

A Life To Serve

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Today I think of the men and women on the other side. For me, they are the Underground man, Billy Pilgrim, Winston Smith and the tortured souls everywhere. I think of the authors crying for help and change against a raging tide and growing ideological isolation. And amidst a painful and incomprehensible struggle, and with little means, write, and yet, write with a willful ethical conscience that their words must be fit for a future generation. These cries are what our freedom of speech are for. Our words, as we say them, and as we wish, constrained only and always by the bounds of ethics - and not this or that ethic, but barring words that cause or provoke needless strife or, unmanageable or unnecessary discord to the world we live and our children will live - all of this inspite of great pain and immense suffering at the hands of an enemy so real!

Follow their lead! Write and write ethically! Stand up to the transgressors; fight for the life that is worth living to you; and by all means celebrate this release. But even in your last words - live for tomorrow; for as long as there is life, it is your life too.

Today, I am writing to tell you that Bradbury's circus came to my town. I survived Kafka's metamorphosis. I've escaped the underground. And while my tattoo's remain, those who wish to use it against me have met their match. Today I tell you that I have defeated an old enemy of humanity - Schizophrenia. Scars remain but they do not own me. They only serve to motivate. And today, by the grace of God, I am free.

To the young and diagnosed - liberation will not be today. Liberation can only be achieved through a long process of understanding and recollection, a clear conscience, and an acceptance of your condition as a terrible misfortune and a travesty of the human condition. It will necessitate a great patience and forthrightness, and in the end, I hope you too will understand by practicing the ethic and the spirituality you must.

Toward this end, I can only say this. When I was young, the fall of the tooth fairy prepared me for the fall of Santa Claus; but nothing could truly prepare me for the realization, by reason and painful circumstance, that there is a great and powerful God, which we all share, and growing stronger every day.