

The One who hacks our data

By [David Williams](#)

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Ashley Madison was evil.

I know, that's judgey of me, and I shouldn't go hatin', but [Ashley Madison](#) was—and I suppose still is—an evil thing. The whole idea of the website, which actively encourages and facilitates extramarital affairs? Evil, if the word evil is considered to have any meaning at all. The entire point of Ashley Madison was betrayal of the trust of another person, and the active violation of a commitment you have made to another soul. Evil was their business model.

If the point of a thing is breaking a promise, and the secretive and self-absorbed betrayal of another, that's a fundamental Golden Rule violation. This odd enterprise was a creature of the dark, relying on the promise of shadows to aid in the deceiving of others, yours for just a couple of hundred bucks. So millions did, millions of lonely, bitter, jaded, horny fools.

And then the whole mess got hacked, as a coven of cheesed-off netmages absconded with their precious data, and made that information available to everyone and anyone. The things Ashley Madison's clientele thought were forever hidden in shadows are now right out there for anyone to see.

The business is doomed, as the gullibility necessary to line up marks in a good confidence scheme has shattered.

There's been some complaining, on the part of those exposed and humiliated, complaints about data privacy that usually begin with something like "setting morality aside for a minute" or "forgetting about the ethical dimension for a moment." Which is more than faintly ironic. There have been a few moderately high-profile hypocrites ensnared.

It'd be easy, oh so easy, to feel a little karmic-gloaty right about now.

In reflecting on this event, though, what convicts my mystic soul is how much this debacle is an in-a-mirror-darkly image of my theology.

Because so many of us have our secrets, our shames, our not-the-best moments. We carry around our blind obsessions and our trivial angers, and let them fester in the shadows of our souls. We have cheated, if not in the flesh, then in [our spirit and in our desire](#). We have murdered, if not with guns and knives, then in the flamethrower hatred of our imaginations.

We don't want anyone to know those things about us. We want that data secured, locked away in the deep encryption of our shadow-selves. Which is why we're so very screwed.

Because not only is this truth etched into being, it's fully within the knowledge of our Creator, through whose love we are connected to all other creatures. We can hide none of it. None of it is secret or hidden, not from God, and ... because God's love weaves us all together ... ultimately not from those we have hated or betrayed.

"[But I say to you](#)," said my Master, long ago, his eyes alight and terrible, "that everyone who looks at another with lust has already committed adultery in their hearts."

The truth of this, if it shapes you, does not make you more tolerant of evil. [But it sure as heck does make it a harder to throw stones.](#)

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