

What is a Man?

(Expression x3 vs. 12 Traits to evoke the emotion of "Fellowship")



This pamphlet may or may not reflect somebody's opinions on this mess somewhere. The author, commissioner, co-author, editor, and guru-in-charge-of-stealing-neato-pictures-from-the-Internet all disavow knowledge of this, the reasons it was made and the ultimate reasoning behind making it.

What We Are

Given the placement of this pamphlet and the context in which you are no doubt reading it, I must assume, dear reader, that you are of a sanguine temperament. I mean this in the most literal sense I can mean it. You and I, we are governed by the same humor. Perhaps you are quick to anger? Perhaps you are quick to act? You know what I'm talking about.

Suffice it to say, I am the same as you. My heart is a quiet one, even though my blood is hot. This condition with which some consider ourselves cursed, friend, it is not an unknown to me.

What Are We?

Now that we've established what seems to be the defining characteristic of ourselves, I should like to examine that definition and how it relates to everyone else.

So. What are we?

Well, I should state that we are men's bodies with men's minds inside and with men's memories housed within. We might be faster, stronger, more potent, capable of greater longevity and more powerful than the rest of our race. We might have foibles and vulnerabilities unheard of amongst others. We might be lured into thinking of ourselves as Gods, or demons, or superheroes or ment+... something a step up from the rest of the herd.

This is a falsehood and a vanity. We are gloriously human.

There is nothing in our experience that is not impossible for the human mind to accomplish.



There is no feeling that wracks our minds that is not a human emotion. We are not more complex in our desires. We are not more noble in our aims. If anything differs, it is that we have the power to present an illusion of being something more elaborate through simply having more time to entangle ourselves in an ultimately human condition.

We are mortal. We are finite. In spite of all arguments to the contrary, we are all doomed to come to the same end that everything else comes to: dust.



There is nothing except hubris and time on our side in disputing this.

...and unlike some who get to end out their days in soft morphine-addled sleep, remembering hazily the presence of grandchildren and the potential of heaven, our deaths have a tendency toward the fast, the brutal and the lonely.

Summary Box: What are you?

You are a human being.

You are a thing that is going to die some day.

You are a creature that has the same set of emotions as every other human being (sanguine or not) on the planet. You are capable of bleeding if pricked and laughing when tickled. You smile when you are happy and frown when you are not.

You are not a special unique glitter-colored snowflake whose existence bears any more weight than that of anyone else's. You are not a God or a demon or a monster or the protagonist of the story of this city, world or moment in time.

And by that logic, you are precisely as significant and meaningful as Jesus Christ, William Shakespeare, Cain, Abel, Napoleon, George Washington, the Queen of England, Jeremy MacNeil, Adolf Hitler, JFK, Sidharta Gautama, Elvis, Jack Kerouac, Bojan Petrov, Kurt Cobain, Barrack Obama, Bill Nye the Science Guy or anyone else you feel you need to believe in.

What is our obligation to the world?

If you've read the previous section this ought be self evident. Our obligation is the same as everyone else's. No more. No less.

We might be better able to accomplish a few things that others have trouble with. We might be less able on a few.

We also might find ourselves a bit wrapped up in our personal egotistical psychodramatic crises and our chess games and playground Machiavelling and all that jazz.

Sorry. It's old hat and nobody thinks it's cool anymore. Stop pretending you're the king of the imaginary hill. Stop bemoaning and gnashing your teeth at the loss of your lost love/family member/paramour/puppy/whatever. Stop writing poetry unless it's good poetry. Stop pretending your heap of angst, black eyeliner and pathos outweighs that of a child that's dropped a Popsicle or a guy whose wife ran off with an itinerant peyote shaman, or or a pretty girl whose husband never came home from Iraq.

Your obligation to the world is the same as every other immensely brief-lived persons. By the time the sun goes red giant, it will all matter the exact same amount.

You ought do the best you can. You ought fully grok, comprehend and understand that you are the sum of your actions.

That's it.

What?

To moralize a bit more explicitly:

If you can look in a mirror and tell yourself that torture is acceptable, that murder occasionally is a means to an end, that said ends can occasionally justify the means, that the word "kine" is not an absurdity, that your isolation is unique and inescapable, that you are Damned, that you are unDamned, that damnation doesn't matter, and/or that you owe nobody anything for any reason - if you can do all that, then I concede that you can call yourself dead (some of us like to use that euphemism, after all).

If not, I suspect that you are probably alive and probably ought be in the business of living.

Being Alive: A Short Guide

So you live. Good job. The question is now what to do with your life, a thing that most people (our type or no) have a few stumbling blocks with. Here are a few of the basic rules at this point, if you've been left behind.

1. Do not have "a cause"

Have a metric fuck-ton of causes. More if possible. The more you tell yourself that you are existing for some noble singular purpose (salvation, power, wealth, prestige, and revenge involving a dead woman all seem to be popular singularities) you will soon find your life consumed by it and be left without time to play, watch fireworks displays, kiss strangers and enjoy the process of living. Remember you are a multi-purposed being.

2. Don't take it all so seriously

You no longer have a deadline on which you have to impress people. Taking yourself too seriously does nothing for anyone, aside from encouraging everyone to act yet-even-more serious to keep up. That's lame. Cut it out.

3. Enjoy minutiae

Once you've been going on living for a bit, it's easy to forget the details of life. It is important to maintain a sense that you are still a person (mostly because you are). To this end: Please have hobbies. Please have a favorite color. Please see a movie every now and again. Please do things for the fun of it. Please enjoy the weather. Please stop to focus on interesting pieces of paper you find on the ground. Please take photos now and again of things you think are pretty.

It is nigh unforgivable to cave in, follow your "cause", act serious all the time, and then go home to sleep in an unfurnished apartment in clothing you never change out of.

4. Give a little back

As much as causes and romances and revenge and imperative crises are all well and good, it is inherently in your best interests to realize that not every good or ungood deed you perform will fall into the realm of action heroes and dastardly villains. There are plenty of hungry people who might like some food, plenty of walls that need murals, plenty of toddlers who dropped their ice cream, plenty of minor needling almost imperceptible injustices that need to be addressed and honestly in the end are just as important than the bomb needing to be diffused, the tragedy needing to be averted and the sky needing to be propped up before it falls.

Remember. You are one of the few people who will genuinely live to see the fruition of the tiniest of goodnesses. You get to watch each butterfly you set loose turn into a hurricane.

Go for it.

Further Suggestions For Action:

- Make something beautiful. Painting, drawing, sculpting, poetry, oration, the playing of the musical saw, gorilla theater, exuberant shouting, dressing as a walrus and handing out flowers to strangers, doodling, and balloon animal breeding are all superior to sitting around contemplating how dark the night is.
- Do something you normally wouldn't do now and again. Learn to do something new while you're at it. You are not dead yet.
- Think for yourself. Don't listen to pamphlets, leaders, televisions, agitators, the status quo, the government, your friends, your parents, your elders, your youngers, the voices in your head, or any other source that you don't think you ought be listening to.
- Remind yourself of who you are and were. Don't keep your lame traumatic past (we all have one) a bottled up source of personal anguish.

Investigate yourself. Confront yourself. Enjoy yourself.
- Don't let the bastards drag you down. Don't give into **THE DARKNESS**. Don't fall into thinking for a moment that you and everyone else somehow doesn't matter.
- Get involved with the lives of normal everyday people who need help. Start working on something you like and are good at if you do. You'll be surprised at the impact you can make now that you're no longer under the same limitations you used to be. Some places that might give you a good start are (), (), () and ().