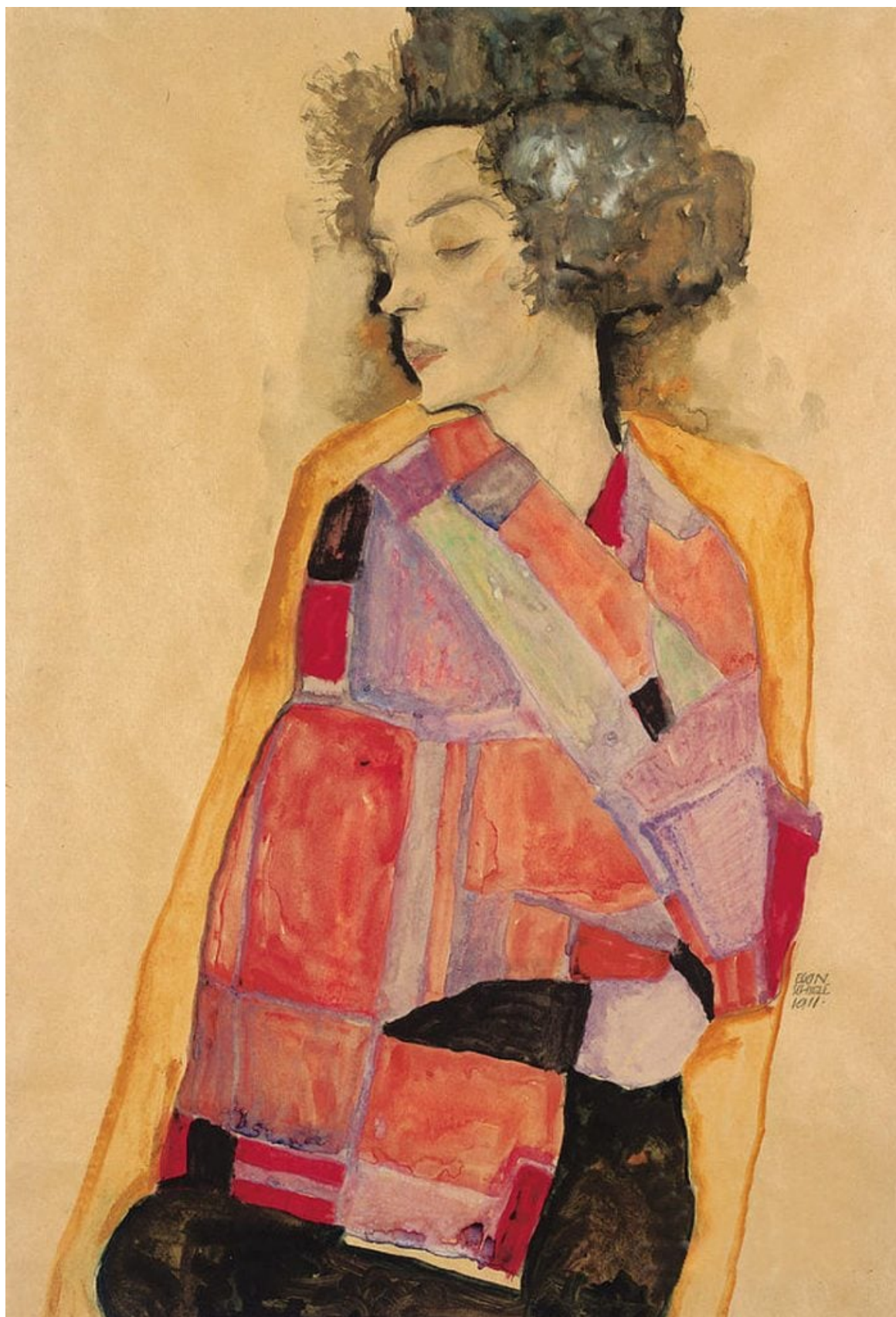


Seer

by [Doug Hawley](#) (June 2024)



Dreaming Woman— Egon Schiele, 1911

An attractive man knocked on the door at 8AM and I invited him in. He was dressed as a successful business man. The visitor said “Hi, I’m Fred Winkins.”

I responded “No, you’re not. You are Jay Hatton.”

“Holy crap, how did you know? Did my friend Sam tell you I was coming?”

I continued looking out the window. “Sam, the one you think doesn’t know his wife is sleeping with you?”

“OK, I’ll admit it, you are a good psychic.”

“I prefer seer.”

“Now that my charade is over, why aren’t you looking at a crystal ball? I thought all psychics, I mean seers, used them.”

“Any so-called psychic using a crystal ball is a fake. Most of us who are real use something else. I look through my flawed mostly opaque window. That window is clear to me because I’ve got the sight. Right now a dog is dumping in my yard. I’ll take care of it later.”

“But can you tell my future by using that window?”

I look at the window. “If you want to keep your marriage, I know that you better not see Sam’s wife again. He’s thinking about telling your wife about the affair. You have some good news. The future is malleable and fluid—Sam really loves his wife Jean, if you break up with her, he may change his mind about starting a chain reaction of breakups. He loves his wife and doesn’t want to give her up.”

If Jay noticed me blinking as I looked outward, he didn’t say

anything. I had just seen a momentary vision of fire.

“How will my career progress?”

This time I looked out the window for a minute, closed my eyes and looked again. Nothing seemed out of order this time. I had more good news. “Your future can take one of two paths. If you continue to work as a numbers guy at Consolidated Fiduciary Insurance you can get regular promotions and increases in pay. You will be bored to tears. If you continue to write and finish that novel you’ve been working on for three years and get a good agent, you will become a best seller and stay on the list with a series of winners. Depends on your choice.”

Jay appeared more engaged than he had been. His face lit up like a child at Christmas.

“How about the stock market?”

“There are some things I cannot see,” I lied.

“I guess I’ve got a lot to think about. I can see I need to clean up my act. What do I owe you?”

“Two hundred dollars.”

“For ten minutes? That’s twelve hundred dollars an hour.”

“Well worth it if you use what you learned here.”

“I guess that’s right.”

He paid and left.

I was still in my walk-in hours looking out the window when I heard another knock. I went to the door and told a little guy to go away.

“Why? I haven’t done anything wrong.”

“I’m not a prostitute you little jerk. This is a legitimate business. I tell the future, not perform sex for money.”

“How did you know I thought I could get laid here? Oh, that’s right, you’re a psychic.”

“You got that wrong too, I’m a seer.”

As he wandered away, I wondered if I should have posted ads posing in less revealing clothing.

I didn’t get any more walk-in business before my 10:00 appointment.

Jane wondered if she should stick with her boyfriend.

My view out the window was bad news. Her boyfriend was a serial cheater who stole from his girlfriends. It wasn’t any fun giving out bad news.

“I’m sorry Jane, but Duke will break your heart and leave you broke. I’m sure you can do better.”

Jane gawped at me and said “Duke was my previous boyfriend. I knew enough to break up with him within three months.”

OK, I make mistakes. Something had ruined my concentration. I looked out the window again and saw Gary, her current boyfriend. A regular boy scout—well groomed, smart, loyal, and all the other good qualities. Gary’s friends and family all doted on Jane.

I apologized and was happy to give Gary my seal of approval.

I had a little time to relax before my next client and decided to take a quick nap. Before I closed my eyes, I looked out my window and was horrified.

Earlier I’d been distracted by a quick flash of flames that I

saw through my window. This time I saw the whole picture. The sun was going supernova. The earth and the rest of the solar system would be turned to cinders. I couldn't be sure of the timing, but it would happen within the next year. As I told Mr. Hatton, the future is fluid and malleable. The latest sight cancels all the others.

I cancelled all of my appointments, closed the office and bought several bottles of my favorite bourbon and two hundred pounds of my favorite chocolates. I'll enjoy the time I have left before doomsday.

The guy who wanted to get laid called me up. He apologized about ten times, said his parents didn't raise him like that. I asked him if he liked bourbon and chocolate. He was a bit taken aback, but he said "You just named my favorites." I didn't have anyone else to spend the rest of my life with, so I invited him to my place. He screwed up once, but he should get a second chance.

Jody and I are enjoying the last days more than I thought possible even though he is little guy. A talented little guy that likes to give as well as take. He acts like I'm a gift from God. I treat him every few days by putting on the outfit that he saw in that advertisement. If he notices what the chocolate and bourbon have done to my body, he's too polite to mention it. The circumstances and timing of finding the love are indeed odd.

See you on the other side.

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Doug Hawley is a former mathematician turned actuary (mathemortician) who writes, snowshoes, volunteers and hikes.

He was a volunteer wheelchair jockey (pusher, roll model, unpaid escort) at a hospital, greeter at the Marine Mammal Center, “control” in a balance study at OHSU and docent at China Camp in California, and now is ... a volunteer book seller in support of his local library and a killer of invasive species at Tryon State Park and Lake Oswego’s Iron Mountain Park. He lives with editor and musician Sharon, and cat Kitzhaber. He currently resides in Lake Oswego, OR, but has lived all over the United States.

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