

# Against the Sword

by [Joshua C. Frank](#) (January 2024)



Anguish— August Friedrich Schenck, 1878

## Against the Sword

When boys are told they're useless and no good,  
And girls are pushed away from motherhood,  
Told children aren't a blessing, but a blight,  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

When mothers have careers as if they're men,  
And every cultural mouthpiece says Amen  
To children only having moms at night,  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

When fathers lose their children to divorce

As slaves lost theirs when sold, just like a horse,  
Or worse, to their own wives' abortion "right,"  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

When Christians must deny their faith's beliefs  
To keep their jobs because of left-wing beefs  
And thus submit to rainbow-colored spite,  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

When rainbow flags eclipse the church's steeple,  
And priests preach leftist lies to media-sheep  
And from the faithful few obscure the light,  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

When people claim oppression, despite all gains,  
While new oppressed must suffer silent pains,  
I'll be the voice of victims leftists slight—  
To fight the power, I fetch my pen and write.

## **Story Time**

The father, he sits on the couch with a book,  
A child in each arm, and one more on his knees;  
The mother, the same. All the other ones look  
Content on the floor; he recites like a breeze.

He changes his voice for each character's lines,  
Whether child or lion or grandma or elf,  
And changes his face as an actor designs  
When quotation marks signal to be a new self.

As he acts, all the listeners picture the scenes  
While the words are transporting them all many places.  
The images show on their own mental screens:  
The farmhouse, the castle, the characters' faces.

These books are their movies, their history tome,  
Their lessons in civics, religion, and right,  
And bonding together with family at home.  
Light fades while they're listening, night after night.

After ten thousand nights touring narrative trails,  
The decades have vanished, the children are grown,  
And all look back fondly on a thousand great tales;  
They continue the story-time nights with their own.

### **Colorblind**

I know a poet dealing with derision  
For writing of a woman's supple skin  
Whose hue he hopes will fill his field of vision—  
To say what color's now a racist sin!

For when he praised her cherry-blossom pink,  
They cried white privilege, said it's lacking grace,  
Yet when it's skin of maple or black ink,  
They censure him for fetishizing race!

Alas, a man can't wax poetic when  
Her skin tone is the trait he dare not name.  
I miss the golden, olden days when men  
Wrote brazen praise of women, free of shame!

At least the man who loves a girl with freckles  
Can rave about her pretty little speckles.

### **The Choice**

*I would happily give up absolutely any comfort or*

*convenience [sic] to have my [then seven, now ten] children. I'd eat beans and rice in a trailer with them in a heartbeat. –Kendra Tierney, blogger at Catholic All Year*

*I*

I could move out of my trailer  
Eat some meat and veggies too  
Buy a bed from a retailer  
Rent a penthouse with a view  
I could visit somewhere sunny  
Buy some clothes without the holes  
But instead I spend my money  
Raising ten immortal souls!

*II*

We live in a trailer and eat beans and rice.  
You say our ten children have made us too poor?  
Then the life of the rich comes at too high a price,  
For family's the gift that shall always endure.

## **Crosses and Losses**

I tried to write a poem to acclaim  
The passion flashing like a lightning strike  
Between a man and woman, though the same  
Return to normal from a single spike.

It's hard to say true love is like those hearts  
Of valentines and candies from the store  
When sugar hearts will mush and crush to parts  
And passion pledges turn to total war.

Not so the lifelong love that doesn't end;  
The sacrifice preserves it from decay.  
It knows a life commitment must transcend

The fleeting feelings from a heart at play.

I'd rather write of love that lasts through losses—  
For you alone, I've borne a thousand crosses.

### **Censored Beauty**

The modern reader's such a prude,  
He'll brand me both depraved and crude  
If I should write about conception,  
Where sperm and egg become one flesh  
And both their genes together mesh  
To cause a human life's inception—  
Unless I preach the modern creed  
That women just need men for seed.

Without this prudishness of others,  
I'd write of pregnant and nursing mothers,  
Of how through womb (and later, breast),  
Just as her body's made to do  
(Though saying so is now taboo),  
A mother feeds her honored guest.  
The only pregnancy they'll fail  
To censor is a pregnant "male."

But God keeps calling me to write  
The Truth I see beneath His light.  
I won't deign to accept a duty  
Not to trespass from the box  
Of placid verse that never shocks;  
I won't stop writing truth as beauty.  
They always say, "Write what you know."  
I know His Truth; that's what I show.

## Let There Be Light

A friend put forward that I write  
Of light that flashes at conception,  
Of fireworks when genes unite  
In the woman's body, out of sight,

And God decrees, "Let there be light!"  
And greets His child with great reception,  
And the zygote's surface flashes white  
In space that's darker far than night.

My friend turned out not to be right,  
Fell victim to a science deception.  
Yet still, God sets each soul alight  
And in all His children takes delight.

## [Table of Contents](#)

**Joshua C. Frank** works in the field of statistics and lives in the American Heartland. His poetry has been published in *The Society of Classical Poets*, *Snakeskin*, *The Lyric*, *Sparks of Calliope*, *Westward Quarterly*, *Atop the Cliffs*, *Our Day's Encounter*, *The Creativity Webzine*, *Verse Virtual*, and *The Asahi Haikuist Network*, and his short fiction has been published in *Nanoism* and *The Creativity Webzine*. His website is [here](#).

Follow NER on Twitter [@NERIconoclast](#)