

So, What Did You Think Collapse Would Look Like?

Part Two (of Two)

by Bill Herbst

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The title of this commentary is a question I ask myself nearly every day, especially these days. For those of us who envision the downfall of the American Empire and Civilizational Collapse as probably inevitable (and perhaps even necessary), *what do we imagine Collapse will look like?* What factors will cause its onset? What shape will it take? And what will its initial and subsequent repercussions be for those of us directly in the path of any such devastating tidal wave?

Some people who have foreseen collapse imagine it as akin to the cataclysmic destruction of the Roman cities Pompeii and Herculaneum in 79 A.D. by the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius. They see the disaster as sudden and overwhelming. And certainly the recent devastating fires in California and Hawaii lend some credence to that kind of scenario. The poisoning of the natural world by human activity has long been a favorite presumed cause of Collapse among people who are worried about our shared future. One doesn't have to be a "doomer" to feel concern about anthropomorphic climate change, whatever shorthand name we might give it — global warming, greenhouse effect, planetary heating, etc.

Those who pooh-pooh catastrophic climate change as non-existent, irrelevant, or a conspiratorial hoax are simply not credible. If you're in that contingent, you can stop reading now (assuming you haven't already), because this commentary is not for you.

Another obvious collapse scenario is nuclear war. Only a small and dwindling percentage of human beings now alive were born before the Age of Nuclear Weapons began in 1945. The awareness of Nuclear Apocalypse has shaped all of our lives, and not in any sort of benign way. It has made us all, to one degree or another, less safe and more fearful, less sane and more crazy.

The specter of Nuclear Winter haunts billions of us like a collective bad dream. And we have come close to Nuclear Armageddon more times than we care to

admit. So far, we have won every game of Nuclear Russian Roulette, managing luckily to avoid pulling the trigger on the chamber that contains the live bullet. Still, the odds are not in our favor and worsen over time, especially as possession of nuclear weapons proliferates throughout the nations of the world.

Another similar scenario is the collision of an astronomical celestial body with the earth, much like the large asteroid that slammed into the Yucatan 65 million years ago and wiped out the dinosaurs. I've never worried about that specific possibility much because it's so completely beyond our control. We wouldn't be the cause of that event, and — despite Hollywood movies to the contrary — we couldn't do much if anything to stave it off should it actually become imminent.

A more recent entry in the Collapse sweepstakes is a global pandemic. I admit that Covid took me by surprise in 2020. Sure, I knew about the Spanish flu in 1918, but despite various publicized outbreaks — Asian flu in 1957, Cholera on a recurring basis, HIV/Aids in 1981, SARS in 2002, MERS in 2012, Ebola virus in 2014, and Zika virus in 2015 — I never focused on the possibility of a world-wide pandemic as a Collapse trigger or extinction event. Well, I guess I do now.

Having said all that, who among us would have seriously considered as recently as two years ago that one of the most despicable human beings on the planet would be re-elected to the U.S. presidency a second time, voted for by 77 million disgruntled and aggrieved American voters. Having suffered that insult, we all watched as Trump surrounded himself with unqualified sycophants and incompetent toadies, and then began an aggressive campaign to break every norm of American politics, neutralize the rule of law, and invalidate the Constitution by gutting all our institutions and setting himself up as Emperor.

And yet, even given all of that, no one I know was prepared for what happened on February 28th, 2026, when Trump ordered the American military to begin Operation Epic Fury and initiate the bombing of Iran with aircraft and missiles.

But anyway, back to my question — *What did I think Collapse would look like?*

Turns out that Collapse looks a helluva lot like what will follow Trump's War against Iran. Absolutely everything that has happened over the past month and a half is really bad for the U.S. — catastrophically bad, in fact. And with the exception of Iran, Russia, and China, it appears that the rest of the world won't get any benefits from this nightmare, either. It's hard to imagine that no one in the gung-ho-for-war contingent of the White House and the Beltway foresaw any of this coming to pass. Trump and Hegseth were easy marks, of course, led down the primrose path by that nutcase Zionist Bebe Netanyahu and the American neoconservative warmongers.

Even if the war were to end tomorrow, the results would still be terrible. Whatever the inherent vulnerabilities and increasing downsides of the global

economy might be, this American-Israeli attack on Iran has made prospects for our future immeasurably worse. The economic destruction already wrought cannot be undone or repaired for years to come. So far, the repercussions for ordinary Americans have been minimal — higher prices for everything, including spiking prices at the pump for gas and diesel. But these are only the beginning. What will follow over the months and years ahead will be much, much worse. Functionally, odds are quite high that this might represent the end of the global economy built over the past 40 years.

Those of us who are ordinary citizens in America are almost certainly in for a very bad time ahead, certainly as a serious recession, but even perhaps approaching the scale of the Great Depression. Runaway inflation, health care crises, farming and food devastation, and the possible dethroning of the U.S. dollar as the world's reserve currency are all either possible or likely. And other awful repercussions may occur.

Pax Americana is over, and our own government — the government Americans elected — killed it. I really don't want to lay all this at the feet of Donald J. Trump. Yes, he's delusional. Yes, he has dementia. Yes, all the cringing insanity of his entire woe begotten life has coalesced into a terrible, toxic stew. But even dictators need support, and the continuing fealty among Trump's hard-core vassals and peasant followers is a tough nut to crack. Yes, cracks have appeared in the MAGA base, but Trump is still surrounded by the aforementioned sycophants and toadies.

OK, I get it that Donald Trump is metaphorically the Anti-Christ. Whatever he touches dies. Everything he believes and does emanates from the darkest shadows of the American psyche. All of us in America are affected by this horrific psychic disturbance, even if we resist it in ourselves. We're all infected with the virus, not just the third of the American population that willingly makes up the MAGA Minions who rabidly support the Monster Trump is.

Assigning blame is risky business. Trump has always been nuts, so what did we expect? Yes, elected Republicans in Congress are cowards, but they are not wrong to fear Trump's wrath. Even the MAGA base can be defended somewhat. Anti-elite, anti-authority, and anti-intellectual sentiment is rampant among the American population, for both good and bad reasons. Yes, those in the MAGA cult may be guilty of throwing out the baby with the bathwater in their blind hatred of Dems, liberals, and the Left, but the bathwater America left them with over the past 40 years was really stinky. So, while I am no fan of MAGA, I stop short of tarring those people with too broad a brush. They bear partial responsibility for our predicament, but then so do the rest of us.

At the root, Trump seems to me merely the convenient instrument that Collapse is using, and through which Collapse is manifesting more and more obviously. It's as if evil were an actual entity, a palpable presence in the ether. Whether

that is more metaphorical than tangible I cannot tell, but something about the evil of our current times seems very real to me.

Right now, there's little relief in discussing how Collapse could or might lead way down the road to a renewal of human evolution through the restart of a kinder and gentler civilization. Yes, that reset remains a possibility even now, as we have been nearly overwhelmed by darkness, although no one can say what the odds might be of something like that emerging eventually. We've even seen signs that a bottom may have been reached, as people begin to stand up and actively say no to evil. Still, we are not yet out of the woods, and the dawn of a new day will probably not happen tomorrow. At this point, what the vast majority of us are facing is the increasing likelihood of prolonged and perhaps significant suffering.

Yes, that sucks, and I'm not thrilled to be writing this. But here we are. So, gird your loins, hunker down, and love each other as much and as well as you can. Compassion, forgiveness, and good heartedness continue to exist among human beings, even in terrible times such as this. Such positive expressions may seem dormant at present, but they are real and alive nonetheless, just hidden mostly from view.

Evil is having its day, as it has so often before throughout human history, but evil cannot ultimately win. Goodness perseveres. Love and Humility continue no matter what. Just as even the best intentions cannot permanently eradicate evil from the world, so evil, no matter how cruel and bloodthirsty, cannot eliminate goodness.

They are both intertwined in the Tao.

End, Part Two.