

### Lord Macbeth

Macbeth  
told  
through  
The  
Thing on  
The  
Doorstep  
by H.P.  
Lovecraft

To some extent we are all a victim of circumstance. There are many contributing factors that can restrict or expand our opportunity that we have no input on upon birth. Some are natural, and some are constructs of society. There are those that are born with all the tools for success just waiting for them to use and those that must climb walls, escape from bondage, and break through ceilings.

In the end we are all individually responsible for our actions. Wherever a person is at any point at time reflects their actions and reactions to others. However, no action is all good or all bad. There is a context to everything a person does and therefore even the most unspeakable acts can have good intentions. There is a big difference between a pauper who steals and someone who has plenty. Both are bad but, the pauper's actions are more excusable. To some extent Lady Macbeth is victim to her own circumstance. She was born into a noble family which some might consider a gilded prison. In 1600 Scotland women rarely had independent agency. Before they are married, they were under their father's guardianship and when they marry, they were their husband's property for the most part. In Lady Macbeth's case she was under constant guard and supervision. Her only value to her father was for a strategically arranged marriage where his family would gain wealth or prestige through a union with another Lord. When the opportunity presented itself, her father married her off to Macbeth who was the king's cousin who had wealth and closeness to the throne. She had no say in the matter nor, any real benefit to gain in the event. She was sold like a fattened cow in the market. Lady Macbeth

had a man's ambition in a woman's body. She was intelligent, motivated, and obsessed with gaining power. She wanted to make her mark in the world and not just be a vessel for producing heirs. As Lady Macbeth realized that she would not be able to gain power through regular channels she turned to witchcraft. Lady Macbeth used her occult arts to possess Macbeth's body to become king and wield royal power.

Macbeth begins and ends with witchcraft. It begins the witches placing a curse on a sailor and declaring a prophecy about Macbeth's kingship. It ends with Macbeth dying from a man not of woman born. People accept belief in God even though they don't fully understand the concept of God. Belief in God doesn't negate the existence of witchcraft. Both can be true or only one of them can exist, because their concepts are valid individually. If Shakespeare included witchcraft as an integral plot point in Macbeth, then it must have real validity and substance in the story.

Macbeth is a humble and righteous man. He is comfortable with what he has and is hesitant to each out and grab for more. In the beginning of the play He returns from battle as a hero. Everyone congratulates and honors him, yet he doesn't gloat or demand recognition. When the witches greet him and proclaim him king, he is embarrassed and not exulted. When he is told that he will be the new Thane of Cawdor he says, *why do you dress me in borrowed robes*, he doesn't want any new titles or prestige because he is complacent with what he has.

At this moment is when witchcraft is first used on Macbeth. Witches are agents of

chaos and as such they know that if Macbeth rebels against the king then chaos will ensue. The chaos doesn't come from the rebellion alone but rather from the perpetrator of the act. Because Macbeth is goodhearted if he is pushed to murder the king he would react strongly and violently afterwards. Whereas a person who is more predisposed towards such acts can handle the repercussions better because it isn't against their basic nature. They knew that Macbeth would go mad and that is why they cast the first hex on him and it is starting to work. In the third scene of act 1 Macbeth starts to ramble about killing the king and Banquo observes that he is in a *daze*. The curse is starting to overpower Macbeth's good inclination and plants the idea of killing the king in his head until he finally regains a holdover his thoughts. However, in the fourth scene the evil thoughts come back.

When Lady Macbeth gets the letter from Macbeth of the news of his success and the witches curse her irritation grows yet she sees that her goals are moving closer to her grasp. If she cared for her husband even a little, she would at least have expressed some relief in her husband's safety and pride in his achievement. Instead she conspires to convince him to do the unspeakable act of murder. She is irritated because she is married to a man who will not do whatever it takes to become king, a man who will do only good and if greatness occurs it is incidental. However, she also sees an opportunity to make use of her own witchcraft to further push Macbeth to his breaking point. She also knows that she can't trust him to kill the king and keep it quiet. So, she summons the evil spirits to give her the power to possess his mind and

override Macbeth's good spirit to kill the king.

When Macbeth arrives to meet Lady Macbeth there is struggle between his good nature and her evil spirit that was strengthened by her witchcraft. Before he greets her he has already decided not to kill the king. However, the combination of the three witches and Lady Macbeth casts doubt in his mind. Her words wrap around his mind like snakes that suffocate his resolve to do good and whisper evil thoughts that start to take over his body. She even mentions that they spoke of killing the king before and there is no evidence in the text of that. He struggles to reassert his good spirit but, in the end, *I am settled, and bend up Each corporal agent to this terrible feat. Away, and mock the time with fairest show. False face must hide what the false heart doth know*. The use of the words *Each corporal agent* (aside from being overly dramatic) signifies the actual possession of her mind over his body.

Similar inconsistencies appear in the second act. Where before Macbeth's speech was indecisive and rambling, it became confident, clear and concise upon speaking to Banquo. The more Lady Macbeth's spirit possesses Macbeth, the more her personality is expressed in his words and actions. The floating dagger that he sees is a physical dagger. At this point the omen of the owl along with Lady Macbeth's enchantment has become so powerful that he is not fully aware of the horrible crime he is about to commit. It is as if his spirit has left his body and can no longer grasp the physicality of the world *Is this a dagger, I see in front of me, with its*

## Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

*handle pointing toward my hand? (to the dagger) Come, let me hold you. (he grabs at the air in front of him without touching anything) I don't have you, but I can still see you.*

The shock of stabbing the king temporarily dispels the enchantment and Macbeth returns to his body. He awakens with the horror of what he has done and staggers through the castle with bloody daggers. Lady Macbeth sees him and realizes that it is upon her to restore stability and make sure that no one suspects them. Macbeth is in no condition to take care of anything and he is ridden with nervousness, guilt, and fear of what is to come. This causes him to kill the drugged guards, who were supposed to be the scapegoats, in sight of the other nobles.

In the third act Lady Macbeth is firmly entrenched in Macbeth's body. He is confident and calm. Banquo is too close to the situation and knows too much. There is also the threat of the witches' prophecy stating that Banquo's descendants will become king against Lady Macbeth's aspirations to be king in her husband's body. There is very similar parallel in how Macbeth speaks to the assassins and how Lady Macbeth convinces Macbeth to kill the king in the second act. In both cases he/she questions the others manhood. In the first act she says *If you weren't a man, then what kind of animal were you when you first told me you wanted to do this? When you dared to do it, that's when you were a man. And if you go one step further by doing what you dared to do before, you'll be that much more the man.* In the third act Macbeth says *Are you so patient and forgiving that you're going to let him off the hook? Are you so pious that you would pray for this man and*

*his children, a man who has pushed you toward an early grave and put your family in poverty forever?* In both quotes he/she is questioning the others hesitancy and lack of desire to take control which they characterize as manly.

We also see that Lady Macbeth who is cunning and competent suddenly becomes ignorant of her own plans. When Macbeth is telling her to charm Banquo to distract him from Macbeth's plans to kill him, she says *What are you going to do?* Macbeth who didn't know to throw the daggers away became the schemer and Lady Macbeth who was the schemer became innocent and naïve. This is more evident when Macbeth says *You seem surprised at my words, but don't question me yet. Bad deeds force you to commit more bad deeds. So please, come with me.* The woman who offered to kill her own child isn't surprised by bad deeds, rather Macbeth's personality is, and he is seeing through Lady Macbeth's eyes.

However, the transfer wasn't complete and as Macbeth returned to his body the horrible guilt and revulsion returned and he saw Banquo's ghost. He can't help but to make a scene in front of the other lords which causes them to doubt his leadership and sanity. They also start questioning his innocence regarding King Duncan's murder. He realizes this when he notices Lord Macduff's absence from the party and becomes suspicious.

Macbeth also feels his wife's possessing his body and goes to the only people who can help him, the three witches. He goes to gain advice on how to break his wife's curse. What he doesn't realize is they bewitched him first to be the lord of chaos and cause a peaceful Scotland to become a

war zone. Much like Aries above the battlefields of Troy, their master feeds off chaos and destruction. As Hecate, the head witch, goes to gather the drop of water from the moon to strengthen the enchantment the other three witches continue leading Macbeth down the road of chaos and destruction. To the witches' surprise when they see Macbeth, they sense Lady Macbeth's enchantment along with their own. They take advantage of this by augmenting Lady Macbeth's enchantment and completing the transfer of her spirit and personality into Macbeth's body. This is evident in the end of the encounter when he sees the vision with Banquo's ghost and when we next see Macbeth the witches are gone, and Lennox is giving him a message. Macbeth wouldn't normally kill women and children even in war and he sets out to attack Macduff's castle and kill all who reside there, men women and children.

When we next see Lady Macbeth in act five the insanity has completely set in. She walks around the castle constantly rubbing her hands because of the spot of blood that won't go away and ranting about all the bloodshed she has caused. Macbeth is stuck in her body and can no longer carry the weight of the guilt for all evil he has caused. The killing of Macduff's family finally broke him, and he agonizes over the defeat of his weak mind against the strength of Lady Macbeth and blames himself for everything that has occurred because of that. He can take it no longer and kills himself.

When Lady Macbeth's body finally dies all Lady, Macbeth has to say is *Life is nothing more than an illusion. It's like a poor actor who struts and worries for his hour on the*

*stage and then is never heard from again.* It is merely a distraction in her plans to defend the castle. She believes herself to be invincible. The witches have convinced her that no one born of a woman can kill her so despite the large army marching against her she believes that she will be victorious. However, in the end her head is cut off and paraded around for all to see. The witch's prophecy has fooled her into believing her immortality and she is killed, body and spirit, shamed with the name of Macbeth becoming a curse when it should have been a blessing.

In the end, Lord Macduff and the other lords were left to rebuild all the destruction lady Macbeth and the witches has caused. Chaos would reign for a while until the good people of Scotland were able to maintain a peaceful environment for all. As for Macbeth and Lady Macbeth he was the sleepless sailor and she was the sailor's wife who would not share her chestnuts.

### The Chaos Threat

As humans evolved, they came to a very important conclusion, that for humanity to survive we must unite. Instead of individual families living on their own and being more susceptible to the disorder of nature, they should all combine into cities and then civilizations that can tame nature and man's natural instincts. These civilizations would establish laws that govern every aspect of life with the guiding principle of making as much order as is humanly possible. However, this order is being challenged by the destructive force of,

## Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

human as well as natural, chaos. To avoid falling to chaos we must observe past occurrences where chaos reigned in our ordered cities. We also must find internal motivation to fight chaos. Then we must implement practical solutions to help all of humanity to understand and fight chaos at its source.

I often find myself analyzing historical scenarios. I am in New York in July of 1863. The newly drafted soldiers from New York march south after all the unrest. After two thousand were injured and one hundred twenty were murdered, they march south without complaint or comment. I roam through the city during the week of the draft riots. I passed by the draft offices that were attacked and put to flame while government officials and Union soldiers were fighting with Irish immigrants. The immigrants were proud of their newly minted United States citizenship, but that was before the first lottery of the conscription law was held, citizens were sold for three hundred dollars by the elite and wealthy citizens of New York, and the black slaves were given one thousand for their freedom. Their citizenship was a symbol of pride and the President abused it. The violence and unrest against the soldiers shifted to the newly freed slaves. The Irish viewed the freed slaves as their oppressors and killed and injured many of them. They feared that their jobs would disappear, and they didn't want to fight for a race they did not know. Their march of terror reached the Colored Orphan Asylum. It was destroyed by fire and the children were spared. The Irish didn't realize that their aggression was misdirected. Like bulls, black was as red to them, and all they could see, and feel was anger and resentment. On Wednesday July 15, 1863, the draft was postponed, and the

rioters dispersed. The quiet on that day was louder than the ruckus of the riots. The draft was still going to happen, and the Blacks were still free. Chaos reigned in those streets and even when it went away its source remained to oppress others throughout history.

My fear of chaos began with a book my brother gave me. This book opened my young ten-year-old mind to the world of horror. It showed me that there are entities that are scarier than my oldest brother. He gave me the book after he was done with it. This book became my salvation and focus. Before R.L. Stine the most horrifying thing in the world was the unchecked brutality of my brother. He spontaneously beat me up multiple times a week. I was a quiet child and tried to stay out of everybody's way, especially my brother's. So, when he would test out new WWE moves for real, it was horrifying. Each instance of abuse felt like it would last forever. However, R.L. Stine's living ventriloquist dummy was exponentially more horrifying. It's strange, because the consequences, in the book, aren't high. No one gets hurt. At most the kids get grounded or possibly get expelled from school. What scared me was the chaos that Slappy, the ventriloquist dummy, embodied. He had no plan or reason for what he did. All he wanted was pure chaos. When Slappy is done with us, everything in our lives will be in shambles, and when we adapt to that he comes back to break your delusions. This made everything my brother did afterwards child's play. With the book's help I was able to survive my brother's reign of terror and began my struggle against chaos. As a young child the book instilled in me with the fear of chaos and I was going to do everything within my power to fight chaos and disorder.

In my observation, chaos is closely related to capitalism because it allows for the most unregulated movement of the factors of production. So, six years from now I will be the head of a team that will conduct research on the benefits of socialism. I only have about two years left to graduate and obtain my bachelor's degree in international business and then I will transfer to a CUNY school to obtain an economics bachelor's degree. There is a lot of crossover between economics and international business majors so, it should take about a year or two to get my second bachelor's degree. After that I plan on entering the graduate program for economics at Columbia which takes about two years. Along the way I plan on gaining experience and knowledge in economics by taking jobs that are related to the topic. Reading, learning, and teaching others will be a big part of my journey. I will read about theoretical and abstract economics as well as historical and practical application of economic theory. I will learn by conducting field research using interviews and observation. I will advance my understanding of the subject matter by discussing and teaching others. This will test and increase my own understanding while also educating others on economic theory and application. After I complete my master's degree in economics I will apply for a job at the United Nations as an economist. I will make presentations to my superiors on the corrosive effect of capitalism and how socialism is the solution. After hearing my presentations, they will grant me the resources to perform my study and I will complete and publish it. While this is a lot to accomplish in six years, my stubbornness and interest in my field of study will guide me throughout.

We have already tamed nature's chaos by building towns cities, and countries. We united these countries by establishing unions like the United Nations, The World Trade Organization, the World Bank, and the like. These organizations were made after the world wars when the world almost fell to chaos and have functioned as controls against future chaos. If we all unite our unique abilities to fight against chaos the world will be a much ordered and better place.

### The Human Machine

Human beings are complex machines. They are a mixture of emotions, logic, and hormones. Although most people are stable machines there are other who are unstable. Unstable machines are not only harmful to themselves, they are harmful to the network of machines that they are part of. This network is the family machine which is even more complex than the single human machine. This is because they all react to each other and usually cause others to be unstable. Because what is stable to one can be unstable to others it is hard to predict or pinpoint what causes these machines to explode.

Ivan Ilych and Gregor are complex people. They are not all bad or all good. The most one can say about Ivan's conscious behavior is that he is calculating. He wanted to create for himself a life the way his father and others he looked up to in society did. He did what he felt a model participant in society does. He went to law school and graduated. He got a job and met a woman he felt was a good society woman. She had

Comparative analysis of *The Metamorphosis* by Kafka and *The Death of Ivan Ilych* by Tolstoy

good social status, behaved properly and was a civil person.

Gregor is very similar to Ivan. When his family was having trouble supporting itself, he stepped up in a big way. Perhaps he had other plans but when he saw that he was needed he became a salesman. He took it upon himself to work hard enough to support his whole family. He sacrificed his hopes and dreams for his family.

Gregor and Ivan don't experience happiness or emotion in their life. They both live their life with a dry sense of duty as if there is some cosmic obligation to do so. It is probably influenced by religion, childhood upbringing, and social backlash. They are not free. They are incarcerated by the way they live, with death being the only relief.

Where Gregor and Ivan diverge is their reaction to their change of circumstance. When Ivan gets sick and is more exposed to the coldness that exists between him and his family and friends, he doesn't attempt to assess the situation. Instead he ignores and pushes it away and would rather concentrate on his debilitating illness which is painful and depressing. When he is first confronted by the ugliness of the relationship with his family and friends, he is so scared that he embraces the pain and despair of his illness as a reprieve. When Ivan sits by himself in the drawing room, he thinks *He would go to his study, lie down, and again be alone with It: face to face with It. And nothing could be done with It except to look at it and shudder.*

Gregor doesn't run from the ugliness. When he wakes up with the realization that his entire life has been an empty and meaningless blur, he stops

everything and assesses his whole life. He starts listening to the tone of his families' voices and starts to watch how they interact with him and each other. He confronts his father and gets rejected and realizes that his sister was using him all along. In the end the deepest connection is with his mother, who is the most heartbroken. Even though he dies in the end it is a peaceful death. He dies with closure from his family and his own soul, as he reflects in the end *Besides he felt relatively content. True, he had pains throughout his entire body, but it seemed to him that they were gradually becoming weaker and weaker and would finally go away completely.*

Family and societal obligations are very important. However, an individual's obligation to himself is just as important. Self-expression is very important for every individual. Every individual needs to release their expression whether it is a hobby, speech, or written word. When a person bottles up their expression with duty, they become unstable and explode the way Ivan and Gregor's family machine did.

### Living with Death

We live the way we day. In many ways' life reflects death. The same way that a day has meaning because it ends at night, life has meaning because it ends with death. On a larger scale it affects the way people from different cultures behave. Those cultures that believe in life after death change their behavior and perspective based on their religion's specific statutes. They deny themselves indulgences that others partake in without restraint. These cultures

can be described as not taking the best they can out of life because of the way they view death. Whereas more secular cultures who believe death is an absolute end, people live more freely and enjoy life more.

Death also affects people on a smaller, more personal scale. People who don't experience death around them in their youth tend to take life for granted. However, those who have deaths in their family or friends tend to be more mature and take advantage of every day of their life. The paradox in this is they are more aware of death and yet live better. On the opposite end when the existence of death is repressed, we live, yet we might as well be dead.

Just as life evolves, so does death. What is considered death has changed medically. We have different classifications of death. Before we knew about comas people were left for dead and buried alive. Many sicknesses were death sentences in the past and are now fully treatable. Many times, a person's mood is very important to a person's recovery. Two people can have the illness and one recover because they have hope and the other dies because they stop fighting. Their apathy is their death as well as an indication of how they lived until that final moment.

The title of Tolstoy's *The Death of Ivan Ilych* may as well have been titled *The life of Ivan Ilych*. It tells us his deepest thoughts, his goals and dreams. It brings to our attention his oppressive suffering and all the obstacles he overcame. No one can say that Ivan's life was easy, whether you believe his issues were self-inflicted, he tried his hardest. However, that wouldn't be a proper title because it wouldn't explain to us Ivan's motivations nor their lessons to

others. Death is a task, and the story illustrates Ivan's ultimate task *Life-span developmentalists know what death is. Death is a task.*

That is precisely why the story starts with his death. That is what sets the tone for the whole story. Ivan isn't telling us the story because he is dead. Tolstoy isn't telling us the story either because he can't read minds. Death is telling us a story through Tolstoy. Death is at the beginning and the end of all our lives, and Ivan's personal Death is telling us his story.

At first, we see that Ivan's death doesn't affect anyone emotionally. When they announce it at work the first thought is who will replace him. Everyone thinks *it is he who is dead and not I*. This is not necessarily the fault of death's audience. In the final accounting Ivan himself is to blame. As the story illustrates, most if not all of Ivan's actions are egotistical. They are all stepping stones to his goal. Perhaps, if Ivan took more interest in the people themselves instead of how valuable they are to him than his friends and family would react emotionally to his death.

We see how Ivan calculates and plans his life out. He chooses law because his father did, and his younger brother was a failure. He married his wife for her social status and looks so that he would be respected and get promoted in his profession. When he realizes that his marriage was monotonous and tortuous, he tries to bring other factors in to liven it up. However, Death comes in the form of his wife pestering him to stop these activities. He realizes this somewhat when he thinks *He now realized that matrimony — at any rate with Praskovya Fedorovna — was not*



*always conducive to the pleasures and amenities of life, but on the contrary often infringed both comfort and propriety.* He has some inclination that something is wrong with his life and that is what Death is trying to tell him. That filling the void with shallow things will not make his life better.

The more Ivan ignores Death's message the more trouble he has in his life. The pain on his side is a constant reminder of this. He knows something is wrong and he is trying to rectify it, but the main cause of the pain is only getting larger. He is only getting more self-centered and reclusive. From Death's perspective it isn't a matter of judgement but of fact and consequence. We see this in the doctor's reaction *From the doctor's summing up Ivan Ilych concluded that things were bad, but that for the doctor, and perhaps for everybody else, it was a matter of indifference, though for him it was bad.* Death is embodied in the doctor's diagnosis as indifferent and factual. Death comes into the story again as Gerasim, Ivan's caretaker. We see that he is irritated by the presence of his friends and family. With Gerasim however, he finds comfort. In the beginning he is bothered, but as death becomes more present, he feels that only Gerasim understands him.

In the end Ivan sees Death as It exists, without the fog of life to distort it. He sees how all his thoughts and actions led to his death and there is no judgement. Ivan isn't good or bad, but simply Ivan, a human being. This is his joy, he sees that the circle of being has ended and death is no more. "Death is finished," he said to himself. "It is no more!" He drew in a breath, stopped during a sigh, stretched out, and died". The death after *death is finished* is the life that

his family and friends live after *The death of Ivan Ilych.*

### Night Shift

I walk down the stairs and the oppressive heat hits me like a brick. I go passed the man reading a book, which he does every time I arrive. I don't know if it is the same book as yesterday or a new one. The nurse is there too. whether she is going home or to work it is hard to say. She looks irritated, but that could either be from work or because she is here. Where I am at night is a different world than daytime. During the day, the environment is only mildly irritating whereas at night it is infuriating. The past feels like a past life compared to the present. In the past, it was almost pleasurable and convenient. The only thing keeping us from madness are cellphones, books or companionship.

We are all waiting for the transport to go home or to work in the dead of night. During the day it feels like a trip. However, at night it feels like a long journey. As the digital timer changes from fifteen to fourteen, the minute feels like an hour. We are all waiting mostly by ourselves but some in small groups. The heat drones on, draining us of whatever energy we have managed to salvage during the day, and the transport offers respite and coolness.

It arrives and we love and hate it at the same time. The coolness is like an oasis in the desert. We all gaze into our devices and tune each other out. I often wonder how we all managed before the advent of the new

technological age. Did we all communicate or make new friends? Was there bitter animosity between us, and the only thing stopping us from killing each other are the new devices of our age? Where is the middle ground, or does one exist?

We get to the second part of our journey and embrace the sickening heat. We must leave this transport and wait for another one. The digital clock says that the next one arrives in twenty minutes. This should cause me to scream and throw a tantrum, but the process has numbed me. We all wait together. There are some new people, but it somehow feels the same.

One of them walks toward me. He is an older man; his shirt is unbuttoned and he isn't wearing a t-shirt. He is also wearing a thick jacket which contradicts the rest of his wardrobe. He doesn't seem threatening, but how can anyone know for certain? What do I do? He is breaking the rule of the night and I must respond. He asks me about the Jewish holiday, and I respond respectfully.

He is quite interesting and eccentric. He was an all-state power forward in high school and he played against Kareem Abdul Jabbar's high school team. He scored forty points against him. He was expected to be drafted by the NBA the same year as Kareem but his mother convinced him otherwise. This man is quite mesmerizing. He believes that the transport workers terrorize us on purpose, that they instigate delays and other machinations to torture us. The emigrants in his building go to send money at the Western Union at 4:30 in the morning every day.

The time flies by, and the transport arrives. We go on together and he is still talking. He started a website that invited

people to write poems and comments against the transport institution. He says that he sought me out because he saw that I wasn't glued to my device and I am the only one in twenty years that he has communicated with here. His family died in a car crash, and he has no family left. He was also hit in the jaw by a bus's mirror and had to rewire his jaw. He walks from Coney Island to Manhattan every night and is wearing a jacket so that he can force himself to sweat.

The usually laborious ride becomes enjoyable. He screams out, "You all are sheep, if we all rise up, they wouldn't treat us this way", They look up. Some smirk and some frown in disapproval. The end of my journey has come, and it is time for me to leave the transport. Part of me hopes that he will come with me and tell me more. We shake hands and say good night. We are all taking the night shift and I have discovered a small ray of sunshine.

### The Forest of Life

A tree falls in the woods and there is no one to hear it, does it make a sound? We all had this question posed to us in some setting or context. This asks us what the nature of a sound is. The basic premise is that obviously when a tree falls a sound occurs, however does the sound have meaning if no one hears it. This misses the true nature of a sound. They are internal. They come out when we express our internal truth's. The tree's sound has meaning despite the lack of an audience. It came out as the tree's last expression. If we listen closely, we can hear many layers and details that lies in the sound. It could have been a

My first attempt at ghost writing. I am not sure if it went well.

## Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

sound of relief or extreme pain. Was the tree ready to die or was it fighting death with all its being? This wasn't the first sound the tree made. The wind rustled its leaves and fall dropped them to the ground. Birds nested on its branches and squirrels made their home in it. Bears scratched at its bark and bees hung their hives on its branches. The trees last sound isn't isolated, rather it is a culmination of all the sound the tree has made its entire existence. Like the finale of an orchestra it completes and is influenced by everything that has led up to it.

Elsewhere in the lonely forest a child is born. It cries for sustenance, a basic animal necessity. The parents understand this and provide for their child. One would have to be a vile being to ignore a cry so obvious and pure, especially when they bear responsibility for bringing it into the world. Even for more noble humans it is easy to detect and respond to a baby's cry. It's easy to hear and there are a limited few responses that can address the baby's need. For these reasons most of civilization raises their children for about nine years. Even as the child learns to speak and walks through the forest his life hasn't gotten more complex yet. His needs still only involve food, drink, sleep, and shelter which its' parents provide.

They do this as they move through the forest of life. The world seems like an open space. There are more ways to communicate with each other than ever before. Yet people still feel lonely and isolated. Next time you are walking on the street stop and look. How many people are talking with each other? For the most part they are all walking past each other, each individual going on their own lonely track. We pass hundreds of people every day and yet we don't know their story. Our group of

contacts don't change and each day is the same as the last and the next one. We are in a thick dark forest, going through life with our circle of people. They include friends, family, co-workers, and others we meet along the way. No forest has only a few trees. A forest is an ecosystem

The child is now ten years old. Its mind expands and starts to question. Why are we in the forest? Where did we come from? Where are we going? Are there clearings or glades in the forest and are we ever going to get there? The child sees the world and wonders if it has to be this way. It expresses itself and is looking for someone to listen and respond. The child doesn't necessarily need the answer, rather it needs to know that its concerns are taken seriously by the people in its immediate surrounding that it has come to respect.

It is at this time where the adult's main responsibility is integral to the child's growth. Now that its needs are more complex the adult has to use more complex methods to raise the child. Despite the parent's tiredness that comes from the burden of providing for their family by gathering food and building shelter by using the forest's resources this doesn't excuse neglecting their child's intellectual growth. This includes nodding condescendingly to their questions or giving answers that come from some obscure religious mantra that has been passed down since before the forest's creation. It is even worse when the child's questions are answered with impatience and dismissiveness. While the parent may not mean it, the child can take that as an expression of hatred and anger for something as innocent as a truthful observation.

## Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

It is also damaging to be overbearing. To hand the child all the answers before it fully understands the questions. It is good to lead them to the question but only until it can ask the question with its own creative mind. Parents don't choose their child before birth and nor do children choose their parents. We are not aware of the reason for the logical connection between parents and children. They appear beside one another in the forest without reason or approval. This makes the parents responsibility of raising the child even more important. A divine command issued from the lord of the forest. It commands parents to be mentors to their children. To allow them to fail on their own so that they can walk the forests paths on their own. Parents have to foster the child's creativity despite the rigid constructs that man has made which favors strict process over creativity. Structures that oppose change by their very nature. While structure is important it is only helpful when it is flexible so that it can change and grow with the individuals of society like the human body that changes as it grows. When societal structures are rigid and oppose change, they are like clothes that don't fit or a body that never grows.

How parent's handle a child's intellectual and emotional upbringing is important because it effects how the child communicates for the rest of its life. If they are not encouraged to express themselves completely when they are young, then they can become afraid to express themselves later in life. When the child communicates with elders it shouldn't be afraid that it will offend. There must be no reservations when the child communicates. Truly. No question or comment is dumb or unacceptable. When we walk the forest's paths and we don't hear the leaves crunching beneath our feet, the

birds chirping, and the branches swaying with the wind we take notice. The absolute silence is as loud as a terrified scream. This is because silence is the absence of expression, of life. So, when the child's sound dissolves into the background that silence should disturb us to our very core. Parents must learn to detect this silence and save the child's expression before it disappears forever.

Every tree in the forest requires different amounts of sunlight, water, and nutrients to grow straight and tall. Children also require different amounts of attention and encouragement. Everything and everyone in the forest is unique. Some people have access to more food while others have better shelter. We all deal with the lot we are given and do our best. The same approach applies to raising our children. Some are quieter and need us to help them come out of their shell while others are more outspoken and don't need our help as much. Some may have more mental capacity and others have mental deficiencies. We must embrace each child based on their specific natures and nurture them to grow straight and tall. We shouldn't use a programmed method, rather a flexible approach.

This is especially applicable to educating our children. The majority of parents aren't specialists when it comes to knowing what and how to teach our children. That is why we send our children to school. Therefore, we should send our children to the right school. That means a school that focuses on each child separately to provide what they need to learn and grow. A school that has administrators and

## Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

teachers who are dedicated to our children. They must have testing that isn't arbitrary that reflects the exact learning goals that each child needs. Even when this is accomplished each parent must still be vigilant and keep to their duties of raising the child. The child can't be taught one way in school and the other or opposite way at home. Children can detect inconsistencies easily and it can be very confusing.

Like the tree the child's sound has profound meaning. It is an expression of their essence, the direction their lives will take. That is true whether we want to listen or not. So, as we walk through this forest together, we must ensure that our present is secure. We also have to secure our futures. Our children are our future, exist in the present and are bound by the past. Every sound and expression our children make has deep meaning behind them, we just must make sure we are there to listen to it.

# Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

# Daniel Goodman's Portfolio

# Daniel Goodman's Portfolio