade gurus rife with guile,  
it harkens to those crafty ministrations unhampered by a doubt or second thought,

it cleaves to them with zeal unhesitating, and credits fabrications too preposterous to bear,  
and ripening in uncritical credulity, attracts the predatory eyes of opportunists ever  
quick to stoke its undiscerning fervor to a fever pitch and gain the day by:

marshalling venal media mercenaries, messengers of deceit  
to keep the feckless mob enthralled,  
exploiting legal loopholes and conundrums to  
evade the irritating strictures of the law,  
contriving unholy ploys and machinations to subvert  
the ever-inconvenient truth that bides nearby,  
deploying wantonly distorted rhetoric, and caricatures indecent and bizarre,  
theirs not to persuade, console, and uplift,  
but to degrade, disparage, and demean,

their callous indifference cloaked in pompous, self-congratulation,  
all to wreak havoc in the naked public square and cavort in the blistering chaos born  
of their unbridled, base ambition, their unsated lust for power and acclaim  
fueled by enough unbounded egotism to make Narcissus blush.

Behold, a legion of prevaricators who, like the demons in the Scriptures, come to feast  
on the frailty of human understanding and bear false witness without scruple  
undisturbed by honest pangs of conscience,

in whose ignoble ranks parade:  
false preachers, hypocrites and liars,  
charlatans, demagogues and rogues,  
inciting the masses cowed by fear and fiction to heinous deeds of infamy and shame.

Unrepentant and indifferent they ignore the ominous warning echoing  
even in the remotest corners of this afflicted land:

*"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"*

# The Dawn

*The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good;  
and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil.*

—St. Luke

Though in the darkness of Ignorance, that false bliss,  
the masters of mischief now rollick unrestrained,  
they won't prevail, they can't prevail, these minions of the gates of Hell,  
for righteousness divine resurging will purge in time this demon-ridden world of folly  
and quell the vainglorious rantings of unregenerate liars.

Hardy seeds of truth, though few, are strewn throughout the parched fields of ignorance  
waiting to be watered by belief in what is right,  
ready to sprout anew with hope and expectation:

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free,"  
Christ assures His followers, so may His words once more relieve  
the weary and bewildered multitudes desperate to be healed,  
for only truth is remedy for sickness  
caused by shameful, unrelenting mendacity.

And the prescription has been known from time long past:  
"Continually test and prove all things," prescribes Saint Paul,  
"Keep holding steadfast to the good – to what proves worthy."  
Good men, he vows, bring forth good from hearts replete with goodness,  
And goodness can't abide in chambers dark with  
deceit, vindictiveness, and lies.

Let champions of truth heed the call to solemn duty:  
to strive with lovingkindness and compassion  
to release into the light the yearning minds  
trapped in the sunless caves of ignorance,  
to guide them into the true light that dispels the clouds of unknowing  
and reveals the motley reality of this teeming world unfolding  
as Eternal Providence ordained it should,  
to open hesitant and fearful hearts and lead them forth with honest counsel  
to a new birth of freedom:  
freedom to celebrate our shared humanity with hearts and minds  
that honor truth, decency and justice  
over falsehood, slander and malice,  
and  
courage to face the harsh demands of trying times  
with patience, fortitude and faith,  
and  
wisdom to shun the chicanery of false prophets  
laden with hollow promises

born of crafty schemes for spoils at their expense.

*"Gnothi seauton,"* enjoins the Sage, *"Know thyself,"*  
for as the Poet declares: at the end of all our trials,  
we will discover the nation we are truly meant to be  
and know ourselves for the first time...

*And the truth shall make us free.*

RLM  
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