

Document Study Reader

READINGS FOR UNITS 1-8

INVESTIGATE → DEBATE → WRITE → STORY

*Discipline begins in attention: to the words, to the evidence,
and to what the text actually asks of us.*

READER NOTE

How to use this appendix

This reader gathers the document-study readings used across The Forge. It is designed to travel separately from the student and mentor binders: bring the relevant unit reading, annotate directly, and return to the binder for the discussion protocol and written work.

BEFORE CLASS	Read the assigned selection and mark the lines that carry the argument.
DURING DISCUSSION	Use the text itself as evidence. Name the passage before interpreting it.
AFTER DISCUSSION	Keep the annotations. They become raw material for the debate and final writing.

Independent artifact. This appendix shares The Forge's design system but is not part of either binder's pagination or build.

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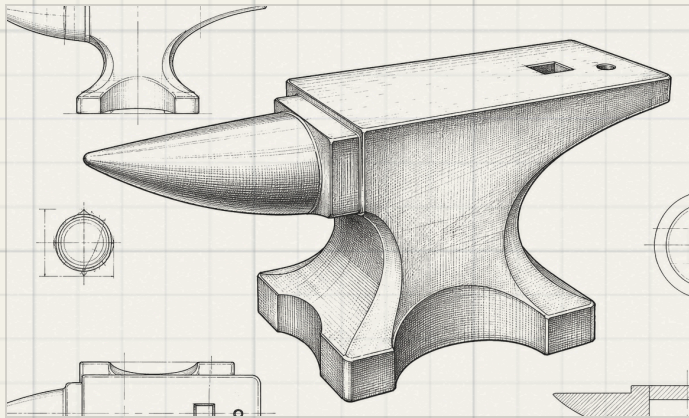
DOCUMENT STUDY

U1 – Make Your Bed

AUTHOR: William H. McRaven

TRAIT: Discipline

Read the bed-inspection scene below at home. The whole point sits inside something small. Everything here is from Chapter One.



The inspection

The barracks at basic SEAL training is a nondescript three-story building located on the beach at Coronado, California, just one hundred yards from the Pacific Ocean. There is no air-conditioning in the building, and at night, with the windows open, you can hear the tide roll in and the surf pounding against the sand. Rooms in the barracks are spartan. In the officers' room, where I berthed with three other classmates, there were four beds, a closet to hang your uniforms, and nothing else. Those mornings that I stayed in the barracks I would roll out of my Navy "rack" and immediately begin the process of making my bed. It was the first task of the day. A day that I knew would be filled with uniform inspections, long swims, longer runs, obstacle courses, and constant harassment from the SEAL instructors.

"Attention!" shouted the class leader, Lieutenant Junior Grade Dan'l Steward, as the instructor entered the room. Standing at the foot of the bed, I snapped my heels together and stood up straight as a chief petty officer approached my position. The instructor, stern and expressionless, began the inspection by checking the starch in my green uniform hat to ensure the eight-sided "cover" was crisp and correctly blocked. Moving from top to bottom, his eyes looked over every inch of my uniform. Were the creases in the blouse and trousers aligned? Was the brass on the belt shined to a mirror-like radiance? Were my boots polished bright enough so he could see his fingers in their reflection?

Satisfied that I met the high standards expected of a SEAL trainee, he moved to inspect the bed. The bed was as simple as the room, nothing but a steel frame and a single mattress. A bottom sheet covered the mattress, and over that was a top sheet. A gray wool blanket tucked tightly under the mattress provided warmth from the cool San Diego evenings. A second blanket was expertly folded into a rectangle at the foot of the bed. A single pillow, made by the Lighthouse for the Blind, was centered at the top of the bed and intersected at a ninety-degree angle with the blanket at the bottom. This was the standard. Any deviation from this exacting requirement would be cause for me to "hit the surf" and then roll around on the beach until I was covered head to toe with wet sand—referred to as a "sugar cookie."

The quarter

Standing motionless, I could see the instructor out of the corner of my eye. He wearily looked at my bed. Bending over, he checked the hospital corners and then surveyed the blanket and the pillow to ensure they were correctly aligned. Then, reaching into his pocket, he pulled out a quarter and flipped it into the air several times to ensure I knew the final test of the bed was coming. With one

final flip the quarter flew high into the air and came down on the mattress with a light bounce. It jumped several inches off the bed, high enough for the instructor to catch it in his hand. Swinging around to face me, the instructor looked me in the eye and nodded. He never said a word.

Making my bed correctly was not going to be an opportunity for praise. It was expected of me. It was my first task of the day, and doing it right was important. It demonstrated my discipline. It showed my attention to detail, and at the end of the day it would be a reminder that I had done something well, something to be proud of, no matter how small the task.

The one constant

Throughout my life in the Navy, making my bed was the one constant that I could count on every day. As a young SEAL ensign aboard the USS Grayback, a special operation submarine, I was berthed in sick bay, where the beds were stacked four high. The salty old doctor who ran sick bay insisted that I make my rack every morning. He often remarked that if the beds were not made and the room was not clean, how could the sailors expect the best medical care?

Thirty years later, the Twin Towers came down in New York City. ... At the time of the attacks, I was recuperating in my home from a serious parachute accident. A hospital bed had been wheeled into my government quarters, and I spent most of the day lying on my back, trying to recover. ... When I was finally well enough to raise myself unaided from the bed, the first thing I did was pull the sheets up tight, adjust the pillow, and make sure the hospital bed looked presentable to all those who entered my home. It was my way of showing that I had conquered the injury and was moving forward with my life.

By October 2003, I was in Iraq at our makeshift headquarters on the Baghdad airfield. For the first few months we slept on Army cots. Nevertheless, I would wake every morning, roll up my sleeping bag, place the pillow at the head of the cot, and get ready for the day.

The cot he never made

In December 2003, U.S. forces captured Saddam Hussein. He was held in confinement during which time we kept him in a small room. He also slept on an Army cot, but with the luxury of sheets and a blanket. Once a day I would visit Saddam to ensure my soldiers were properly caring for him. I noticed, with some sense of amusement, that Saddam did not make his bed.

The lesson

If you make your bed every morning, you will have accomplished the first task of the day. It will give you a small sense of pride ... If you can't do the little things right, you will never do the big things right. And, if by chance you have a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made

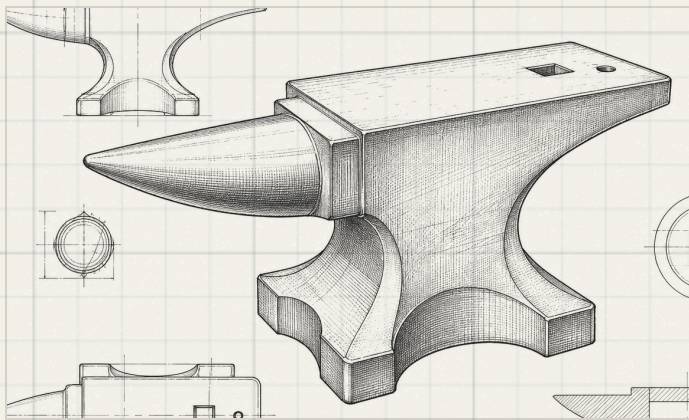
—that you made—and a made bed gives you encouragement that tomorrow will be better. If you want to change the world, start off by making your bed.

DOCUMENT STUDY

U2 – Man's Search for Meaning

AUTHOR: Viktor E. Frankl

TRAIT: Perseverance



SOURCE TEXT

Viktor E. Frankl – Six Scenes of Inner Freedom (from *Man's Search for Meaning*)

The six scenes are not continuous in the book — they are drawn from across the chapter and are marked below. Read them in this order for the document study.

Scene 1 – The Sunset over the Bavarian Woods

In camp, too, a man might draw the attention of a comrade working next to him to a nice view of the setting sun shining through the tall trees of the Bavarian woods (as in the famous water color by Dürer), the same woods in which we had built an enormous, hidden munitions plant. One evening, when we were already resting on the floor of our hut, dead tired, soup bowls in hand, a fellow prisoner rushed in and asked us to run out to the assembly grounds and see the wonderful sunset. Standing outside we saw sinister clouds glowing in the west and the whole sky alive with clouds of ever-changing shapes and colors, from steel blue to blood red. The desolate grey mud huts provided a sharp contrast, while the puddles on the muddy ground reflected the glowing sky. Then, after minutes of moving silence, one prisoner said to another, “How beautiful the world could be!”

Scene 2 – The Light in the Trench

Another time we were at work in a trench. The dawn was grey around us; grey was the sky above; grey the snow in the pale light of dawn; grey the rags in which my fellow prisoners were clad, and grey their faces. I was again conversing silently with my wife, or perhaps I was struggling to find the reason for my sufferings, my slow dying. In a last violent protest against the hopelessness of imminent death, I sensed my spirit piercing through the enveloping gloom. I felt it transcend that hopeless, meaningless world, and from somewhere I heard a victorious “Yes” in answer to my question of the existence of an ultimate purpose. At that moment a light was lit in a distant farmhouse, which stood on the horizon as if painted there, in the midst of the miserable grey of a dawning morning in Bavaria. “Et lux in tenebris lucet” — and the light shineth in the darkness. For hours I stood hacking at the icy ground. The guard passed by, insulting me, and once again I communed with my beloved. More and more I felt that she was present, that she was with me; I had

the feeling that I was able to touch her, able to stretch out my hand and grasp hers. The feeling was very strong: she was there. Then, at that very moment, a bird flew down silently and perched just in front of me, on the heap of soil which I had dug up from the ditch, and looked steadily at me.

Scene 3 – The Men Walking the Huts

(Later in the chapter, Frankl asks whether a man has any choice of action in such circumstances.)

We can answer these questions from experience as well as on principle. The experiences of camp life show that man does have a choice of action. There were enough examples, often of a heroic nature, which proved that apathy could be overcome, irritability suppressed. Man can preserve a vestige of spiritual freedom, of independence of mind, even in such terrible conditions of psychic and physical stress.

We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

Scene 4 – The Young Woman and the Chestnut Tree

(Frankl recalls one particular instance of a person's inner greatness.)

The story of the young woman whose death I witnessed in a concentration camp. It is a simple story. There is little to tell and it may sound as if I had invented it; but to me it seems like a poem.

This young woman knew that she would die in the next few days. But when I talked to her she was cheerful in spite of this knowledge. "I am grateful that fate has hit me so hard," she told me. "In my former life I was spoiled and did not take spiritual accomplishments seriously." Pointing through the window of the hut, she said, "This tree here is the only friend I have in my loneliness." Through that window she could see just one branch of a chestnut tree, and on the branch were two blossoms. "I often talk to this tree," she said to me.

I was startled and didn't quite know how to take her words. Was she delirious? Did she have occasional hallucinations? Anxiously I asked her if the tree replied. "Yes." What did it say to her? She answered, "It said to me, 'I am here—I am here—I am life, eternal life.'"

Scene 5 – The March at Dawn

(Frankl describes the forced march to the work site before sunrise, and the thought that carried him through it.)

We stumbled on in the darkness, over big stones and through large puddles, along the one road leading from the camp. The accompanying guards kept shouting at us and driving us with the butts of their rifles. Anyone with very sore feet supported himself on his neighbor's arm. Hardly a word was spoken; the icy wind did not encourage talk. Hiding his mouth behind his upturned collar, the man marching next to me whispered suddenly: "If our wives could see us now! I do hope they are better off in their camps and don't know what is happening to us."

That brought thoughts of my own wife to mind. And as we stumbled on for miles, slipping on icy spots, supporting each other time and again, dragging one another up and onward, nothing was said, but we both knew: each of us was thinking of his wife. Occasionally I looked at the sky, where the stars were fading and the pink light of the morning was beginning to spread behind a dark bank of clouds. But my mind clung to my wife's image, imagining it with an uncanny acuteness. I heard her answering me, saw her smile, her frank and encouraging look. Real or not, her look was then more luminous than the sun which was beginning to rise.

A thought transfixed me: for the first time in my life I saw the truth as it is set into song by so many poets, proclaimed as the final wisdom by so many thinkers. The truth—that love is the ultimate and the highest goal to which man can aspire. Then I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart: The salvation of man is through love and in love. I understood how a man who has nothing left in this world still may know bliss, be it only for a brief moment, in the contemplation of his beloved.

Scene 6 – The Choice to Stay

(Near the end, with the front approaching, a friend arranges an escape and offers to take Frankl with him. Frankl goes to make a last round of the sick before slipping away.)

I made a quick last round of my patients, who were lying huddled on the rotten planks of wood on either side of the huts. I came to my only countryman, who was almost dying, and whose life it had been my ambition to save in spite of his condition. I had to keep my intention to escape to myself, but my comrade seemed to guess that something was wrong (perhaps I showed a little nervousness). In a tired voice he asked me, "You, too, are getting out?" I denied it, but I found it difficult to avoid his sad look. After my round I returned to him. Again a hopeless look greeted me and somehow I felt it to be an accusation.

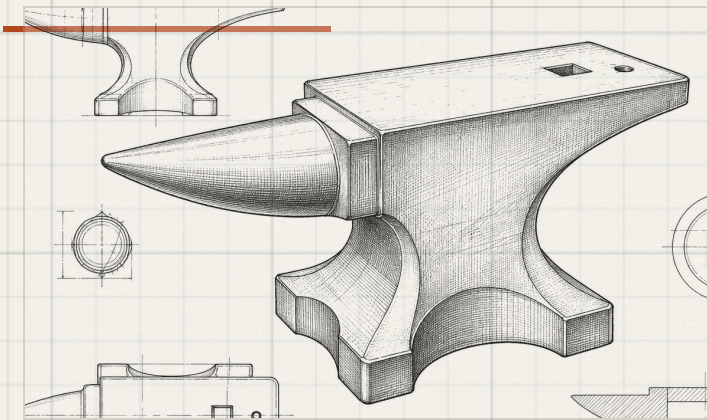
The unpleasant feeling that had gripped me as soon as I had told my friend I would escape with him became more intense. Suddenly I decided to take fate into my own hands for once. I ran out of the hut and told my friend that I could not go with him. As soon as I had told him with finality that I had made up my mind to stay with my patients, the unhappy feeling left me. I did not know what the following days would bring, but I had gained an inward peace that I had never experienced before. I returned to the hut, sat down on the boards at my countryman's feet and tried to comfort him; then I chatted with the others, trying to quiet them in their delirium.

DOCUMENT STUDY

U3 – South – The Story of Shackleton's Last Expedition

AUTHOR: Ernest Shackleton

TRAIT: Interdependence



SOURCE TEXT

Ernest Shackleton – The Voyage of the *James Caird* (from *South*)

The scenes are not continuous in the book. They are drawn from across Chapter IX and marked below. Read them in this order.

Scene 1 – Choosing the six

(Shackleton decides who goes and who stays. Frank Wild is left behind precisely because Shackleton depends on him to hold the marooned party together.)

Worsley I would take with me, for I had a very high opinion of his accuracy and quickness as a navigator, and especially in the snapping and working out of positions in difficult circumstances—an opinion that was only enhanced during the actual journey. Four other men would be required, and I decided to call for volunteers, although, as a matter of fact, I pretty well knew which of the people I would select. Crean I proposed to leave on the island as a right-hand man for Wild, but he begged so hard to be allowed to come in the boat that, after consultation with Wild, I promised to take him. I called the men together, explained my plan, and asked for volunteers. Many came forward at once. Some were not fit enough for the work that would have to be done, and others would not have been much use in the boat since they were not seasoned sailors, though the experiences of recent months entitled them to some consideration as seafaring men. [...] I finally selected McNeish, McCarthy, and Vincent in addition to Worsley and Crean. The crew seemed a strong one, and as I looked at the men I felt confidence increasing.

Scene 2 – Every task takes more than one man

(Once at sea, nothing on the boat can be done by a single person. First the cooking, on the very first night out.)

The swell was very heavy now, and when the time came for our first evening meal we found great difficulty in keeping the Primus lamp alight and preventing the hoosh splashing out of the pot. Three men were needed to attend to the cooking, one man holding the lamp and two men guarding the aluminium cooking-pot, which had to be lifted clear of the Primus whenever the movement of the boat threatened to cause a disaster.

(Then the watch itself, the machine the six men ran in shifts, day and night.)

When watch turned out it was necessary for me to direct each man by name when and where to move, since if all hands had crawled about at the same time the result would have been dire confusion and many bruises. Then there was the trim of the boat to be considered. The order of the watch was four hours on and four hours off, three men to the watch. One man had the tiller-ropes, the second man attended to the sail, and the third baled for all he was worth.

(And when a watch came off, the men warmed the next men by the heat they left behind in the bags.)

While a new watch was shivering in the wind and spray, the men who had been relieved groped hurriedly among the soaked sleeping-bags and tried to steal a little of the warmth created by the last occupants; but it was not always possible for us to find even this comfort when we went off watch. The boulders that we had taken aboard for ballast had to be shifted continually in order to trim the boat and give access to the pump.

Scene 3 – The wave that nearly took them

(The eleventh night. The largest wave Shackleton had seen in twenty-six years at sea. What saves the boat is not one man but all of them baling at once.)

At midnight I was at the tiller and suddenly noticed a line of clear sky between the south and south-west. I called to the other men that the sky was clearing, and then a moment later I realized that what I had seen was not a rift in the clouds but the white crest of an enormous wave. During twenty-six years' experience of the ocean in all its moods I had not encountered a wave so gigantic. It was a mighty upheaval of the ocean, a thing quite apart from the big white-capped seas that had been our tireless enemies for many days. I shouted, "For God's sake, hold on! It's got us!" Then came a moment of suspense that seemed drawn out into hours. White surged the foam of the breaking sea around us. We felt our boat lifted and flung forward like a cork in breaking surf. We were in a seething chaos of tortured water; but somehow the boat lived through it, half-full of water, sagging to the dead weight and shuddering under the blow. We baled with the energy of men fighting for life, flinging the water over the sides with every receptacle that came to our hands, and after ten minutes of uncertainty we felt the boat renew her life beneath us. She floated again and ceased to lurch drunkenly as though dazed by the attack of the sea. Earnestly we hoped that never again would we encounter such a wave.

Scene 4 – The Landing

(After the wave, the exhausted six sighted South Georgia. But sighting land and reaching it were two different

things. Their water was gone, and the coast was a wall of reef and glacier.)

We stood off shore again, tired almost to the point of apathy. Our water had long been finished. The last was about a pint of hairy liquid, which we strained through a bit of gauze from the medicine-chest. The pangs of thirst attacked us with redoubled intensity, and I felt that we must make a landing on the following day at almost any hazard. The night wore on. We were very tired. We longed for day. When at last the dawn came on the morning of May 10 there was practically no wind, but a high cross-sea was running. We made slow progress towards the shore. About 8 a.m. the wind backed to the north-west and threatened another blow. We had sighted in the meantime a big indentation which I thought must be King Haakon Bay, and I decided that we must land there. We set the bows of the boat towards the bay and ran before the freshening gale. Soon we had angry reefs on either side. Great glaciers came down to the sea and offered no landing-place. The sea spouted on the reefs and thundered against the shore.

About noon we sighted a line of jagged reef, like blackened teeth, that seemed to bar the entrance to the bay. Inside, comparatively smooth water stretched eight or nine miles to the head of the bay. A gap in the reef appeared, and we made for it. But the fates had another rebuff for us. The wind shifted and blew from the east right out of the bay. We could see the way through the reef, but we could not approach it directly. That afternoon we bore up, tacking five times in the strong wind. The last tack enabled us to get through, and at last we were in the wide mouth of the bay. Dusk was approaching. A small cove, with a boulder-strewn beach guarded by a reef, made a break in the cliffs on the south side of the bay, and we turned in that direction. I stood in the bows directing the steering as we ran through the kelp and made the passage of the reef. The entrance was so narrow that we had to take in the oars, and the swell was piling itself right over the reef into the cove; but in a minute or two we were inside, and in the gathering darkness the *James Caird* ran in on a swell and touched the beach.

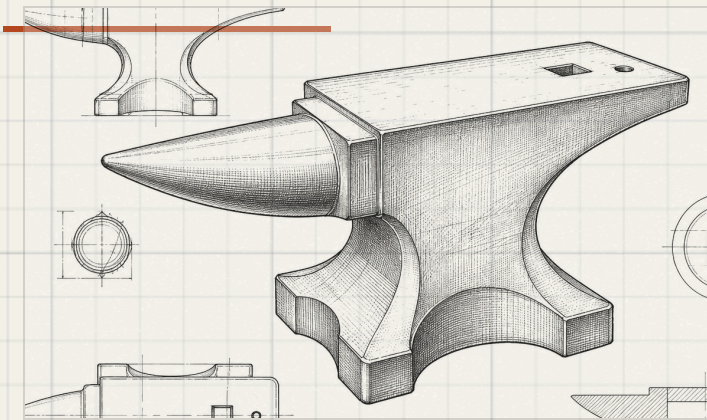
I sprang ashore with the short painter and held on when the boat went out with the backward surge. When the *James Caird* came in again three of the men got ashore, and they held the painter while I climbed some rocks with another line. A slip on the wet rocks twenty feet up nearly closed my part of the story just at the moment when we were achieving safety. A jagged piece of rock held me and at the same time bruised me sorely. However, I made fast the line, and in a few minutes we were all safe on the beach, with the boat floating in the surging water just off the shore. We heard a gurgling sound that was sweet music in our ears, and, peering around, found a stream of fresh water almost at our feet. A moment later we were down on our knees drinking the pure, ice-cold water in long draughts that put new life into us. It was a splendid moment.

DOCUMENT STUDY

U4 – Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

AUTHOR: Frederick Douglass

TRAIT: Resilience



SOURCE TEXT

Frederick Douglass – The Fight with Covey (from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*)

The scene

I have already intimated that my condition was much worse, during the first six months of my stay at Mr. Covey's, than in the last six. The circumstances leading to the change in Mr. Covey's course toward me form an epoch in my humble history. You have seen how a man was made a slave; you shall see how a slave was made a man. On one of the hottest days of the month of August, 1833, Bill Smith, William Hughes, a slave named Eli, and myself, were engaged in fanning wheat. Hughes was clearing the fanned wheat from before the fan. Eli was turning, Smith was feeding, and I was carrying wheat to the fan. The work was simple, requiring strength rather than intellect; yet, to one entirely unused to such work, it came very hard. About three o'clock of that day, I broke down; my strength failed me; I was seized with a violent aching of the head, attended with extreme dizziness; I trembled in every limb. Finding what was coming, I nerved myself up, feeling it would never do to stop work. I stood as long as I could stagger to the hopper with grain. When I could stand no longer, I fell, and felt as if held down by an immense weight. The fan of course stopped; every one had his own work to do; and no one could do the work of the other, and have his own go on at the same time.

Mr. Covey was at the house, about one hundred yards from the treading-yard where we were fanning. On hearing the fan stop, he left immediately, and came to the spot where we were. He hastily inquired what the matter was. Bill answered that I was sick, and there was no one to bring wheat to the fan. I had by this time crawled away under the side of the post and rail-fence by which the yard was enclosed, hoping to find relief by getting out of the sun. He then asked where I was. He was told by one of the hands. He came to the spot, and, after looking at me awhile, asked me what was the matter. I told him as well as I could, for I scarce had strength to speak. He then gave me a savage kick in the side, and told me to get up. I tried to do so, but fell back in the attempt. He gave me another kick, and again told me to rise. I again tried, and succeeded in gaining my feet; but, stooping to get the tub with which I was feeding the fan, I again staggered and fell. While down in this situation, Mr. Covey took up the hickory slat with which Hughes had been striking off the half-bushel measure, and with it gave me a heavy blow upon the head, making a large wound, and the blood ran freely; and with this again told me to get up.

I made no effort to comply, having now made up my mind to let him do his worst. In a short time after receiving this blow, my head grew better. Mr. Covey had now left me to my fate. At this moment I resolved, for the first time, to go to my master, enter a complaint, and ask his protection. In order to do this, I must that afternoon walk seven miles; and this, under the circumstances, was truly a severe undertaking. I was exceedingly feeble; made so as much by the kicks and blows which I received, as by the severe fit of sickness to which I had been subjected. I, however, watched my chance, while Covey was looking in an opposite direction, and started for St. Michael's. I succeeded in getting a considerable distance on my way to the woods, when Covey discovered me, and called after me to come back, threatening what he would do if I did not come. I disregarded both his calls and his threats, and made my way to the woods as fast as my feeble state would allow; and thinking I might be overhauled by him if I kept the road, I walked through the woods, keeping far enough from the road to avoid detection, and near enough to prevent losing my way. I had not gone far before my little strength again failed me. I could go no farther. I fell down, and lay for a considerable time. The blood was yet oozing from the wound on my head. For a time I thought I should bleed to death; and think now that I should have done so, but that the blood so matted my hair as to stop the wound. After lying there about three quarters of an hour, I nerved myself up again, and started on my way, through bogs and briers, barefooted and bareheaded, tearing my feet sometimes at nearly every step; and after a journey of about seven miles, occupying some five hours to perform it, I arrived at master's store.

I then presented an appearance enough to affect any but a heart of iron. From the crown of my head to my feet, I was covered with blood. My hair was all clotted with dust and blood; my shirt was stiff with blood. I suppose I looked like a man who had escaped a den of wild beasts, and barely escaped them. In this state I appeared before my master, humbly entreating him to interpose his authority for my protection. I told him all the circumstances as well as I could, and it seemed, as I spoke, at times to affect him. He would then walk the floor, and seek to justify Covey by saying he expected I deserved it. He asked me what I wanted. I told him, to let me get a new home; that as sure as I lived with Mr. Covey again, I should live with but to die with him; that Covey would surely kill me; he was in a fair way for it. Master Thomas ridiculed the idea that there was any danger of Mr. Covey's killing me, and said that he knew Mr. Covey; that he was a good man, and that he could not think of taking me from him; that, should he do so, he would lose the whole year's wages; that I belonged to Mr. Covey for one year, and that I must go back to him, come what might; and that I must not trouble him with any more stories, or that he would himself *get hold of me*. After threatening me thus, he gave me a very large dose of salts, telling me that I might remain in St. Michael's that night, (it being quite late,) but that I must be off back to Mr. Covey's early in the morning; and that if I did not, he would *get hold of me*, which meant that he would whip me. I remained all night, and, according to his orders, I started off to Covey's in the morning, (Saturday morning,) wearied in body and broken in spirit. I got no supper that night, or breakfast that morning.

I reached Covey's about nine o'clock; and just as I was getting over the fence that divided Mrs. Kemp's fields from ours, out ran Covey with his cowskin, to give me another whipping. Before he could reach me, I succeeded in getting to the cornfield; and as the corn was very high, it afforded me the means of hiding. He seemed very angry, and searched for me a long time. My behavior was altogether unaccountable. He finally gave up the chase, thinking, I suppose, that I must come home for something to eat; he would give himself no further trouble in looking for me. I spent that day mostly in the woods, having the alternative before me,—to go home and be whipped to death, or stay in the woods and be starved to death. That night, I fell in with Sandy Jenkins, a slave with whom I was somewhat acquainted. Sandy had a free wife who lived about four miles from Mr. Covey's; and it being Saturday, he was on his way to see her. I told him my circumstances, and he very kindly invited me to go home with him. I went home with him, and talked this whole matter over, and got his advice as to what course it was best for me to pursue. I found Sandy an old adviser. He told me, with great solemnity, I must go back to Covey; but that before I went, I must go with him into another part of the woods, where there was a certain *root*, which, if I would take some of it with me, carrying it *always on my right side*, would render it impossible for Mr. Covey, or any other white man, to whip me. He said he had carried it for years; and since he had done so, he had never received a blow, and never expected to while he carried it. I at first rejected the idea, that the simple carrying of a root in my pocket would have any such effect as he had said, and was not disposed to take it; but Sandy impressed the necessity with much earnestness, telling me it could do no harm, if it did no good. To please him, I at length took the root, and, according to his direction, carried it upon my right side.

This was Sunday morning. I immediately started for home; and upon entering the yard gate, out came Mr. Covey on his way to meeting. He spoke to me very kindly, bade me drive the pigs from a lot near by, and passed on towards the church. Now, this singular conduct of Mr. Covey really made me begin to think that there was something in the *root* which Sandy had given me; and had it been on any other day than Sunday, I could have attributed the conduct to no other cause than the influence of that root; and as it was, I was half inclined to think the *root* to be something more than I at first had taken it to be. All went well till Monday morning. On this morning, the virtue of the *root* was fully tested. Long before daylight, I was called to go and rub, curry, and feed, the horses. I obeyed, and was glad to obey. But whilst thus engaged, whilst in the act of throwing down some blades from the loft, Mr. Covey entered the stable with a long rope; and just as I was half out of the loft, he caught hold of my legs, and was about tying me. As soon as I found what he was up to, I gave a sudden spring, and as I did so, he holding to my legs, I was brought sprawling on the stable floor. Mr. Covey seemed now to think he had me, and could do what he pleased; but at this moment—from whence came the spirit I don't know—I resolved to fight; and, suiting my action to the resolution, I seized Covey hard by the throat; and as I did so, I rose.

He held on to me, and I to him. My resistance was so entirely unexpected that Covey seemed taken all aback. He trembled like a leaf. This gave me assurance, and I held him uneasy, causing the blood to run where I touched him with the ends of my fingers. Mr. Covey soon called out to Hughes for help. Hughes came, and, while Covey held me, attempted to tie my right hand. While he was in the

act of doing so, I watched my chance, and gave him a heavy kick close under the ribs. This kick fairly sickened Hughes, so that he left me in the hands of Mr. Covey. This kick had the effect of not only weakening Hughes, but Covey also. When he saw Hughes bending over with pain, his courage quailed. He asked me if I meant to persist in my resistance. I told him I did, come what might; that he had used me like a brute for six months, and that I was determined to be used so no longer. With that, he strove to drag me to a stick that was lying just out of the stable door. He meant to knock me down. But just as he was leaning over to get the stick, I seized him with both hands by his collar, and brought him by a sudden snatch to the ground. By this time, Bill came. Covey called upon him for assistance. Bill wanted to know what he could do. Covey said, "Take hold of him, take hold of him!" Bill said his master hired him out to work, and not to help to whip me; so he left Covey and myself to fight our own battle out. We were at it for nearly two hours. Covey at length let me go, puffing and blowing at a great rate, saying that if I had not resisted, he would not have whipped me half so much. The truth was, that he had not whipped me at all. I considered him as getting entirely the worst end of the bargain; for he had drawn no blood from me, but I had from him. The whole six months afterwards, that I spent with Mr. Covey, he never laid the weight of his finger upon me in anger. He would occasionally say, he didn't want to get hold of me again. "No," thought I, "you need not; for you will come off worse than you did before."

(The reflective paragraph that closes the scene — the "resurrection." Keep this once; it is the definition, and everything above is the exemplar.)

This battle with Mr. Covey was the turning-point in my career as a slave. It rekindled the few expiring embers of freedom, and revived within me a sense of my own manhood. It recalled the departed self-confidence, and inspired me again with a determination to be free. The gratification afforded by the triumph was a full compensation for whatever else might follow, even death itself. He only can understand the deep satisfaction which I experienced, who has himself repelled by force the bloody arm of slavery. I felt as I never felt before. It was a glorious resurrection, from the tomb of slavery, to the heaven of freedom. My long-crushed spirit rose, cowardice departed, bold defiance took its place; and I now resolved that, however long I might remain a slave in form, the day had passed forever when I could be a slave in fact. I did not hesitate to let it be known of me, that the white man who expected to succeed in whipping, must also succeed in killing me.

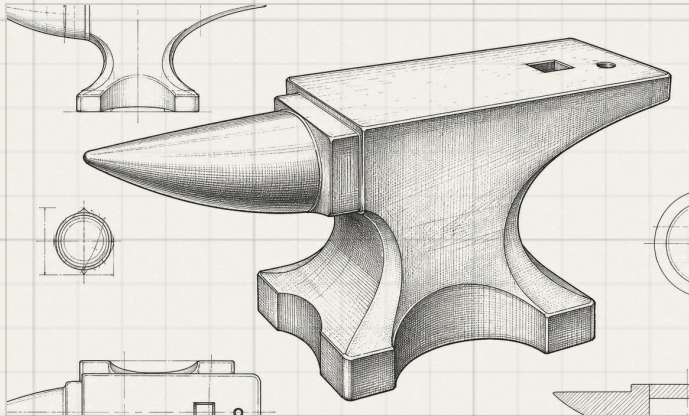
DOCUMENT STUDY

U5 – Thomas More & Joan of Arc

AUTHORS: Thomas More · Joan of Arc (Trial of Condemnation)

TRAIT: Acceptance — paired contrast

Two people in the same corner, facing the same death, taking opposite ways to it, and neither will take the one way out. More the Lord Chancellor guards his silence and will not swear the oath. Joan the peasant girl answers everything and will not revoke a word. Both could have lived by saying one sentence. Neither would. Read each at home.



Thomas More — the man who would not swear

Sir Thomas More, once Lord Chancellor of England, was imprisoned in the Tower of London in 1534 for refusing to swear the oath that made Henry VIII head of the Church in England. He would not attack the oath and he would not take it; he simply kept silent. These come from his correspondence with his daughter Margaret Roper during his imprisonment in the Tower — his own letters, and her own account of a conversation with him. First, from prison, weighing the death he could see coming:

And I thank our Lord (Meg) since I am come hither I set by death every day less than other. For though a man leese of his years in this world, it is more than manifold recompensed by coming the sooner to heaven. And though it be a pain to die while a man is in health, yet see I very few that in sickness die with ease. And finally, very sure am I that whensoever the time shall come that may hap to come, God wot how soon, in which I should lie sick in my deathbed by nature, I shall then think that God had done much for me, if he had suffered me to die before by the color of such a law.

Yet he did not trust his own courage. He knew that even the strongest man can break, and said so plainly:

And yet I know well for all this mine own frailty, and that Saint Peter which feared it much less than I, fell in such fear soon after, that at the word of a simple girl he forsook and foreswore our Savior. And therefore am I not (Meg) so mad, as to warrant myself to stand. But I shall pray, and I pray thee mine own good daughter to pray with me, that it may please God that hath given me this mind, to give me the grace to keep it.

He had reckoned the cost through many sleepless nights, and still would not turn:

I accounted, Marget, full surely many a restless night, while my wife slept, and weened that I had slept too, what peril was possible for to fall to me, so far forth that I am sure there can come none above. And in devising, Daughter, thereupon, I had a full heavy heart. But yet (I thank our Lord) for all that, I never thought to change, though the very uttermost should hap me that my fear ran upon.

Margaret, who loved him, pressed him: might he not one day wish he had yielded, when it was too late to turn back? He answered her:

Too late, Daughter ... Margaret? I beseech our Lord, that if ever I make such a change, it may be too late, indeed. For well I wot the change cannot be good for my soul, that change I say that should grow but by fear. And therefore I pray God that in this world I never have good of such change.

Then he was summoned before the King's Council and pressed to declare, one way or the other, whether the oath was lawful. To say yes was to betray his conscience; to say no was to be condemned for treason. He would say neither. He sent Margaret this account of the day:

Forasmuch, dearly beloved daughter, as it is likely that you either have heard or shortly shall hear that the Council was here this day, and that I was before them, I have thought it necessary to send you word how the matter standeth. And verily to be short I perceive little difference between this

time and the last, for as far as I can see the whole purpose is either to drive me to say precisely the one way, or else precisely the other.

And so he had sent them now in his name upon mine allegiance to command me to make a plain and terminate answer whether I thought the statute lawful or not, and that I should either acknowledge and confess it lawful that his Highness should be Supreme Head of the Church of England, or else to utter plainly my malignity. Whereunto I answered that I had no malignity and therefore I could none utter. And as to the matter I could none other answer make than I had before made. I thanked God that my case was such in this matter through the clearness of mine own conscience that though I might have pain I could not have harm, for a man may in such case leese his head and have no harm.

To this it was said by my Lord Chancellor and Master Secretary both that the King might by his laws compel me to make a plain answer thereto, either the one way or the other. Whereunto I answered ... For if it so were that my conscience gave me against the statutes ... then I nothing doing nor nothing saying against the statute, it were a very hard thing to compel me to say either precisely with it against my conscience to the loss of my soul, or precisely against it to the destruction of my body. ... The difference standeth between heading and hell.

And in conclusion they offered me an oath by which I should be sworn to make true answer to such things as should be asked me on the King's behalf, concerning the King's own person. Whereunto I answered that verily I never purposed to swear any book oath more while I lived. ... Whereupon I refused the oath ... It was also said unto me that if I had as lief be out of the world as in it ... why did I not speak even out plain against the statute ... Whereunto I answered as the truth is, that I have not been a man of such holy living as I might be bold to offer myself to death, lest God for my presumption might suffer me to fall, and therefore I put not myself forward but draw back. Howbeit if God draw me to it himself, then trust I in his great mercy, that he shall not fail to give me grace and strength.

His last letter to Margaret was written with a coal the day before his execution, 5 July 1535:

Our Lord bless you good daughter and your good husband and your little boy and all yours and all my children and all my godchildren and all our friends. ... I cumber you good Margaret much, but I would be sorry, if it should be any longer than tomorrow, for it is St. Thomas' eve, and the utas of Saint Peter and therefore tomorrow long I to go to God, it were a day very meet and convenient for me. I never liked your manner toward me better than when you kissed me last for I love when daughterly love and dear charity hath no leisure to look to worldly courtesy. Farewell my dear child and pray for me, and I shall for you and all your friends that we may merrily meet in heaven.

Joan of Arc — the answers she would not take back

Joan of Arc was a farm girl of Domrémy who, at seventeen, led French armies to lift the siege of Orleans. Captured and sold to the English, she was tried for heresy at Rouen in 1431. Where More guarded his silence, Joan answered everything. Years before, a soldier who escorted her to the King remembered the village girl who first told him her mission:

No one in the world — neither kings, nor dukes, nor the daughter of the King of Scotland, nor any others — can recover the kingdom of France; there is no succour to be expected save from me; but, nevertheless, I would rather spin with my poor mother, for this is not my proper estate: it is, however, necessary that I should go, and do this, because my Lord wills that I should do it.

At her trial, asked about the Voice that had sent her, she answered with plain directness:

Pass that by. I was thirteen when I had a Voice from God for my help and guidance. The first time that I heard this Voice, I was very much frightened; it was mid-day, in the summer, in my father's garden. ... I heard this Voice to my right, towards the Church; rarely do I hear it without its being accompanied also by a light. This light comes from the same side as the Voice. ... Since I came into France I have often heard this Voice.

Her judges set a trap: to claim she was in a state of grace was presumption, to deny it was to condemn herself. She replied:

If I am, may God so keep me. If I am not, may God so place me. I would rather die than not be in the love of God.

Before her English judges she did not soften the truth:

Of the love or hate God may have for the English, or of what He will do for their souls, I know nothing; but I know quite well that they will be put out of France, except those who shall die there, and that God will send victory to the French against the English.

She foretold their defeat with a certainty that unsettled the court:

Before seven years are passed, the English will lose a greater wager than they have already done at Orleans; they will lose everything in France. ... I know it by revelation, as clearly as I know that you are before me at this moment.

Her Voices, she said, had already told her how it would end, and told her to accept it:

My Voices have told me that I shall be delivered by a great victory; and they add: "Be resigned; have no care for thy martyrdom; thou wilt come in the end to the Kingdom of Paradise." They have told me this simply, absolutely, and without fail. What is meant by my martyrdom is the pain and adversity that I suffer in prison; I do not know if I shall have still greater suffering to bear; for that I refer me to God.

She had already faced death once by her own choice. Held in a high tower, she had leapt from it rather than be handed to the English. Asked why:

I had heard that the people of Compiègne, all, to the age of seven years, were to be put to fire and sword; and I would rather have died than live after such a destruction of good people. That was one of the reasons. The other was that I knew I was sold to the English; and I had rather die than be in the hands of my enemies, the English.

Asked whether she would take back what she had said of her Voices:

What I have always said in the Trial, and held, I wish still to say and maintain. If I were condemned, if I saw the fire lighted, the faggots prepared, and the executioner ready to kindle the fire, and if I myself were in the fire, I would not say otherwise, and would maintain to the death all I have said.

Then came the one moment she faltered. On the scaffold, with the fire before her, she had signed a recantation to be spared, and been led back to prison. Days later she withdrew it, knowing that returned her to the stake:

The great pity it is, this treason to which I have consented, to abjure and recant in order to save my life! I have damned myself to save my life! ... All I said and revoked, I said for fear of the fire. ... I revoked nothing that was not against the truth. I would rather do penance once for all — that is die — than endure any longer the suffering of a prison.

Her acceptance did not come without terror. On the morning she was told she would burn that very day, a friar in the prison heard her cry out:

Alas! am I to be so horribly and cruelly treated? Alas! that my body, whole and entire, which has never been corrupted, should to-day be consumed and burned to ashes! Ah! I would far rather have my head cut off, seven times over, than be thus burned!

She was nineteen years old. She went to the fire anyway. Jean Massieu, the priest who attended her to the end, testified to her last hour:

When she was given over by the Church, I was still with her; and with great devotion she asked to have a Cross; and, hearing this, an Englishman who was there present made a little cross of wood with the ends of a stick, which he gave her, and devoutly she received and kissed it, making piteous lamentations and acknowledgments to God, Our Redeemer. ... And she put the said Cross in her bosom, between her person and her clothing. And, besides, she asked me humbly that I would get for her the Church Cross, so that she might see it continually until death. ... The which, being brought, she embraced closely and long, and kept it till she was fastened to the stake. ... And thus she was led and fastened to the stake, continuing her praises and devout lamentations to God and His Saints; and with her last word, in dying, she cried, with a loud voice: "Jesus!"

A friar who was also present saw the executioner come to them afterward, stricken and moved with a marvellous repentance. He recorded the man's own words:

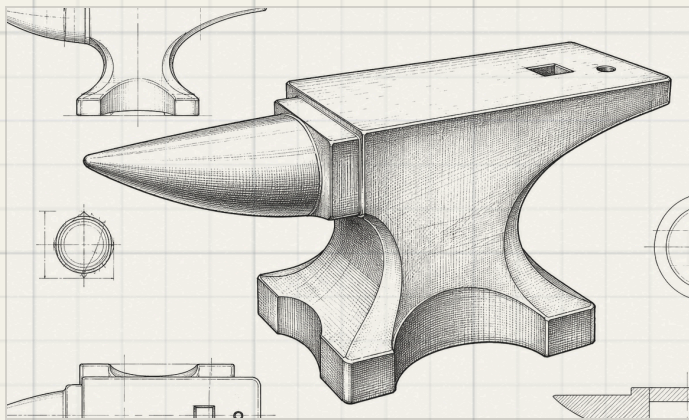
The executioner, about four hours after the burning, said that he had never been so afraid in executing any criminal as in the burning of the Maid.

DOCUMENT STUDY

U6 – White Rose Leaflet 4

AUTHOR: Hans Scholl & Alexander Schmorell (1942)

TRAIT: Courage



SOURCE TEXT

The White Rose – Leaflet 4 (Flugblatt IV), 1942

Trait: Courage

In the summer of 1942, university students in Munich, among them Hans Scholl and Alexander Schmorell, wrote, duplicated, and mailed short leaflets under the name the White Rose, calling Germans to see the regime's crimes and to resist. Sophie Scholl joined the circle later; she did not write Leaflets 1 through 4. Distributing these texts was a capital crime. In February 1943 Hans and Sophie Scholl were arrested after a leaflet drop at the University of Munich; they, Christoph Probst, and later others of the circle were tried by the People's Court and executed. Leaflet 4 ends by naming the group's method: they will not be silent; they mean to be Germany's bad conscience. The courage is not only in the sentences. It is in printing them under a state that guillotined the printers. Read the leaflet at home.

Leaflets of the White Rose — IV

It is an old piece of wisdom, preached to children again and again: whoever will not listen must feel. But a clever child burns his fingers on the hot stove only once.

In recent weeks Hitler has recorded successes in Africa and in Russia. The result was that optimism on one side of the people, and dismay and pessimism on the other, rose at a speed foreign to German inertia. Everywhere among Hitler's opponents — that is, among the better part of the people — one heard cries of complaint, words of disappointment and discouragement, which not seldom ended in the outcry: "Could it be that Hitler after all...?"

Meanwhile the German attack on Egypt has come to a standstill; Rommel must hold out in a dangerously exposed position — but the advance in the East still goes on. This apparent success has been bought with the most horrible sacrifices, so that it can no longer even be called an advantage. We therefore warn against every optimism.

Who has counted the dead — Hitler or Goebbels? Surely neither of them. Every day thousands fall in Russia. It is the time of harvest, and the reaper drives at full force into the ripe grain. Mourning enters the cottages of the homeland, and there is no one to dry the mothers' tears. But Hitler lies to those whose dearest treasure he has stolen and driven into senseless death.

Every word that comes from Hitler's mouth is a lie: when he says peace, he means war, and when he most blasphemously names the Almighty, he means the power of evil, the fallen angel, Satan. His mouth is the stinking maw of hell, and his power is at bottom reprobate. True, one must fight the National Socialist terror-state with rational means; but whoever still doubts the real existence of demonic powers has not remotely grasped the metaphysical background of this war. Behind the concrete, behind what the senses can perceive, behind all factual, logical considerations, stands the irrational — that is, the struggle against the demon, against the messenger of the Antichrist.

Everywhere and in every age the demons have lurked in the dark for the hour when the human being grows weak, when he willfully leaves the place in the *ordo* founded for him by God upon freedom, when he yields to the pressure of evil, detaches himself from the powers of a higher order, and so — after taking the first step freely — is driven to the second and the third and ever further at a furiously increasing speed. Everywhere and in every age of highest need, people have stood up — prophets, saints — who had kept their freedom, who pointed to the one God and with His help called the people to turn back. Man is free, to be sure, but without the true God he is defenseless against evil: like a ship without a rudder, given over to the storm; like an infant without a mother; like a cloud that dissolves.

I ask you, then — you who are a Christian — in this struggle to preserve your highest goods, is there hesitation, a game of intrigues, a putting-off of the decision in the hope that someone else will take up arms to defend you? Has God Himself not given you the strength and the courage to fight? We must attack evil where it is most powerful, and it is most powerful in the power of Hitler.

“I turned and saw all the injustice that was done under the sun; and behold, there were the tears of those who suffered injustice and had no comforter; and those who did them injustice were too powerful, so that they could have no comforter.

Then I praised the dead, who had already died, more than the living, who still had life....” (*Sprüche* — see adversarial note: this is Ecclesiastes / Kohelet 4:1–2, not Proverbs)

Novalis: “True anarchy is the generative element of religion. Out of the annihilation of everything positive she lifts her glorious head as foundress of a new world... If Europe would awaken again, if a state of states, a political doctrine of science, stood before us! Should hierarchy, then, be the principle of the union of states?... Blood will stream over Europe until the nations become aware of the terrible madness that drives them in a circle, and, struck and soothed by holy music, approach former altars in a colorful mingling, take up the works of peace, and celebrate a great festival of peace with hot tears on the smoking battlefields. Only religion can awaken Europe again and secure the law of nations and install Christendom, with new glory, visibly on earth in its peace-making office.”

We point out emphatically that the White Rose is not in the pay of any foreign power. Although we know that National Socialist power must be broken by military means, we seek a renewal of the severely wounded German spirit from within. But this rebirth must be preceded by the clear recognition of all the guilt the German people has taken upon itself, and by a ruthless struggle against Hitler and his all-too-many helpers — party members, Quislings, and so on. With every brutality the chasm between the better part of the people and everything connected with National Socialism must be torn open. For Hitler and his followers there is no punishment on this earth that would fit their deeds. But out of love for coming generations, after the war ends an example must be made, so that no one should ever again feel the slightest desire to attempt anything similar. Do

not forget the little scoundrels of this system either; mark their names, so that none escape! They must not succeed, at the last minute, after all these horrors, in changing flags and acting as if nothing had happened!

For your reassurance we would add that the addresses of the readers of the White Rose are nowhere written down. The addresses were taken at random from directories.

We will not be silent. We are your bad conscience. The White Rose gives you no rest!

Please duplicate and pass this on!

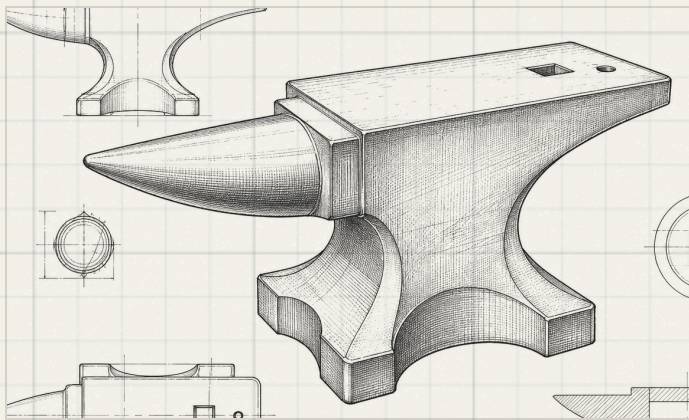
(Familiar English echo sometimes heard in secondary sources: "will not leave you in peace." Binder text uses the closer rendering of lässt Euch keine Ruhe above.)**

DOCUMENT STUDY

U7 – Courage Under Fire

AUTHOR: James Bond Stockdale

TRAIT: Hope



1. Discovery at Stanford

I came to the philosophic life as a thirty-eight-year-old naval pilot in grad school at Stanford University. I had been in the navy for twenty years and scarcely ever out of a cockpit. In 1962, I began my second year of studying international relations so I could become a strategic planner in the Pentagon. But my heart wasn't in it. I had yet to be inspired at Stanford and saw myself as just processing tedious material about how nations organized and governed themselves. I was too old for that. I knew how political systems operated; I had been beating systems for years.

Then, in what we call a “feel out pass” in stunt flying, I cruised into Stanford's philosophy corner one winter morning. I was gray-haired and in civilian clothes. A voice boomed out of an office, “Can I help you?” The speaker was Philip Rhinelander, dean of Humanities and Sciences, who taught Philosophy 6: The Problems of Good and Evil.

At first he thought I was a professor, but we soon found common ground in the navy because he'd served in World War II. Within fifteen minutes we'd agreed that I would enter his two-term course in the middle, and to make up for my lack of background, I would meet him for an hour a week for a private tutorial in the study of his campus home.

2. A Handbook “Ready at Hand”

Phil Rhinelander opened my eyes. In that study it all happened for me—my inspiration, my dedication to the philosophic life. From then on, I was out of international relations—I already had enough credits for the master's—and into philosophy. We went from Job to Socrates to Aristotle to Descartes. And then on to Kant, Hume, Dostoyevsky, Camus. All the while, Rhinelander was psyching me out, trying to figure out what I was seeking. He thought my interest in Hume's *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* was quite interesting. On my last session, he reached high in his wall of books and brought down a copy of *The Enchiridion*. He said, “I think you'll be interested in this.”

Enchiridion means “ready at hand.” In other words, it's a handbook. Rhinelander explained that its author, Epictetus, was a very unusual man of intelligence and sensitivity, who gleaned wisdom rather than bitterness from his early firsthand exposure to extreme cruelty and firsthand observations of the abuse of power and self-indulgent debauchery.

3. Preparing for the Test

When I got my degree, Sybil and I packed up our four sons and family belongings and headed to Southern California. I was to take command of Fighter Squadron 51, flying supersonic F-8 Crusaders, first at the Miramar Naval Air Station, near San Diego, and later, of course, at sea

aboard various aircraft carriers in the western Pacific. Exactly three years after we drove up to our new home near San Diego, I was shot down and captured in North Vietnam.

During those three years, I had launched on three seven-month cruises to the waters off Vietnam. On the first we were occupied with general surveillance of the fighting erupting in the South; on the second I led the first-ever American bombing raid against North Vietnam; and on the third, I was flying in combat almost daily as the air wing commander of the *USS Oriskany*. But on my bedside table, no matter what carrier I was aboard, were my Epictetus books: *Enchiridion*, *Discourses*, Xenophon's *Memorabilia of Socrates*, and *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*. (Epictetus expected his students to be familiar with Homer's plots.) I didn't have time to be a bookworm, but I spent several hours each week buried in them.

I think it was obvious to my close friends, and certainly to me, that I was a changed man and, I have to say, a better man for my introduction to philosophy and especially to Epictetus. I was on a different track—certainly not an antimilitary track but to some extent an antiorganization track. Against the backdrop of all the posturing and fumbling around peacetime military organizations seem to have to go through, to accept the need for graceful and unself-conscious improvisation under pressure, to break away from set procedures forces you to be reflective, reflective as you put a new mode of operation together. I had become a man detached—not aloof but detached—able to throw out the book without the slightest hesitation when it no longer matched the external circumstances. I was able to put juniors over seniors without embarrassment when their wartime instincts were more reliable. This new abandon, this new built-in flexibility I had gained, was to pay off later in prison.

4. A Soldier's Service

But undergirding my new confidence was the realization that I had found the proper philosophy for the military arts as I practiced them. The Roman Stoics coined the formula *Vivere militare!*—"Life is being a soldier." Epictetus in *Discourses*: "Do you not know that life is a soldier's service? One must keep guard, another go out to reconnoitre, another take the field. If you neglect your responsibilities when some severe order is laid upon you, do you not understand to what a pitiful state you bring the army in so far as in you lies?"

Enchiridion: "Remember, you are an actor in a drama of such sort as the Author chooses—if short, then in a short one; if long, then in a long one. If it be his pleasure that you should enact a poor man, or a cripple, or a ruler, see that you act it well. For this is your business—to act well the given part, but to choose it belongs to Another." "Every one of us, slave or free, has come into this world with innate conceptions as to good and bad, noble and shameful, becoming and unbecoming, happiness and unhappiness, fitting and inappropriate." "If you regard yourself as a man and as a part of some whole, it is fitting for you now to be sick and now to make a voyage and run risks, and now to be in want, and on occasion to die before your time. Why, then are you vexed? Would you

have someone else be sick of a fever now, someone else go on a voyage, someone else die? For it is impossible in such a body as ours, that is, in this universe that envelops us, among these fellow-creatures of ours, that such things should not happen, some to one man, some to another.”

5. Shot Down: What Is Up to You

On September 9, 1965, I flew at 500 knots right into a flak trap, at tree-top level, in a little A-4 airplane—the cockpit walls not even three feet apart—which I couldn’t steer after it was on fire, its control system shot out. After ejection I had about thirty seconds to make my last statement in freedom before I landed in the main street of a little village right ahead. And so help me, I whispered to myself: “Five years down there, at least. I’m leaving the world of technology and entering the world of Epictetus.”

“Ready at hand” from *The Enchiridion* as I ejected from that airplane was the understanding that a Stoic always kept separate files in his mind for (A) those things that are “up to him” and (B) those things that are “not up to him.” Another way of saying it is (A) those things that are “within his power” and (B) those things that are “beyond his power.” Still another way of saying it is (A) those things that are within the grasp of “his Will, his Free Will” and (B) those things that are beyond it. All in category B are “external,” beyond my control, ultimately dooming me to fear and anxiety if I covet them. All in category A are up to me, within my power, within my will, and properly subjects for my total concern and involvement. They include my opinions, my aims, my aversions, my own grief, my own joy, my judgments, my attitude about what is going on, my own good, and my own evil.

6. What It Cost – Station in Life

(Stockdale spent over seven years in Hanoi, four of them in solitary, in leg irons. Here is what the first thing on Epictetus’ list, the thing “not up to you,” actually meant when it was tested. He begins on the parachute ride down.)

What is not up to you? beyond your power? not subject to your will in the last analysis? For starters, let’s take “your station in life.” As I glide down toward that little town on my short parachute ride, I’m just about to learn how negligible is my control over my station in life. It’s not at all up to me. I’m going right now from being the leader of a hundred-plus pilots and a thousand men and, goodness knows, all sorts of symbolic status and goodwill, to being an object of contempt. I’ll be known as a “criminal.”

But that's not half the revelation that is the realization of your own fragility — that you can be reduced by wind and rain and ice and seawater or men to a helpless, sobbing wreck, unable to control even your own bowels, in a matter of minutes. And, more than even that, you're going to face fragilities you never before let yourself believe you could have.

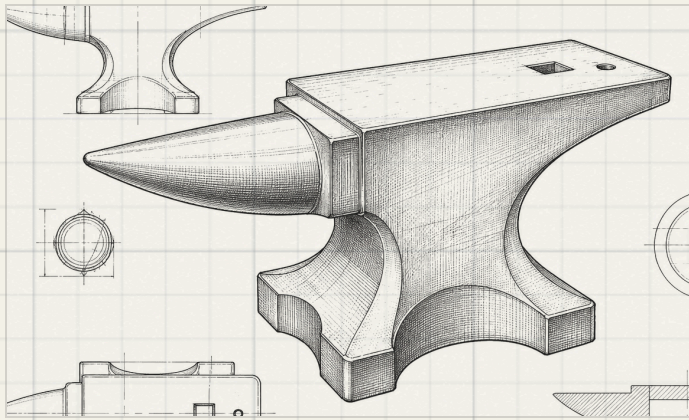
"Station in life," then, can be changed from that of a dignified and competent gentleman of culture to that of a panic-stricken, sobbing, self-loathing wreck in a matter of minutes. So what? To live under the false pretense that you will forever have control of your station in life is to ride for a fall; you're asking for disappointment. So make sure in your heart of hearts, in your inner self, that you treat your station in life with indifference, not with contempt, only with indifference.

DOCUMENT STUDY

U8 — A Good Man Is Hard to Find

AUTHOR: Flannery O'Connor

TRAIT: Moral Courage — anchor text



SOURCE TEXT

Flannery O'Connor – “A Good Man Is Hard to Find” (from *The Avon Book of Modern Writing*, 1953)

THE grandmother didn't want to go to Florida. She wanted to visit some of her connections in east Tennessee and she was seizing at every chance to change Bailey's mind. Bailey was the son she lived with, her only boy. He was sitting on the edge of his chair at the table, bent over the orange sports section of the Journal. "Now look here, Bailey," she said, "see here, read this," and she stood with one hand on her thin hip and the other rattling the newspaper at his bald head. "Here this fellow that calls himself The Misfit is a loose from the Federal Pen and headed toward Florida and you read here what it says he did to these people. Just you read it. I wouldn't take my children in any direction with a criminal like that a loose in it. I couldn't answer to my conscience if I did."

Bailey didn't look up from his reading so she wheeled around then and faced the children's mother, a young woman in slacks, whose face was as broad and innocent as a cabbage and was tied around with a green head-kerchief that had two points on the top like rabbit's ears. She was sitting on the sofa, feeding the baby his apricots out of a jar. "The children have been to Florida before," the old lady said. "You all ought to take them somewhere else for a change so they would see different parts of the world and be broad. They never have been to east Tennessee."

The children's mother didn't seem to hear her but the eight-year-old boy, John Wesley, a stocky child with glasses, said, "If you don't want to go to Florida, why don'tcha stay at home?" He and the little girl, June Star, were reading the funny papers on the floor.

"She wouldn't stay at home to be queen for a day," June Star said without raising her yellow head.

"Yes and what would you do if this fellow, The Misfit, caught you?" the grandmother asked.

"I'd smack his face," John Wesley said.

"She wouldn't stay at home for a million bucks," June Star said. "Afraid she'd miss something. She has to go everywhere we go."

"All right, Miss," the grandmother said. "Just remember that the next time you want me to curl your hair."

June Star said her hair was naturally curly.

The next morning the grandmother was the first one in the car, ready to go. She had her big black valise that looked like the head of a hippopotamus in one corner, and underneath it she was hiding a basket with Pitty Sing, the cat, in it. She didn't intend for the cat to be left alone in the house for

three days because he would miss her too much and she was afraid he might brush against one of the gas burners and accidentally asphyxiate himself. Her son, Bailey, didn't like to arrive at a motel with a cat.

She sat in the middle of the back seat with John Wesley and June Star on either side of her. Bailey and the children's mother and the baby sat in front and they left Atlanta at eight forty-five with the mileage on the car at 55890. The grandmother wrote this down because she thought it would be interesting to say how many miles they had been when they got back. It took them twenty minutes to reach the outskirts of the city.

The old lady settled herself comfortably, removing her white cotton gloves and putting them up with her purse on the shelf in front of the back window. The children's mother still had on slacks and still had her head tied up in a green kerchief, but the grandmother had on a navy blue straw sailor hat with a bunch of white violets on the brim and a navy blue dress with a small white dot in the print. Her collars and cuffs were white organdy trimmed with lace and at her neckline she had pinned a purple spray of cloth violets containing a sachet. In case of an accident, anyone seeing her dead on the highway would know at once that she was a lady.

She said she thought it was going to be a good day for driving, neither too hot nor too cold, and she cautioned Bailey that the speed limit was fifty-five miles an hour and that the patrolmen hid themselves behind billboards and small clumps of trees and sped out after you before you had a chance to slow down. She pointed out interesting details of the scenery: Stone Mountain; the blue granite that in some places came up to both sides of the highway; the brilliant red clay banks slightly streaked with purple; and the various crops that made rows of green lace-work on the ground. The trees were full of silver-white sunlight and the meanest of them sparkled. The children were reading comic magazines and their mother had gone back to sleep.

"Let's go through Georgia fast so we won't have to look at it much," John Wesley said.

"If I were a little boy," said the grandmother, "I wouldn't talk about my native state that way. Tennessee has the mountains and Georgia has the hills."

"Tennessee is just a hillbilly dumping ground," John Wesley said, "and Georgia is a lousy state too."

"You said it," June Star said.

"In my time," said the grandmother, folding her thin veined fingers, "children were more respectful of their native states and their parents and everything else. People did right then. Oh look at the cute little pickaninny!" she said and pointed to a Negro child standing in the door of a shack.

"Wouldn't that make a picture, now?" she asked and they all turned and looked at the little Negro out of the back window. He waved.

"He didn't have any britches on," June Star said.

"He probably didn't have any," the grandmother explained. "Little niggers in the country don't have things like we do. If I could paint, I'd paint that picture," she said.

The children exchanged comic books.

The grandmother offered to hold the baby and the children's mother passed him over the front seat to her. She set him on her knee and bounced him and told him about the things they were passing. She rolled her eyes and screwed up her mouth and stuck her leathery thin face into his smooth bland one. Occasionally he gave her a faraway smile. They passed a large cotton field with five or six graves fenced in the middle of it, like a small island. "Look at the graveyard!" the grandmother said, pointing it out. "That was the old family burying ground. That belonged to the plantation."

"Where's the plantation?" John Wesley asked.

"Gone With the Wind," said the grandmother. "Ha. Ha."

When the children finished all the comic books they had brought, they opened the lunch and ate it. The grandmother ate a peanut butter sandwich and an olive and would not let the children throw the box and the paper napkins out the window. When there was nothing else to do they played a game by choosing a cloud and making the other two guess what shape it suggested. John Wesley took one the shape of a cow and June Star guessed a cow and John Wesley said, no, an automobile, and June Star said he didn't play fair, and they began to slap each other over the grandmother.

The grandmother said she would tell them a story if they would keep quiet. When she told a story, she rolled her eyes and waved her head and was very dramatic. She said once when she was a maiden lady she had been courted by a Mr. Edgar Atkins Teagarden from Jasper, Georgia. She said he was a very good-looking man and a gentleman and that he brought her a watermelon every Saturday afternoon with his initials cut in it, E. A. T. Well, one Saturday, she said, Mr. Teagarden brought the watermelon and there was nobody at home and he left it on the front porch and returned in his buggy to Jasper, but she never got the watermelon, she said, because a nigger boy ate it when he saw the initials, E. A. T.! This story tickled John Wesley's funny bone and he giggled and giggled but June Star didn't think it was any good. She said she wouldn't marry a man that just brought her a watermelon on Saturday. The grandmother said she would have done well to marry Mr. Teagarden because he was a gentleman and had bought Coca-Cola stock when it first came out and that he had died only a few years ago, a very wealthy man.

They stopped at The Tower for barbecued sandwiches. The Tower was a part stucco and part wood filling station and dance hall set in a clearing outside of Timothy. A fat man named Red Sammy Butts ran it and there were signs stuck here and there on the building and for miles up and down the highway saying, TRY RED SAMMY'S FAMOUS BARBECUE. NONE LIKE FAMOUS RED SAMMY'S! RED SAM! THE FAT BOY WITH THE HAPPY LAUGH. A VETERAN! RED SAMMY'S YOUR MAN!

Red Sammy was lying on the bare ground outside The Tower with his head under a truck while a gray monkey about a foot high, chained to a small chinaberry tree, chattered nearby. The monkey sprang back into the tree and got on the highest limb as soon as he saw the children jump out of the car and run toward him.

Inside, The Tower was a long dark room with a counter at one end and tables at the other and dancing space in the middle. They all sat down at a board table next to the nickelodeon and Red Sam's wife, a tall burnt-brown woman with hair and eyes lighter than her skin, came and took their [[ORDER]]. The children's mother put a dime in the machine and played "The Tennessee Waltz," and the grandmother said that tune always made her want to dance. She asked Bailey if he would like to dance but he only glared at her. He didn't have a naturally sunny disposition like she did and trips made him nervous. The grandmother's brown eyes were very bright. She swayed her head from side to side and pretended she was dancing in her chair. June Star said play something she could tap to so the children's mother put in another dime and played a fast number and June Star stepped out onto the dance floor and did her tap routine.

"Ain't she cute?" Red Sam's wife said, leaning over the counter. "Would you like to come be my little girl?"

"No I certainly wouldn't," June Star said. "I wouldn't live in a broken-down place like this for a million bucks!" and she ran back to the table.

"Ain't she cute?" the woman repeated, stretching her mouth politely.

"Arn't you ashamed?" hissed the grandmother.

Red Sam came in and told his wife to quit lounging on the counter and hurry up with these people's order. His khaki trousers reached just to his hip bones and his stomach hung over them like a sack of meal swaying under his shirt. He came over and sat down at a table nearby and let out a combination sigh and yodel. "You can't win," he said. "You can't win," and he wiped his sweating red face off with a gray handkerchief. "These days you don't know who to trust," he said. "Ain't that the truth?"

"People are certainly not nice like they used to be," said the grandmother.

"Two fellers come in here last week," Red Sammy said, "driving a Chrysler. It was a old beat-up car but it was a good one and these boys looked all right to me. Said they worked at the mill and you know I let them fellers charge the gas they bought? Now why did I do that?"

"Because you're a good man!" the grandmother said at once.

"Yes'm, I suppose so," Red Sam said as if he were struck with this answer.

His wife brought the orders, carrying the five plates all at once without a tray, two in each hand and one balanced on her arm. "It isn't a soul in this green world of God's that you can trust," she said. "And I don't count nobody out of that, not nobody," she repeated, looking at Red Sammy.

"Did you read about that criminal, The Misfit, that's escaped?" asked the grandmother.

"I wouldn't be a bit surprised if he didn't attack this place right here," said the woman. "If he hears about it being here, I wouldn't be none surprised to see him. If he hears it's two cent in the cash register, I wouldn't be a tall surprised if he . . ."

"That'll do," Red Sam said. "Go bring these people their Co'-Colas," and the woman went off to get the rest of the order.

"A good man is hard to find," Red Sammy said. "Everything is getting terrible. I remember the day you could go off and leave your screen door unlatched. Not no more."

He and the grandmother discussed better times. The old lady said that in her opinion Europe was entirely to blame for the way things were now. She said the way Europe acted you would think we were made of money and Red Sam said it was no use talking about it, she was exactly right. The children ran outside into the white sunlight and looked at the monkey in the lacy chinaberry tree. He was busy catching fleas on himself and biting each one carefully between his teeth as if it were a delicacy.

They drove off again into the hot afternoon. The grandmother took cat naps and woke up every few minutes with her own snoring. Outside of Toombsboro she woke up and recalled an old plantation that she had visited in this neighborhood once when she was a young lady. She said the house had six white columns across the front and that there was an avenue of oaks leading up to it and two little wooden trellis arbors on either side in front where you sat down with your suitor after a stroll in the garden. She recalled exactly which road to turn off to get to it. She knew that Bailey would not be willing to lose any time looking at an old house, but the more she talked about it, the more she wanted to see it once again and find out if the little twin arbors were still standing. "There was a secret panel in this house," she said craftily, not telling the truth but wishing that she were, "and the story went that all the family silver was hidden in it when Sherman came through but it was never found . . ."

"Hey!" John Wesley said. "Let's go see it! We'll find it! We'll poke all the woodwork and find it! Who lives there? Where do you turn off at? Hey Pop, can't we turn off there?"

"We never have seen a house with a secret panel!" June Star shrieked. "Let's go to the house with the secret panel! Hey Pop, can't we go see the house with the secret panel!"

"It's not far from here, I know," the grandmother said. "It wouldn't take over twenty minutes."

Bailey was looking straight ahead. His jaw was as rigid as a horseshoe. "No," he said.

The children began to yell and scream that they wanted to see the house with the secret panel. John Wesley kicked the back of the front seat and June Star hung over her mother's shoulder and whined desperately into her ear that they never had any fun even on their vacation, that they could never do

what THEY wanted to do. The baby began to scream and John Wesley kicked the back of the seat so hard that his father could feel the blows in his kidney.

"All right!" he shouted and drew the car to a stop at the side of the road. "Will you all shut up? Will you all just shut up for one second? If you don't shut up, we won't go anywhere.

"It would be very educational for them," the grandmother murmured.

"All right," Bailey said, "but get this: this is the only time we're going to stop for anything like this. This is the one and only time."

"The dirt road that you have to turn down is about a mile back," the grandmother directed. "I marked it when we passed."

"A dirt road," Bailey groaned.

After they had turned around and were headed toward the dirt road, the grandmother recalled other points about the house, the beautiful glass over the front doorway and the candle-lamp in the hall. John Wesley said that the secret panel was probably in the fireplace.

"You can't go inside this house," Bailey said. "You don't know who lives there."

"While you all talk to the people in front, I'll run around behind and get in a window," John Wesley suggested.

"We'll all stay in the car," his mother said. They turned onto the dirt road and the car raced roughly along in a swirl of pink dust. The grandmother recalled the times when there were no paved roads and thirty miles was a day's journey. The dirt road was hilly and there were sudden washes in it and sharp curves on dangerous embankments. All at once they would be on a hill, looking down over the blue tops of trees for miles around, then the next minute, they would be in a red depression with the dust-coated trees looking down on them.

"This place had better turn up in a minute," Bailey said, "or I'm going to turn around."

The road looked as if no one had traveled on it in months.

"It's not much farther," the grandmother said and just as she said it, a horrible thought came to her. The thought was so embarrassing that she turned red in the face and her eyes dilated and her feet jumped up, upsetting her valise in the corner. The instant the valise moved, the newspaper top she had over the basket under it rose with a snarl and Pitty Sing, the cat, sprang onto Bailey's shoulder.

The children were thrown to the floor and their mother, clutching the baby, was thrown out the door onto the ground; the old lady was thrown into the front seat. The car turned over once and landed right-side-up in a gulch off the side of the road. Bailey remained in the driver's seat with the cat—gray-striped with a broad white face and an orange nose—clinging to his neck like a caterpillar.

As soon as the children saw they could move their arms and legs, they scrambled out of the car, shouting, "We've had an ACCIDENT!" The grandmother was curled up under the dashboard, hoping she was injured so that Bailey's wrath would not come down on her all at once. The horrible thought she had had before the accident was that the house she had remembered so vividly was not in Georgia but in Tennessee.

Bailey removed the cat from his neck with both hands and flung it out the window against the side of a pine tree. Then he got out of the car and started looking for the children's mother. She was sitting against the side of the red gutted ditch, holding the screaming baby, but she only had a cut down her face and a broken shoulder. "We've had an ACCIDENT!" the children screamed in a frenzy of delight.

"But nobody's killed," June Star said with disappointment as the grandmother limped out of the car, her hat still pinned to her head but the broken front brim standing up at a jaunty angle and the violet spray hanging off the side. They all sat down in the ditch, except the children, to recover from the shock. They were all shaking.

"Maybe a car will come along," said the children's mother hoarsely. "I believe I have injured an organ," said the grandmother, pressing her side, but no one answered her. Bailey's teeth were chattering. He had on a yellow sport shirt with bright blue parrots designed in it and his face was as yellow as the shirt. The grandmother decided that she would not mention that the house was in Tennessee.

The road was about ten feet above and they could see only the tops of the trees on the other side of it. Behind the ditch they were sitting in there were more woods, tall and dark and deep. In a few minutes they saw a car some distance away on top of a hill, coming slowly as if the occupants were watching them. The grandmother stood up and waved both arms dramatically to attract their attention. The car continued to come on slowly, disappeared around a bend and appeared again, moving even slower, on top of the hill they had gone over. It was a big black battered hearse-like automobile. There were three men in it.

It came to a stop just over them and for some minutes, the driver looked down with a steady expressionless gaze to where they were sitting, and didn't speak. Then he turned his head and muttered something to the other two and they got out. One was a fat boy in black trousers and a red sweat shirt with a silver stallion embossed on the front of it. He moved around on the right side of them and stood staring, his mouth partly open in a kind of loose grin. The other had on khaki pants and a blue striped coat and a gray hat pulled down very low, hiding most of his face. He came around slowly on the left side. Neither spoke.

The driver got out of the car and stood by the side of it, looking down at them. He was an older man than the other two. His hair was just beginning to gray and he wore silver-rimmed spectacles that gave him a scholarly look. He had a long creased face and didn't have on any shirt or undershirt. He had on blue jeans that were too tight for him and was holding a black hat and a gun. The two boys also had guns.

"We've had an ACCIDENT!" the children screamed.

The grandmother had the peculiar feeling that the bespectacled man was someone she knew. His face was as familiar to her as if she had known him all her life but she could not recall who he was. He moved away from the car and began to come down the embankment, placing his feet carefully so that he wouldn't slip. He had on tan and white shoes and no socks, and his ankles were red and thin. "Good afternoon," he said. "I see you all had you a little spill."

"We turned over twice!" said the grandmother.

"Once," he corrected. "We seen it happen. Try their car and see will it run, Hiram," he said quietly to the boy with the gray hat.

"What you got that gun for?" John Wesley asked. "Whatcha gonna do with that gun?"

"Lady," the man said to the children's mother, "would you mind calling them children to sit down by you? Children make me nervous. I want all you all to sit down right together there where you're at."

"What are you telling US what to do for?" June Star asked.

Behind them the line of woods gaped like a dark open mouth. "Come here," said their mother.

"Look here now," Bailey began suddenly, "we're in a predicament! We're in . . ."

The grandmother shrieked. She scrambled to her feet and stood staring. "You're The Misfit!" she said. "I recognized you at once!"

"Yes'm," the man said, smiling slightly as if he were pleased in spite of himself to be known, "but it would have been better for all of you, lady, if you hadn't of reckernized me."

Bailey turned his head sharply and said something to his mother that shocked even the children. The old lady began to cry and The Misfit reddened.

"Lady," he said, "don't you get upset. Sometimes a man says things he don't mean. I don't reckon he meant to talk to you thataway."

"You wouldn't shoot a lady, would you?" the grandmother said and removed a clean handkerchief from her cuff and began to slap at her eyes with it.

The Misfit pointed the toe of his shoe into the ground and made a little hole and then covered it up again. "I would hate to have to," he said.

"Listen," the grandmother almost screamed, "I know you're a good man. You don't look a bit like you have common blood. I know you must come from nice people!"

"Yes mam," he said, "finest people in the world." When he smiled he showed a row of strong white teeth. "God never made a finer woman than my mother and my daddy's heart was pure gold," he said. The boy with the red sweat shirt had come around behind them and was standing with his gun at his hip. The Misfit squatted down on the ground. "Watch them children, Bobby Lee," he said. "You know they make me nervous." He looked at the six of them huddled together in front of him and he seemed to be embarrassed as if he couldn't think of anything to say. "Ain't a cloud in the sky," he remarked, looking up at it. "Don't see no sun but don't see no cloud neither."

"Yes, it's a beautiful day," said the grandmother. "Listen," she said, "you shouldn't call yourself The Misfit because I know you're a good man at heart. I can just look at you and tell."

"Hush!" Bailey yelled. "Hush! Everybody shut up and let me handle this!" He was squatting in the position of a runner about to sprint forward but he didn't move.

"I prechate that, lady," The Misfit said and drew a little circle in the ground with the butt of his gun.

"It'll take a half a hour to fix this here car," Hiram called, looking over the raised hood of it.

"Well, first you and Bobby Lee get him and that little boy to step over yonder with you," The Misfit said, pointing to Bailey and John Wesley. "The boys want to ast you something," he said to Bailey. "Would you mind stepping back in them woods there with them?"

"Listen," Bailey began, "we're in a terrible predicament! Nobody realizes what this is," and his voice cracked. His eyes were as blue and intense as the parrots in his shirt and he remained perfectly still.

The grandmother reached up to adjust her hat brim as if she were going to the woods with him but it came off in her hand. She stood staring at it and after a second she let it fall on the ground. Hiram pulled Bailey up by the arm as if he were assisting an old man. John Wesley caught hold of his father's hand and Bobby Lee followed. They went off toward the woods and just as they reached the dark edge, Bailey turned and supporting himself against a gray naked pine trunk, he shouted, "I'll be back in a minute, Mamma, wait on me!"

"Come back this instant!" his mother shrilled but they all disappeared into the woods.

"Bailey Boy!" the grandmother called in a tragic voice but she found she was looking at The Misfit squatting on the ground in front of her. "I just know you're a good man," she said desperately. "You're not a bit common!"

"Nome, I ain't a good man," The Misfit said after a second as if he had considered her statement carefully, "but I ain't the worst in the world neither. My daddy said I was a different breed of dog from my brothers and sisters. 'You know,' Daddy said, 'it's some that can live their whole life out without asking about it and it's others has to know why it is, and this boy is one of the latters. He's going to be into everything!'" He put on his black hat and looked up suddenly and then away deep

into the woods as if he were embarrassed again. "I'm sorry I don't have on a shirt before you ladies," he said, hunching his shoulders slightly. "We buried our clothes that we had on when we escaped and we're just making do until we can get better. We borrowed these from some folks we met," he explained.

"That's perfectly all right," the grandmother said. "Maybe Bailey has an extra shirt in his suitcase."

"I'll look and see terrectly," The Misfit said.

"Where are they taking him?" the children's mother screamed.

"Daddy was a card himself," The Misfit said. "You couldn't put anything over on him. He never got in trouble with the Authorities though. Just had the knack of handling them."

"You could be honest too if you'd only try," said the grandmother. "Think how wonderful it would be to settle down and live a comfortable life and not have to think about somebody chasing you all the time."

The Misfit kept scratching in the ground with the butt of his gun as if he were thinking about it. "Yes'm, somebody is always after you," he murmured.

The grandmother noticed how thin his shoulder blades were just behind his hat because she was standing up looking down on him. "Do you ever pray?" she asked.

He shook his head. All she saw was the black hat wiggle between his shoulder blades. "Nome," he said.

There was a pistol shot from the woods, followed closely by another. Then silence. The old lady's head jerked around. She could hear the wind move through the tree tops like a long satisfied insuck of breath. "Bailey Boy!" she called.

"I was a gospel singer for a while," The Misfit said. "I been most everything. Been in the arm service, both land and sea, at home and abroad, been twict married, been an undertaker, been with the railroads, plowed Mother Earth, been in a tornado, seen a man burnt alive oncet," and he looked up at the children's mother and the little girl who were sitting close together, their faces white and their eyes glassy; "I even seen a woman flogged," he said.

"Pray, pray," the grandmother began, "pray, pray . . ."

"I never was a bad boy that I remember of," The Misfit said in an almost dreamy voice, "but somewheres along the line I done something wrong and got sent to the penitentiary. I was buried alive," and he looked up and held her attention to him by a steady stare.

"That's when you should have started to pray," she said. "What did you do to get sent to the penitentiary that first time?"

"Turn to the right, it was a wall," The Misfit said, looking up again at the cloudless sky. "Turn to the left, it was a wall. Look up it was a ceiling, look down it was a floor. I forget what I done, lady. I set there and set there, trying to remember what it was I done and I ain't recalled it to this day. Oncet in a while, I would think it was coming to me, but it never come."

"Maybe they put you in by mistake," the old lady said vaguely.

"Nome," he said. "It wasn't no mistake. They had the papers on me."

"You must have stolen something," she said.

The Misfit sneered slightly. "Nobody had nothing I wanted," he said. "It was a head-doctor at the penitentiary said what I had done was kill my daddy but I known that for a lie. My daddy died in nineteen ought nineteen of the epidemic flu and I never had a thing to do with it. He was buried in the Mount Hopewell Baptist churchyard and you can go there and see for yourself."

"If you would pray," the old lady said, "Jesus would help you."

"That's right," The Misfit said.

"Well then, why don't you pray?" she asked trembling with delight suddenly.

"I don't want no hep," he said. "I'm doing all right by myself."

Bobby Lee and Hiram came ambling back from the woods. Bobby Lee was dragging a yellow shirt with bright blue parrots in it.

"Thow me that shirt, Bobby Lee," The Misfit said. The shirt came flying at him and landed on his shoulder and he put it on. The grandmother couldn't name what the shirt reminded her of. "No, lady," The Misfit said while he was buttoning it up, "I found out the crime don't matter. You can do one thing or you can do another, kill a man or take a tire off his car, because sooner or later you're going to forget what it was you done and just be punished for it."

The children's mother had begun to make heaving noises as if she couldn't get her breath. "Lady," he asked, "would you and that little girl like to step off yonder with Bobby Lee and Hiram and join your husband?"

"Yes, thank you," the mother said faintly. Her left arm dangled helplessly and she was holding the baby, who had gone to sleep, in the other. "Hep that lady up, Hiram," The Misfit said as she struggled to climb out of the ditch, "and Bobby Lee, you hold onto that little girl's hand."

"I don't want to hold hands with him," June Star said. "He reminds me of a pig."

The fat boy blushed and laughed and caught her by the arm and pulled her off into the woods after Hiram and her mother.

Alone with The Misfit, the grandmother found that she had lost her voice. There was not a cloud in the sky nor any sun. There was nothing around her but woods. She wanted to tell him that he must pray. She opened and closed her mouth several times before anything came out. Finally she found herself saying, "Jesus. Jesus," meaning, Jesus will help you, but the way she was saying it, it sounded as if she might be cursing.

"Yes'm," The Misfit said as if he agreed. "Jesus shown everything off balance. It was the same case with Him as with me except He hadn't committed any crime and they could prove I had committed one because they had the papers on me. Of course," he said, "they never shown me my papers. That's why I sign myself now. I said long ago, you get you a signature and sign everything you do and keep a [[COPY]] of it. Then you'll know what you done and you can hold up the crime to the punishment and see do they match and in the end you'll have something to prove you ain't been treated right. I call myself The Misfit," he said, "because I can't make what all I done wrong fit what all I gone through in punishment."

There was a piercing scream from the woods, followed closely by a pistol report.

"Does it seem right to you, lady, that one is punished a heap and another ain't punished at all?"

"Jesus!" the old lady cried. "You've got good blood! I know you wouldn't shoot a lady! I know you come from nice! Pray! Jesus, you ought not to shoot a lady. I'll give you all the money I've got!"

"Lady," The Misfit said, looking beyond her far into the woods, "there never was a body that give the undertaker a tip."

There were two more pistol reports and the grandmother raised her head like a parched old turkey hen crying for water and called, "Bailey Boy, Bailey Boy!" as if her heart would break.

"Jesus was the only One that ever raised the dead," The Misfit continued, "and He shouldn't have done it. He shown everything off balance. If He did what He said, then it's nothing for you to do but throw away everything and follow Him, and if He didn't, then it's nothing for you to do but enjoy the few minutes you got left the best way you can—by killing somebody or burning down his house or doing some other meanness to him. No pleasure but meanness," he said and his voice had become almost a snarl.

"Maybe He didn't raise the dead," the old lady mumbled, not knowing what she was saying and feeling so dizzy that she sank down in the ditch with her legs twisted under her.

"I wasn't there so I can't say He didn't," The Misfit said. "I wisht I had of been there," he said, hitting the ground with his fist. "It ain't right I wasn't there because if I had of been there I would of known. Listen lady," he said in a high voice, "if I had of been there I would of known and I wouldn't be like I am now." His voice seemed about to crack and the grandmother's head cleared for an instant. She saw the man's face twisted close to her own as if he were going to cry and she murmured, "Why you're one of my babies. You're one of my own children!" She reached out and

touched him on the shoulder. The Misfit sprang back as if a snake had bitten him and shot her three times through the chest. Then he put his gun down on the ground and took off his glasses and began to clean them.

Hiram and Bobby Lee returned from the woods and stood over the ditch, looking down at the grandmother who half sat and half lay in a puddle of blood with her legs crossed under her like a child's and her face smiling up at the cloudless sky.

Without his glasses, The Misfit's eyes were red-rimmed and pale and defenseless-looking. "Take her off and throw her where you shown the others," he said, picking up the cat that was rubbing itself against his leg.

"She was a talker, wasn't she?" Bobby Lee said, sliding down the ditch with a yodel.

"She would of been a good woman," The Misfit said, "if it had been somebody there to shoot her every minute of her life."

"Some fun!" Bobby Lee said.

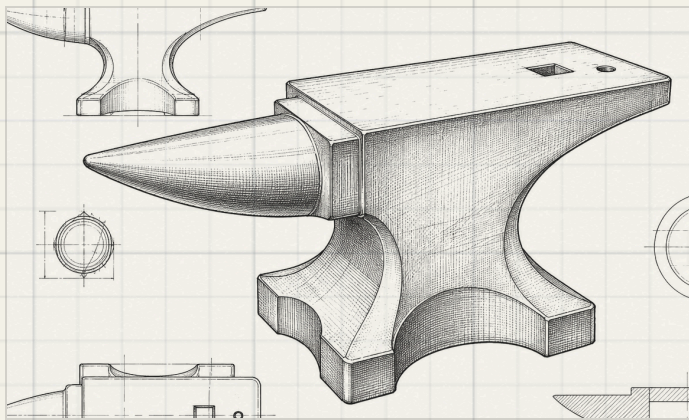
"Shut up, Bobby Lee," The Misfit said. "It's no real pleasure in life."

DOCUMENT STUDY

U8 – God Sees the Truth but Waits

AUTHOR: Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy

TRAIT: Moral Courage — companion text



SOURCE TEXT

Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy – “God Sees the Truth, but Waits” (from *Twenty-Three Tales*, 1872)

IN the town of Vladímir lived a young merchant named Iván Dmítritch Aksyónof. He had two shops and a house of his own. Aksyónof was a handsome, fair-haired, curly-headed fellow, full of fun, and very fond of singing. When quite a young man he had been given to drink, and was riotous when he had had too much, but after he married he gave up drinking, except now and then.

One summer Aksyónof was going to the Nízhný Fair, and as he bade good-bye to his family his wife said to him, 'Iván Dmítritch, do not start to-day; I have had a bad dream about you.'

Aksyónof laughed, and said, 'You are afraid that when I get to the fair I shall go on the spree.'

His wife replied: 'I do not know what I am afraid of; all I know is that I had a bad dream. I dreamt you returned from the town, and when you took off your cap I saw that your hair was quite grey.'

Aksyónof laughed. 'That's a lucky sign,' said he. 'See if I don't sell out all my goods, and bring you some presents from the fair.'

So he said good-bye to his family, and drove away.

When he had travelled half-way, he met a merchant whom he knew, and they put up at the same inn for the night. They had some tea together, and then went to bed in adjoining rooms.

It was not Aksyónof's habit to sleep late, and, wishing to travel while it was still cool, he aroused his driver before dawn, and told him to put in the horses.

Then he made his way across to the landlord of the inn (who lived in a cottage at the back), paid his bill, and continued his journey.

When he had gone about twenty-five miles, he stopped for the horses to be fed. Aksyónof rested awhile in the passage of the inn, then he stepped out into the porch and, ordering a samovár to be heated got out his guitar and began to play.

Suddenly a tróyka drove up with tinkling bells, and an official alighted, followed by two soldiers. He came to Aksyónof and began to question him, asking him who he was and whence he came. Aksyónof answered him fully, and said, 'Won't you have some tea with me?' But the official went on cross-questioning him and asking him, 'Where did you spend last night? Were you alone, or with a fellow-merchant? Did you see the other merchant this morning? Why did you leave the inn before dawn?'

Aksyónof wondered why he was asked all these questions, but he described all that had happened, and then added, 'Why do you cross-question me as if I were a thief or a robber? I am travelling on business of my own, and there is no need to question me.'

Then the official, calling the soldiers, said, 'I am the police-officer of this district, and I question you because the merchant with whom you spent last night has been found with his throat cut. We must search your things.'

They entered the house. The soldiers and the police-officer unstrapped Aksyónof's luggage and searched it. Suddenly the officer drew a knife out of a bag, crying, 'Whose knife is this?'

Aksyónof looked, and seeing a blood-stained knife taken from his bag, he was frightened.

'How is it there is blood on this knife?'

Aksyónof tried to answer, but could hardly utter a word, and only stammered: 'I -- I don't know -- not mine.'

Then the police-officer said, 'This morning the merchant was found in bed with his throat cut. You are the only person who could have done it. The house was locked from inside, and no one else was there. Here is this bloodstained knife in your bag, and your face and manner betray you! Tell me how you killed him, and how much money you stole?'

Aksyónof swore he had not done it; that he had not seen the merchant after they had had tea together; that he had no money except eight thousand roubles of his own, and that the knife was not his. But his voice was broken, his face pale, and he trembled with fear as though he were guilty.

The police-officer ordered the soldiers to bind Aksyónof and to put him in the cart. As they tied his feet together and flung him into the cart, Aksyónof crossed himself and wept. His money and goods were taken from him, and he was sent to the nearest town and imprisoned there. Enquiries as to his character were made in Vladímir. The merchants and other inhabitants of that town said that in former days he used to drink and waste his time, but that he was a good man. Then the trial came on: he was charged with murdering a merchant from Ryazán, and robbing him of twenty thousand roubles.

His wife was in despair, and did not know what to believe. Her children were all quite small; one was a baby at her breast. Taking them all with her, she went to the town where her husband was in gaol. At first she was not allowed to see him; but, after much begging, she obtained permission from the officials, and was taken to him. When she saw her husband in prison-dress and in chains, shut up with thieves and criminals, she fell down, and did not come to her senses for a long time. Then she drew her children to her, and sat down near him. She told him of things at home, and asked about what had happened to him. He told her all, and she asked, 'What can we do now?'

'We must petition the Tsar not to let an innocent man perish.'

His wife told him that she had sent a petition to the Tsar, but that it had not been accepted.

Aksyónof did not reply, but only looked downcast.

Then his wife said, 'It was not for nothing I dreamt your hair had turned grey. You remember? You should not have started that day.' And passing her fingers through his hair, she said: 'Ványa dearest, tell your wife the truth; was it not you who did it?'

'So you, too, suspect me!' said Aksyónof, and hiding his face in his hands, he began to weep. Then a soldier came to say that the wife and children must go away; and Aksyónof said good-bye to his family for the last time.

When they were gone, Aksyónof recalled what had been said, and when he remembered that his wife also had suspected him, he said to himself, 'It seems that only God can know the truth, it is to Him alone we must appeal, and from Him alone expect mercy.'

And Aksyónof wrote no more petitions; gave up all hope, and only prayed to God.

Aksyónof was condemned to be flogged and sent to the mines. So he was flogged with a knout, and when the wounds made by the knout were healed, he was driven to Siberia with other convicts.

For twenty-six years Aksyónof lived as a convict in Siberia. His hair turned white as snow and his beard grew long, thin, and grey. All his mirth went; he stooped; he walked slowly, spoke little, and never laughed, but he often prayed.

In prison Aksyónof learnt to make boots, and earned a little money, with which he bought *The Lives of the Saints*. He read this book when there was light enough in the prison; and on Sundays in the prison-church he read the lessons and sang in the choir; for his voice was still good.

The prison authorities liked Aksyónof for his meekness, and his fellow-prisoners respected him: they called him 'Grandfather,' and 'The Saint.' When they wanted to petition the prison authorities about anything, they always made Aksyónof their spokesman, and when there were quarrels among the prisoners they came to him to put things right, and to judge the matter.

No news reached Aksyónof from his home, and he did not even know if his wife and children were still alive.

One day a fresh gang of convicts came to the prison. In the evening the old prisoners collected round the new ones and asked them what towns or villages they came from, and what they were sentenced for. Among the rest Aksyónof sat down near the new-comers, and listened with downcast air to what was said.

One of the new convicts, a tall, strong man of sixty, with a closely-cropped grey beard, was telling the others what he had been arrested for.

'Well, friends,' he said, 'I only took a horse that was tied to a sledge, and I was arrested and accused of stealing. I said I had only taken it to get home quicker, and had then let it go; besides, the driver was a personal friend of mine. So I said, "It's all right." "No," said they, "you stole it." But how or

where I stole it they could not say. I once really did something wrong, and ought by rights to have come here long ago, but that time I was not found out. Now I have been sent here for nothing at all. . . . Eh, but it's lies I'm telling you; I've been to Siberia before, but I did not stay long.'

'Where are you from?' asked some one.

'From Vladímir. My family are of that town. My name is Makár, and they also call me Semyónitch.'

Aksyónof raised his head and said: 'Tell me, Semyónitch, do you know anything of the merchants Aksyónof, of Vladímir? Are they still alive?'

'Know them? Of course I do. The Aksyónofs are rich, though their father is in Siberia: a sinner like ourselves, it seems! As for you, Gran'dad, how did you come here?'

Aksyónof did not like to speak of his misfortune. He only sighed, and said, 'For my sins I have been in prison these twenty-six years.'

'What sins?' asked Makár Semyónitch.

But Aksyónof only said, 'Well, well -- I must have deserved it!' He would have said no more, but his companions told the new-comer how Aksyónof came to be in Siberia: how some one had killed a merchant and had put a knife among Aksyónof's things, and Aksyónof had been unjustly condemned.

When Makár Semyónitch heard this, he looked at Aksyónof, slapped his own knee, and exclaimed, 'Well this is wonderful! Really wonderful! But how old you've grown, Gran'dad!'

The others asked him why he was so surprised, and where he had seen Aksyónof before; but Makár Semyónitch did not reply. He only said: 'It's wonderful that we should meet here, lads!'

These words made Aksyónof wonder whether this man knew who had killed the merchant; so he said 'Perhaps, Semyónitch, you have heard of that affair or maybe you've seen me before?'

'How could I help hearing? The world's full of rumours. But it's long ago, and I've forgotten what I heard.'

'Perhaps you heard who killed the merchant?' asked Aksyónof.

Makár Semyónitch laughed, and replied, 'It must have been him in whose bag the knife was found! If some one else hid the knife there, "He's not a thief till he's caught," as the saying is. How could any one put a knife into your bag while it was under your head? It would surely have woke you up?'

When Aksyónof heard these words, he felt sure this was the man who had killed the merchant. He rose and went away. All that night Aksyónof lay awake.

He felt terribly unhappy, and all sorts of images rose in his mind. There was the image of his wife as she was when he parted from her to go to the fair. He saw her as if she were present; her face and her eyes rose before him; he heard her speak and laugh. Then he saw his children, quite little, as

they were at that time: one with a little cloak on, another at his mother's breast. And then he remembered himself as he used to be -- young and merry. He remembered how he sat playing the guitar in the porch of the inn where he was arrested, and how free from care he had been. He saw, in his mind, the place where he was flogged, the executioner, and the people standing around; the chains, the convicts, all the twenty-six years of his prison life, and his premature old age. The thought of it all made him so wretched that he was ready to kill himself.

'And it's all that villain's doing!' thought Aksyónof. And his anger was so great against Makár Semyónitch that he longed for vengeance, even if he himself should perish for it. He kept repeating prayers all night, but could get no peace. During the day he did not go near Makár Semyónitch, nor even look at him.

A fortnight passed in this way. Aksyónof could not sleep at nights, and was so miserable that he did not know what to do.

One night as he was walking about the prison he noticed some earth that came rolling out from under one of the shelves on which the prisoners slept. He stopped to see what it was. Suddenly Makár Semyónitch crept out from under the shelf, and looked up at Aksyónof with frightened face. Aksyónof tried to pass without looking at him, but Makár seized his hand and told him that he had dug a hole under the wall, getting rid of the earth by putting it into his high-boots, and emptying it out every day on the road when the prisoners were driven to their work.

'Just you keep quiet, old man, and you shall get out too. If you blab they'll flog the life out of me, but I will kill you first.'

Aksyónof trembled with anger as he looked at his enemy. He drew his hand away, saying, 'I have no wish to escape, and you have no need to kill me; you killed me long ago! As to telling of you -- I may do so or not, as God shall direct.'

Next day, when the convicts were led out to work, the convoy soldiers noticed that one or other of the prisoners emptied some earth out of his boots. The prison was searched, and the tunnel found. The Governor came and questioned all the prisoners to find out who had dug the hole. They all denied any knowledge of it. Those who knew, would not betray Makár Semyónitch, knowing he would be flogged almost to death. At last the Governor turned to Aksyónof, whom he knew to be a just man, and said:

'You are a truthful old man; tell me, before God, who dug the hole?'

Makár Semyónitch stood as if he were quite unconcerned, looking at the Governor and not so much as glancing at Aksyónof. Aksyónof's lips and hands trembled, and for a long time he could not utter a word. He thought, 'Why should I screen him who ruined my life? Let him pay for what I have suffered. But if I tell, they will probably flog the life out of him and maybe I suspect him wrongly. And, after all, what good would it be to me?'

'Well, old man,' repeated the Governor, 'tell us the truth: who has been digging under the wall?'

Aksyónof glanced at Makár Semyónitch, and said 'I cannot say, your honour. It is not God's will that I should tell! Do what you like with me; I am in your hands.'

However much the Governor tried, Aksyónof would say no more, and so the matter had to be left.

That night, when Aksyónof was lying on his bed and just beginning to doze, some one came quietly and sat down on his bed. He peered through the darkness and recognized Makár.

'What more do you want of me?' asked Aksyónof. 'Why have you come here?'

Makár Semyónitch was silent. So Aksyónof sat up and said, 'What do you want? Go away, or I will call the guard!'

Makár Semyónitch bent close over Aksyónof, and whispered, 'Iván Dmítritch, forgive me!'

'What for?' asked Aksyónof.

'It was I who killed the merchant and hid the knife among your things. I meant to kill you too, but I heard a noise outside; so I hid the knife in your bag and escaped out of the window.'

Aksyónof was silent, and did not know what to say. Makár Semyónitch slid off the bed-shelf and knelt upon the ground. 'Iván Dmítritch,' said he, 'forgive me! For the love of God, forgive me! I will confess that it was I who killed the merchant, and you will be released and can go to your home.'

'It is easy for you to talk,' said Aksyónof, 'but I have suffered for you these twenty-six years. Where could I go to now? . . . My wife is dead, and my children have forgotten me. I have nowhere to go. . . .'

Makár Semyónitch did not rise, but beat his head on the floor. 'Iván Dmítritch, forgive me!' he cried. 'When they flogged me with the knout it was not so hard to bear as it is to see you now . . . yet you had pity on me, and did not tell. For Christ's sake forgive me, wretch that I am!' And he began to sob.

When Aksyónof heard him sobbing he, too, began to weep.

'God will forgive you!' said he. 'Maybe I am a hundred times worse than you.' And at these words his heart grew light, and the longing for home left him. He no longer had any desire to leave the prison, but only hoped for his last hour to come.

In spite of what Aksyónof had said, Makár Semyónitch confessed his guilt. But when the order for his release came, Aksyónof was already dead.

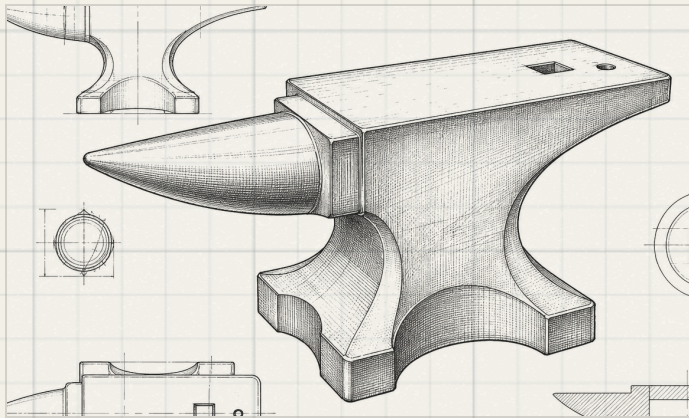
(Written in 1872.)

DOCUMENT STUDY

U8 – After Ten Years

AUTHOR: Dietrich Bonhoeffer

TRAIT: Moral Courage



SOURCE TEXT

Dietrich Bonhoeffer – “After Ten Years”

I After Ten Years TEN YEARS is a long stretch in a man's life. Time is the most precious gift in our possession, for it is the most irrevocable. This is what makes it so disturbing to look back upon time we have lost. Time lost is time when we have not lived a full human life, time unenriched by experience, creative endeavour, enjoyment and suffering. Time lost is time we have not filled, time left empty. The past ten years have not been like that. Our losses have been immeasurable, but we have not lost time. True, knowledge and experience, which are realized only in retrospect, are mere abstractions compared with the reality, compared with the life we have actually lived. But just as the capacity to forget is a gift of grace, so memory, the recalling of the lessons we have learnt, is an essential element in responsible living. In the following pages I hope to put on record some of the lessons we have learnt and the experiences we have shared during the past ten years. These are not just individual experiences; they are not arranged in an orderly way, there is no attempt to discuss them or to theorize about them. All I have done is to jot down as they come some of the discoveries made by a circle of like-minded friends, discoveries about the business of human life. The only connexion between them is that of concrete experience. There is nothing new or startling about them, for they have been known long before. But to us has been granted the privilege of learning them anew by first-hand experience. I cannot write a single word about these things without a deep sense of gratitude for the fellowship of spirit and community of life we have been allowed to enjoy and preserve throughout these years.

No Ground beneath our Feet Surely there has never been a generation in the course of human history with so little ground under its feet as our own.

NO GROUND BENEATH OUR FEET Every conceivable alternative seems equally intolerable. We try to escape from the present by looking entirely to the past or the future for our inspiration, and yet, without indulging in fanciful dreams, we are able to wait for the success of our cause in quietness and confidence. It may be however that the responsible, thinking people of earlier generations who stood at a turning-point of history felt just as we do, for the very reason that something new was being born which was not discernible in the alternatives of the present.

Who Stands his Ground?

The great masquerade of evil has wrought havoc with all our ethical preconceptions. This appearance of evil in the guise of light, beneficence and historical necessity is utterly bewildering to anyone nurtured in our traditional ethical systems. But for the Christian who frames his life on the Bible it simply confirms the radical evilness of evil.

The failure of rationalism is evident. With the best of intentions, but with a naive lack of realism, the rationalist imagines that a small dose of reason will be enough to put the world right. In his short-sightedness he wants to do justice to all sides, but in the *mélée* of conflicting forces he gets

trampled upon without having achieved the slightest effect. Disappointed by the irrationality of the world, he realizes at last his futility, retires from the fray, and weakly surrenders to the winning side.

Worse still is the total collapse of moral fanaticism. The fanatic imagines that his moral purity will prove a match for the power of evil, but like a bull he goes for the red rag instead of the man who carries it, grows weary and succumbs. He becomes entangled with non-essentials and falls into the trap set by the superior ingenuity of his adversary.

Then there is the man with a conscience. He fights singlehanded against overwhelming odds in situations which demand a decision. But there are so many conflicts going on, all of which demand some vital choice—with no advice or support save that of his own conscience—that he is torn to pieces.

WHO STANDS HIS GROUND?

Evil approaches him in so many specious and deceptive guises that his conscience becomes nervous and vacillating. In the end he contents himself with a salved instead of a clear conscience, and starts lying to his conscience as a means of avoiding despair. If a man relies exclusively on his conscience he fails to see how a bad conscience is sometimes more wholesome and strong than a deluded one.

When men are confronted by a bewildering variety of alternatives, the path of duty seems to offer a sure way out. They grasp at the imperative as the one certainty. The responsibility for the imperative rests upon its author, not upon its executor. But when men are confined to the limits of duty, they never risk a daring deed on their own responsibility, which is the only way to score a bull's eye against evil and defeat it. The man of duty will in the end be forced to give the devil his due.

What then of the man of freedom? He is the man who aspires to stand his ground in the world, who values the necessary deed more highly than a clear conscience or the duties of his calling, who is ready to sacrifice a barren principle for a fruitful compromise or a barren mediocrity for a fruitful radicalism. What then of him? He must beware lest his freedom should become his own undoing. For in choosing the lesser of two evils he may fail to see that the greater evil he seeks to avoid may prove the lesser. Here we have the raw material of tragedy.

Some seek refuge from the rough-and-tumble of public life in the sanctuary of their own private virtue. Such men however are compelled to seal their lips and shut their eyes to the injustice around them. Only at the cost of self-deception can they keep themselves pure from the defilements incurred by responsible action. For all that they achieve, that which they leave undone will still torment their peace of mind. They will either go to pieces in face of this disquiet, or develop into the most hypocritical of all Pharisees.

Who stands his ground? Only the man whose ultimate criterion is not in his reason, his principles, his conscience, his freedom or his virtue, but who is ready to sacrifice all these CIVIL COURAGE? things when he is called to obedient and responsible action in faith and exclusive allegiance to God. The responsible man seeks to make his whole life a response to the question and call of God.

Civil Courage? What lies behind the complaint about the dearth of civil courage? The last ten years have produced a rich harvest of bravery and self-sacrifice, but hardly any civil courage, even among ourselves. To attribute this to personal cowardice would be an all too facile psychology. Its background must be sought elsewhere. In the course of a long history we Germans have had to learn the necessity and the power of obedience. The subordination of all individual desires and opinions to the call of duty has given meaning and nobility to life. We have looked upwards, not in servile fear, but in free trust, seeing our duty as a call, and the call as a vocation. This readiness to follow a command from above rather than our own private opinion of what was best was a sign of a legitimate selfdistrust. Who can deny that in obedience, duty and calling we Germans have again and again excelled in bravery and selfsacrifice? But the German has preserved his freedom—what nation has talked so passionately of freedom as we have, from Luther to the idealistsPp—by seeking deliverance from his own will through service to the community. Calling and freedom were two sides of the same thing. The trouble was, he did not understand his world. He forgot that submissiveness and self-sacrifice could be exploited for evil ends. Once that happened, once the exercise of the calling itself became questionable, all the ideals of the German would begin to totter. Inevitably he was convicted of a fundamental failure: he could not see that in certain circumstances free and responsible action might have to take precedence over duty and calling. As a compensation he developed in one direction an irresponsible unscrupulousness, and in another an agonising scrupulosity which invariably frustrated action. Civil courage however can only grow out of the free responsibility of free men. Only ' [16 OF SUCCESS now are we Germans beginning to discover the meaning of free responsibility. It depends upon a God who demands bold action as the free response of faith, and who promises forgiveness and consolation to the man who becomes a sinner in the process.

Of Success Though success can never justify an evil deed or the use of questionable means, it is not an ethically neutral thing. All the same it remains true that historical success creates the only basis for the continuance of life, and it is still a moot point whether it is ethically more responsible to behave like Don Quixote and enter the lists against a new age, or to admit one's defeat, accept the new age and agree to serve it. In the last resort success makes history, and the Disposer of history is always bringing good out of evil over the heads of the historymakers. To ignore the ethical significance of success is to betray a superficial acquaintance with history and a defective sense of responsibility. So it is all to the good that we have been forced for once to grapple seriously with this problem of the ethics of success. All the time goodness is successful we can afford the luxury of regarding success as having no ethical significance. But the problem arises when success is achieved by evil means. It is no good then behaving as an arm-chair critic and disputing the issue, for that is to refuse to face the facts. Nor is opportunism any help, for that is to capitulate before success. We must be determined not to be outraged critics or mere opportunists. We must take our

full share of responsibility for the moulding of history, whether it be as victors or vanquished. It is only by refusing to allow any event to deprive us of our responsibility for history, because we know that is a responsibility laid upon us by God, that we shall achieve a relation to the events of history far more fruitful than criticism or opportunism. To talk about going down fighting like heroes in face of certain defeat is not really heroic at all, but a failure to face up to the future. The ultimate question the man of responsibility asks is not, How can I extricate myself heroically from the affair? but, How is the OF FOLLY coming generation to live? It is only in this way that fruitful solutions can arise, even if for the time being they are humiliating. In short it is easier by far to act on abstract principle than from concrete responsibility. The rising generation will always instinctively discern which of the two we are acting upon. For it is their future which is at stake.

Of Folly Folly is a more dangerous enemy to the good than malice.

You can protest against malice, you can unmask it or prevent it by force. Malice always contains the seeds of its own destruction, for it always makes men uncomfortable, if nothing worse. There is no defence against folly. Neither protests nor force are of any avail against it, and it is never amenable to reason. If facts contradict personal prejudices, there is no need to believe them, and if they are undeniable, they can simply be pushed aside as exceptions. Thus the fool, as compared with the scoundrel, is invariably self-complacent. And he can easily become dangerous, for it does not take much to make him aggressive. Hence folly requires much more cautious handling than malice. We shall never again try to reason with the fool, for it is both useless and dangerous.

To deal adequately with folly it is essential to recognize it for what it is. This much is certain, it is a moral rather than an intellectual defect. There are men of great intellect who are fools, and men of low intellect who are anything but fools, a discovery we make to our surprise as a result of particular circumstances. The impression we derive is that folly is acquired rather than congenital; it is acquired in certain circumstances where men make fools of themselves or allow others to make fools of them. We observe further that folly is less common in the unsociable or the solitary than in individuals or groups who are inclined or condemned to sociability. From this it would appear that folly is a sociological problem rather than one of psychology. It is a special form of the operation of historical circumstances upon men, a psychological by-product of definite external factors. On closer OF FOLLY inspection it would seem that any violent revolution, whether political or religious, produces an outburst of folly in a large part of mankind. Indeed, it would seem to be almost a law of psychology and sociology. The power of one needs the folly of the other. It is not that certain aptitudes of men, intellectual aptitudes for instance, become stunted or destroyed. Rather, the upsurge of power is so terrific that it deprives men of an independent judgement, and they give up trying—more or less unconsciously—to assess the new state of affairs for themselves. The fool can often be stubborn, but this must not mislead us into thinking he is independent. One feels somehow, especially in conversation with him, that it is impossible to talk to the man himself, to talk to him personally. Instead, one is confronted with a series of slogans, watchwords, and the like, which have acquired power over him. He is under a curse, he is blinded, his very humanity is being prostituted and exploited. Once he has surrendered his will and become a mere tool, there

are no lengths of evil to which the fool will not go, yet all the time he is unable to see that it is evil. Here lies the danger of a diabolical exploitation of humanity, which can do irreparable damage to the human character.

But it is just at this point that we realize that the fool cannot be saved by education. What he needs is redemption. There is nothing else for it. Until then it is no earthly good trying to convince him by rational argument. In this state of affairs we can well understand why it is no use trying to find out what 'the people' really think, and why this question is also so superfluous for the man who thinks and acts responsibly. As the Bible says, 'the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom'. In other words, the only cure for folly is spiritual redemption, for that alone can enable a man to live as a responsible person in the sight of God.

But there is a grain of consolation in these reflections on human folly. There is no reason for us to think that the majority of men are fools under all circumstances. What matters in the long run is whether our rulers hope to gain more from the folly of men, or from their independence of judgement and their shrewdness of mind.

CONTEMPT FOR HUMANITY?

Contempt for Humanity?

There is a very real danger of our drifting into an attitude of contempt for humanity. We know full well that it would be very wrong, and that it would lead to a sterile relationship with our fellow men. Perhaps the following considerations will save us from this temptation. The trouble about it is that it lands us into the worst mistake of our enemies. The man who despises others can never hope to do anything with them. The faults we despise in others are always, to some extent at least, our own too. How often have we expected from others more than we are prepared to do ourselves! Why have we until now held such lofty views about human nature? Why have we not recognized its frailty and liability to temptation? We must form our estimate of men less from their achievements and failures, and more from their sufferings. The only profitable relationship to others—and especially to our weaker brethren—is one of love, that is the will to hold fellowship with them. Even God did not despise humanity, but became Man for man's sake.

Immanent Righteousness It is one of the most astounding discoveries, but one of the most incontrovertible, that evil—often in a surprisingly short time—proves its own folly and defeats its own object. That is not to say that every evil deed is at once followed automatically by retribution. But it does mean that the deliberate transgression of the divine law on the plea of self-preservation has the opposite effect of self-destruction. This is something we have learnt from our own experience, and it can be interpreted in various ways. But one certain conclusion we can draw from it seems to be that social life is governed by certain laws more powerful than any other factors which may claim to be determinative. Hence it is not only unjust, but positively unwise to ignore these laws. Perhaps that is why Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas made prudence one of the cardinal virtues. Prudence and folly are not ethical adiaphora, as some IMMANENT RIGHTEOUSNESS Neo-protestant and Gesinnungs-ethics have tried to make out. The prudent

man sees not only the possibilities of every concrete situation, but also the limits to human behaviour which are set by the eternal laws of social life. The prudent man acts virtuously and the virtuous man prudently.

It is true that all great historical action is constantly dis- -egarding these laws. But it makes all the difference in the world whether it does so on principle, as though it contained : justification of its own, or whether it is still realized that to break these laws is sin, even if it be unavoidable, and that it can only be justified if the law is at once re-instated and -respected. It is not necessarily hypocrisy when the declared aim of political action is the restoration of the law and not just blatant self-preservation. The world is simply ordered in such a way that a profound respect for the absolute laws and human rights is also the best means of self-preservation. While these laws may on occasion be broken in case of necessity, to proclaim that necessity as a principle and to take the law into our own hands is bound to bring retribution sooner or later. The permanent righteousness of history only rewards and punishes the deeds of men, the eternal righteousness of God tries and judges their hearts.

A Few Articles of Faith on the Sovereignty of God in History I believe that God both can and will bring good out of evil. For that purpose he needs men who make the best use of everything. I believe God will give us all the power we need to resist in all time of distress. But he never gives it in advance, lest we should rely upon ourselves and not on him alone. A faith as strong as this should allay all our fears for the future. I believe that even our errors and mistakes are turned to good account. It is no harder for God to cope with them than with what we imagine to be our good deeds. I believe God is not just timeless fate, but that he waits upon and answers sincere prayer and responsible action.

CONFIDENCE Confidence There is hardly one of us who has not known what it is to be betrayed. We used to find the figure of Judas an enigma, but now we know him only too well. The air we breathe is so infested with mistrust that it almost chokes us. But where we have managed to pierce through this layer of mistrust we have discovered a confidence scarcely dreamed of hitherto. Where we do trust we have learnt to entrust our very lives to the hands of others. In face of all the many constructions to which our actions and our lives have been inevitably exposed we have learnt to trust without reserve. We know that hardly anything can be more reprehensible than the sowing and encouragement of mistrust, and that our duty is rather to do everything in our power to strengthen and foster confidence among men. Trust will always be one of the greatest, rarest and happiest blessings of social life, though it can only emerge on the dark background of a necessary mistrust. We have learnt never to trust a scoundrel an inch, but to give ourselves to the trustworthy without reserve.

The Sense of Quality Unless we have the courage to fight for a revival of a wholesome reserve between man and man, all human values will be submerged in anarchy. The impudent contempt for such reserve is as much the mark of the rabble as interior uncertainty, as haggling and cringing for the favour of the insolent, as lowering oneself to the level of the rabble is the way to becoming no better than the rabble oneself. Where self-respect is abandoned, where the feeling for human quality

and the power of reserve decay, chaos is at the door. Where impudence is tolerated for the sake of material comfort, self-respect is abandoned, the flood-gates are opened, and chaos bursts the dams we were pledged to defend. That is a crime against humanity. In other ages it may have been the duty of Christians to champion the equality of all men. Our duty THE SENSE OF QUALITY to-day, however, is passionately to defend the sense of reserve between man and man. We shall be accused of acting for our own interests, of being anti-social. Such cheap jibes must be placidly accepted. They are the invariable protests of the rabble against decency and order. To be pliant and uncertain is to fail to realize what is at stake, and no doubt it goes a good way to justify those jibes. We are witnessing the levelling down of all ranks of society, but at the same time we are watching the birth of a new sense of nobility, which is binding together a circle of men from all the previous classes of society. Nobility springs from and thrives on self-sacrifice and courage and an unfailing sense of duty to oneself and society. It expects due deference to itself, but shows an equally natural deference to others, whether they be of higher or of lower degree. From start to finish it demands a recovery of a lost sense of quality and of a social order based upon quality. Quality is the bitterest enemy of conceit in all its forms. Socially it implies the cessation of all place-hunting, of the cult of the 'star'. It requires an open eye both upwards and downwards, especially in the choice of one's closest friends. Culturally it means a return from the newspaper and the radio to the book, from feverish activity to unhurried leisure, from dissipation to recollection, from sensationalism to reflection, from virtuosity to art, from snobbery to modesty, from extravagance to moderation. Quantities are competitive, qualities complementary.

Sympathy We must never forget that most men only learn wisdom by personal experience. This explains, first, why so few people are capable of taking precautions in advance—they always think they will be able somehow or other to circumvent the danger. Secondly, it explains their insensibility to the sufferings of others. Sympathy grows in proportion to the fear of approaching disaster. There is a good deal of excuse on ethical grounds for this attitude. Nobody wants to meet fate head-on: inward calling and strength for action are only acquired in face of actual danger. Nobody is responsible for all the suffering and SYMPATHY injustice in the world, and nobody wants to set himself up as the judge of the universe. Psychologically, our lack of imagination, sensitivity and mental agility is balanced by a steady composure, an unruffled power of concentration and an immense capacity for suffering. But from a Christian point of view, none of these mitigating circumstances can atone for the absence of the most important factor, that is, a real breadth of sympathy/Christ avoided suffering until his hour had come, but when it did come he seized it with both hands as a free man and mastered it. Christ, as the Scriptures tell us, bore all our human sufferings in his own body as if they were his own—a tremendous thought—and submitted to them freely. Of course, we are not Christs, we do not have to redeem the world by any action or suffering of our own. There is no need for us to lay upon ourselves such an intolerable burden. We are not lords, but instruments in the hand of the Lord of history. Our capacity to sympathize with others in their sufferings is strictly limited. We are not Christs, but if we want to be Christians we must show something of Christ's breadth of sympathy by acting responsibly, by grasping our 'hour', by facing danger like free men, by displaying a real sympathy which springs not from fear, but from

the liberating and redeeming love of Christ for all who suffer. To look on without lifting a helping hand is most un-Christian. The Christian does not have to wait until he suffers himself; the sufferings of his brethren for whom Christ died are enough to awaken his active sympathy.

Of Suffering It is infinitely easier to suffer in obedience to a human command than to accept suffering as free, responsible men. It is infinitely easier to suffer with others than to suffer alone. It is infinitely easier to suffer as public heroes than to suffer apart and in ignominy. It is infinitely easier to suffer physical death than to endure spiritual suffering. Christ suffered as a free man alone, apart and in ignominy, in body and in spirit, and since that day many Christians have suffered with him.

PRESENT AND FUTURE Present and Future We always used to think it was one of the elementary rights of man that he should be able to plan his life in advance, both private life and professional. That is a thing of the past. The pressure of events is forcing us to give up 'being anxious for the morrow'. But it makes all the difference in the world whether we accept this willingly and in faith (which is what the Sermon on the Mount means) or under compulsion. For most people not to plan for the future means to live irresponsibly and frivolously, to live just for the moment, while some few continue to dream of better times to come. But we cannot take either of these courses. We are still left with only the narrow way, a way often hardly to be found, of living every day as if it were our last, yet in faith and responsibility living as though a splendid future still lay before us. "Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land", cries Jeremiah just as the Holy City is about to be destroyed, a striking contrast to his previous prophecies of woe. It is a divine sign and pledge of better things to come, just when all seems blackest. Thinking and acting for the sake of the coming generation, but taking each day as it comes without fear and anxiety—that is the spirit in which we are being forced to live in practice. It is not easy to be brave and hold out, but it is imperative.

Optimism It is more prudent to be a pessimist. It is an insurance against disappointment, and no one can say 'I told you so', which is how the prudent condemns the optimist. The essence of optimism is that it takes no account of the present, but it is a source of inspiration, of vitality and hope where others have resigned; it enables a man to hold his head high, to claim the future for himself and not to abandon it to his enemy. Of 'course there is a foolish, shifty kind of optimism which is rightly condemned. But the optimism which is will for the INSECURITY AND DEATH future should never be despised, even if it is proved wrong a hundred times. It is the health and vitality which a sick man should never impugn. Some men regard it as frivolous, and some Christians think it is irreligious to hope and prepare oneself for better things to come in this life. They believe in chaos, disorder and catastrophe. That, they think, is the meaning of present events, and in sheer resignation or pious escapism they surrender all responsibility for the preservation of life and for the generations yet unborn. To-morrow may be the day of judgement. If it is, we shall gladly give up working for a better future, but not before.

Insecurity and Death During recent years we have come to know death at close quarters. We are sometimes startled at the placidity with which we hear of the death of one of our contemporaries. We cannot hate death as we used to, for we have discovered some good in it after all, and have almost come to terms with it. Fundamentally we feel that we really belong to death already, and that every new day is a miracle. It would hardly be true to say that we welcome death—although we all know that accidia which should be avoided like the plague—we are too curious for that, or to put it more seriously, we still hope to see some sense in the broken fragments of our life. Nor do we try and romanticize death, for life is too precious for that. Still less are we inclined to see in danger the meaning of life—we are not desperate enough for that, and we know too much about the joys life has to offer. And we know too much about life's anxieties also, and all the havoc wrought by prolonged insecurity. We still love life, but I do not think that death can take us by surprise now. After all we have been through during the war we hardly dare admit our hope that we shall not die a sudden and unexpected death for some trivial accident, but rather in dedication to some noble cause. It is not the external circumstances, but the spirit in which we face it, that makes death what it can be, a death freely and voluntarily accepted.

ARE WE STILL SERVICEABLE?

Are we still serviceable?

We have been the silent witnesses of evil deeds. Many storms have gone over our heads. We have learnt the art of deception and of equivocal speech. Experience has made us suspicious of others, and prevented us from being open and frank. Bitter conflicts have made us weary and even cynical. Are we still serviceable? It is not the genius that we shall need, not the cynic, not the misanthropist, not the adroit tactician, but honest, straightforward men. Will our spiritual reserves prove adequate and our candour with ourselves remorseless enough to enable us to find our way back again to simplicity and straightforwardness?
