

School: Defender of the Status Quo



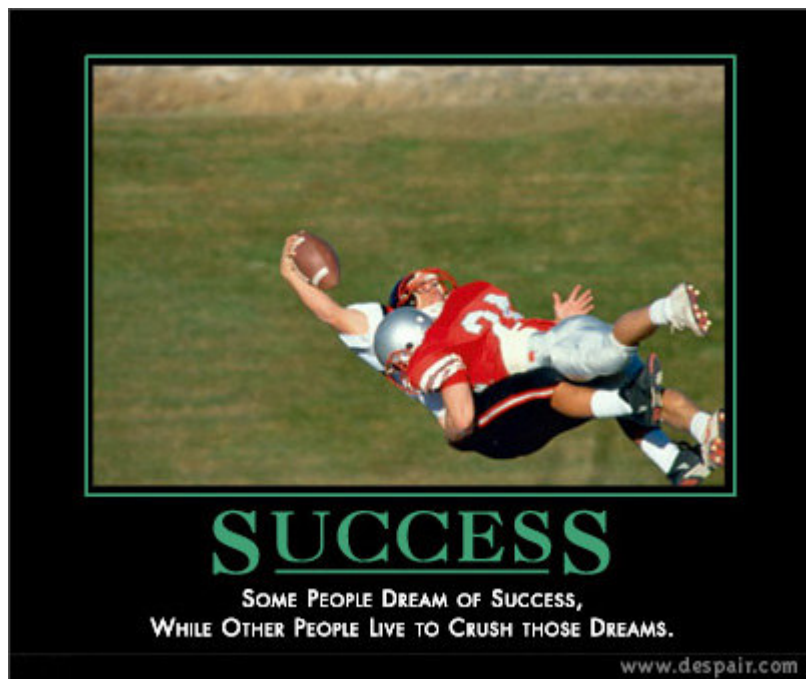
PREFACE

The Power of Two presents the topic of schooling, as a class project, to delve into how its effects can be interpreted by individuals, groups, and society in general. There are a number of aspects to schooling, probably infinitely too much to entertain for this project. So, it is the Power of Two's objective to present particular aspects that we find interesting, and we think relevant to this topic. For clarity, "education" is synonymous with "schooling". Aspects of education include but are not limited to the roles of educators and students, but to roles of other elements within the system. We will identify the meanings of conventional and unconventional, as well as how education interacts between them. Also, what it means to be successful and how valuable success is within the confinement of education and or schooling.

We present issues and follow with fictional content which illustrates those issues. Those issues invariably involve a clash between conventional and unconventional modes, are often dry and scholarly, and in-and-of themselves, most closely conform to conventional forms of education, whereas the narrative form is entertaining and does not completely conform to conventions.

The fictional narratives follow a transition in the life of our protagonist, [Jack](#).

SUCCESS



Survival's [importance](#) is often taken for granted by industrialized humans. This is because our survival has been established and surpassed. One's level of education is often a predictor of success (transcendent of survival) within the collective, and because inequity is a part of modern society, education is more often a dividing force than a cooperative endeavor. Restrictions lead to personal access to information and research tools, which leads to a greater will for [individual self-preservation](#) within the educated subcollective, and modern democracy fails the uneducated in the interest of supporting the educated. After all, [the drive to succeed](#) is supported by evolutionary features. The formally educated subcollective has established a plateau of achievement greater than survival, named success. [Success is a product of individual](#)

[efforts, often with the help of others within the subcollective.](#)

On the other hand, collective success becomes more likely as collective intelligence accrues and is dispersed. A [four-hour workday](#) is on the horizon from there. Standardization establishes a poor facsimile of conditions which facilitate survival. Comparing individual results to the societal mean, and further elevating or degrading based solely on those scores does lead to some degree of individualization. This artificial filtering process disintegrates when an individual adopts an idea contrary to standard education and further, becomes [bored](#)

enough with school to put individual effort into his or her own education. Those who are self-taught and those who are dissatisfied with their success often dissociate from the system.

SCENE ONE



I sit on the edge and wonder why my life turned out so great. I was adopted by old, rich, impotent people who left me their estate – Charles was an attorney who died of cardiovascular disease and Maggie was an alcoholic socialite who died of cancer. I was born to an out-of-work actress, who, as the story goes, was knocked up by a handsome stranger at her 19th birthday party, but she didn't have an abortion because her Baptist parents in Texas who didn't want me, didn't want her to have an abortion. The only things that I know about her, I know from her death certificate and the doctor who birthed me. Dr. Majeed Mohammed, by no great irony is my wife's mentor at Cedars-Sinai and the man who couldn't save my biological mother's life at the General Hospital. He was apprehensive in speaking to me about it and I realized that it was the first and only time that I've seen him require effort to be tactful. He had only seen one other woman die in the practice of his specialty. He turned his chair and looked upon the statue of Shiva in the corner of his office as he spoke, "she was very slight and it was a miracle that she carried you to term. It was either you or her and nature chose you. I'm sorry I couldn't do anything to make it different." I was sure that my apathy had jarred him more than the realization of our crossing paths again. Rosa told him everything about me and he has had an easier time with the notion of being her friend than her father has. My wife's a black-haired, green-eyed beauty of a trauma doctor. We fell in love with each other at sixteen, the same year that my father died, though we had known each other most of our lives. She went to Brown to learn the arts required to practice medicine. I went to Caltech to learn how and why things blow up. Her father brought us together again. He was my adoptive-father's client and is my mentor in more ways than one. The rich live in a smaller world than the rest of reality and everyone outside of that world is a nameless, faceless beggar. I've scarcely been able to escape my heritage in buying a name for myself with my inheritance. I have two, fulfilling, undemanding jobs, a manor in Laurel Canyon, underlings, connections in high places and avenues for buying any drug that I can pronounce; but if success is handed to you, is it really yours, or is it just somebody else's leftovers? I wish I could be wasted right now.

I laugh aloud at my bad pun. The winding road and ebbing sea provoke me to meet them, tête-à-tête. The night is clear, the moon is gone and the Milky Way is much prettier than I remember it from my childhood. "I haven't been on Highway 1 on a night like this in five years," I say to myself and feel petty for having done so. "The grass doesn't need to know me." I am pulled from my childish fancy by the hum of an engine five or six cycles north on the sinuous coastline. "Here he comes." I kiss my rifle, jump over a nice leafy hedge and strap myself into my harness on the edge of the cliff. "Like a bat out of hell." I take aim at the spot I've chosen. "He should slow down – speed kills." He's within half of a mile and I can clearly hear that he's in a Lotus – just like Benito's – just like dad's. I see light blue headlights reflect from the sea-splashed guardrail. I've been waiting to make this look like an accident. I anticipate the position of his rear wheel as he spins around the curve and shifts into third, just like I've seen him manage it for the past month. The moment is ripe. I pull the trigger and watch my target flip into the sea. I take a moment of silence for the gorgeous piece of British engineering which I've just sunk, wiggle out from behind the bush, watch the infrared recording on my scope to make sure that the

bullet bounced into the sea, dismantle and return my rifle to my coat, and make a note in my log: 73172145 (March 17, 2007 at 9:45 P.M). I make a quick call, "Cory, I'm all done here. I've been successful. Come get me."

"Roger, Jack, I'll be to the spot in fifteen."

I put on my infrared goggles, take a long hike through the wilderness.

INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT

School at every level does one thing: it teaches individuals to take and appropriately respond to instructions (to interact with society). When, how and why a child's schooling begins is decided by the parents. It isn't illegal to intellectually neglect a child until the age of six. [Individuality is often linked with the extent of one's knowledge or experience](#), as enhanced knowledge generates more advanced musings. Knowledge and experience begin in childhood. Responsible parenting requires leadership in shaping behavior and, ideally, all other education flows from this pattern of entrainment and emulation. Instruction is a form of communication that induces action. Instructional messages are received and interpreted; as always the ideal result of communication is shared understanding. Therefore, school is practice for doing something for another in return for something that another has power over. [Child development is the product of a parent's decisions, not a child's work.](#)



In the same sense, school parallels life (and life becomes school), often as a matter of convenience to those who have structured it. It is no secret that high school is vocational training. For instance, factory workers are treated effectively like high school children. They are allotted breaks, are penalized for absenteeism, and are made to answer to a power that they will never hold. In terms of higher education, there is a vastly greater deal of respect, freedom and equality. Classes have magically transformed into often non-mandatory, "Class Meetings," and if you want authority, it only takes three extra years. This higher education, as it is often called, is nothing more than preparation for higher paying jobs and any "work," "investment" or "sacrifice" that might be a part of it are thought to somehow justify this higher pay. In that way, school is the gateway to success, so long as success is defined as financial gain. Money implies one's ability to exert control upon society.

School is where individuals become socialized. In societies with a social order, or class system, it is where people are placed into society by teaching them how to think like everybody else for the purpose of serving those who have more resources than oneself in order to attempt to obtain more resources than everybody else.

SCENE TWO

Chucho returns my tennis ball, with his brother, Blue trotting behind. Chucho is a good boy and doesn't want to play tug of war like Blue, who isn't as good at fetching. "Give it. Shake. Shake. Sit. Sit!" I start to scratch Chucho's head and Blue licks my other hand, trying to give me a message. "Alright, I have no reason not to love you too." I decide that I'm done and pretend to throw the ball, but they are keen to my tricks.

"Jack!" Rosa calls to me as she approaches with a tray of pink lemonade. The sunflowers on her summer dress sway in the wind. I've never seen her so tan as this summer.

I throw the ball as hard as I can into the wooded area and lose interest in the [catahoulas](#) racing for it. I stand and start walking to the veranda towards which she's headed. She had just laid our drink to rest as I embrace her from behind. I wrap my arms fully around her so that my hands are touching her opposite sides and kiss her from shoulder to ear. My arms loosen as she spins and clasps her hands behind my neck. We smile at each other for a moment before we kiss. Her hands move down my torso and mine down her hips as we refrain and sit.

I pour each of us a glass and take a sip. "Cinzano Rosso?"

"Yep, some of the cheap stuff. Mom won't care if it's missing."

"How was tennis?"

"Unfulfilling: Tina really sucks. I barely broke a sweat beating her. I mean, it's only practice, but still..."

"She's only fourteen, you know."

"I know, I just want to be in shape for the school season."

"You're in the best shape I've ever seen you in."

She smiles kindly and we turn from each other to gaze at the wilderness. Chucho scampers up again, ball in mouth, brother at side. Rosa stands and they automatically sit before her as Chucho drops the ball into her hand. She chucks it clear across the terrace and into the brush at the bottom. She reflexively pulls the bottom of her dress against her backside before she sits again.

"Jack?" I say nothing and look at her. She grabs my free hand between both of hers and rests her head on my arm. "I'm glad you and your mom spent the summer with us; it's the least my father could do for you."

"He's always been more of a father than my own, anyway. All that dolt ever taught me was how to not be like him."

"You shouldn't talk about him like that; it's disrespectful."

"It's how I feel too. You know, your dad is supposed to take me hunting today."

"That's such a disgusting tradition."

I say, "I know," and try to kiss her to change the subject. I hear a nearby explosion and, before understanding what had happened, find myself trembling and clutching her against me on the deck of the veranda.

A perverse laugh comes from the direction of the house.

Near crying, I whisper, "are you alright?"

"Yeah, but I think you bruised my hip."

I hold her hand as she gets up and try to hug her again, but instead I watch her run and scream at the perpetrator. "Jesus Christ, you lunatic! You really do want me to have grey hair by the time I'm twenty, don't you!"

Her father stands there, dressed in camouflage from head to heel, laughing, and holding our hunting gear. "Sorry about that. I couldn't resist."

I avoid his eyes and continue staring at the door Rosa entered.

"I know you want to go after her, but she'll be fine. Besides, we have some hunting to do." He throws the rifle around his left shoulder at me and I catch it by the stock. He takes up her untouched glass, finishes it, and pours himself another. I continue to stand and now, stare at him. "About that: I'm sorry I'm late too." We finish the pitcher in silence before he decides to move on. "Let's go teach you how to use this thing. Chuchi! Bluey!"

The four of us hike two miles into the woods before finding a [shoat](#).

"Take him out boy! Make it count!"

The fool-beast charges at us, unaware of his fate, and I pull my trigger. My bullet blows off his left hind leg and the dogs rush in to finish the kill. His death cry reminds me of something that is almost human.

Ben removes his hat and wipes his brow as he begins speaking, "Listen to that sound and remember it well. You are the one who caused all of that pain by not killing him quickly and now my dogs tear at him, trying to subdue him. You see, there are two things that a weapons can do: inflict pain and take life. Inflicting pain is sadistic. Listen to his scream. A degree or two to your left would have put the bullet through his head."

"But he was rushing us. I reacted when you told me to."

"I'm not blaming you, son; it's just something you need to know. If there is any blame to be placed, blame your own lack of foresight. He's ten yards away. You still had time to react when I told you to shoot him. Go pay your respects."

I approach the dead and dismembered pig with trepidation, as though he could gore me still. The dogs tug at his skin and drag him through a pool of his own blood. "It doesn't seem fair."

"Of course it isn't fair; we have guns to make things unfair."

"Are we just going to leave him like this?"

"We have plenty of food at home."

"It seems like such a waste."

“Something will eat him, even if it’s bacteria. Life always goes on.”

“Why did you want me to do this anyway?”

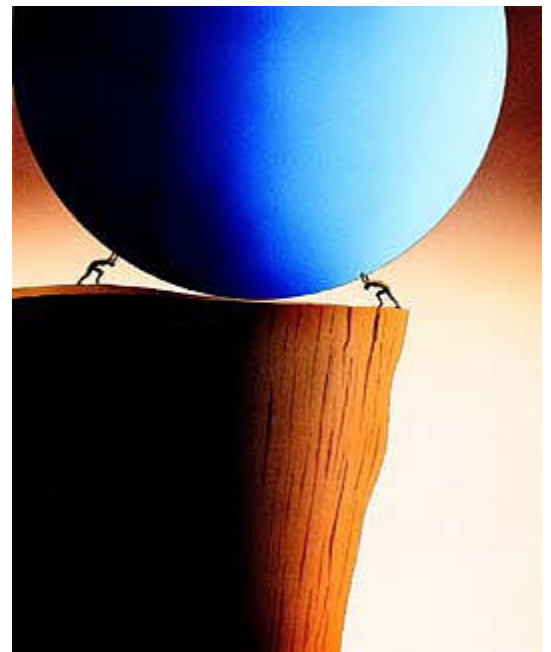
“Because every man in my family knows how and when to use a gun.”

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Humanity survives on what its collective members know. Survival is the collective effort of all individuals interested in surviving. As information becomes increasingly accessible to the collective, our audience grows. Furthering each individual's education is imperative to furthering collective concern for education. Information is the Free Power which forms our audience. They don't have to be Geniuses. Educators, scholars, modern revolutionaries, anarchists, agnostics, malcontents, the unemployed, the average Joe and the 300,000,000th baby are all concerned with education for different reasons.

This infinitely encompassing definition is only a potential reckoning of our audience. However, just as natural selection seems to demand adaptation of individuals within a group, our consideration must purify and exclude to a more reasonable audience. They may or may not have accepted established paradigms such as Darwin's Theory of Natural Selection (but through further education, they may come to). All who are educated enough to understand and be concerned with the world around them have a duty to learn about education and playing a role in its development.

The ultimate circumstance to be met is a personal concern with the progress of society. Raising sympathy for the cause of uplifting the entirety of humanity is a natural objective of educators, scholars, modern revolutionaries, anarchists, agnostics, and malcontents.



SCENE THREE

I find Cory waiting. The lights are off, but the Cadillac's still putting out radiation. The door pops open and I step in.

"Good evening, Cyclops," Cory got the job of being my "partner" because it was the safest place for the boss' kid to be and still get paid. Whenever we were in the company of others, I referred to him as my driver; this is California after all, and I didn't want people to get the wrong idea. All he does is drive anyway.

"I ain't no mutant. Ain't got no superpowers, neither," I respond in Georgian.

"Sorry, boss." I hate it when my equal's call me boss, even if I am better. "I just meant that you're like, better at seeing in two-dimensions than three."

"I'm surprised you know how many dimensions there are."

"Come on, they taught everyone that in the seventh grade."

"Which grade did you get the fourth dimension in?"

"There's only three that I know."

"Okay, just making sure. That explains a lot, though."

"Explains what?"

"Your driving."

"You're really one to talk. I slow down, while you're in the car, old man."

"Your driving scares me because you don't understand physics. My driving scares you because I've learned from Mario Kart that moving in a straight line as much as possible cuts distance off of the total path. We speed just the same."

He tries driving in the prescribed fashion and says, "That's a crazy James Bond trick."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"You know what I mean."

"I'm better than James Bond. I'm like James Bond on meth. I am to the rifle what James Bond is to the thirteen bullet revolver."

"What?"

"I don't need to reload."

"You should be a rapper."

"Did you get those pills, by the way?"

"No. Xanax, instead."

"Don't those eat holes in your brain?"

"Only in long-term, double-blind clinical studies."

"Fork 'em over." He hands me a tiny baggy with six pills and I say, "I don't need that many holes in my brain. You want the rest?"

"I never say no to drugs."

I hand him the half-full bag and he makes a confession, "You know, my dad tries to tell me to get you to take what he wants, so lately it's been kind of hard to get anyone to come up off of the good stuff."

"I appreciate it. I don't know if I could do my job without it and I sure feel like I need it. Tell Francisco to lay off my coping and my copping."

"Sure. Some of the senior citizens around the house are calling you Gabriel, you know?"

"What's that supposed to mean?"

"My father believes that he should run his house like the house of the lord, you know? Gabriel was the Angel of Death and the Left Hand of God, bro. Didn't you learn that in school?"

"I didn't learn anything in school but a different way of looking at life, although I rejected that way and quickly went back to my own. I've never cracked a Bible. Too bad he didn't nickname us after Ninja Turtles, 'cause then you could have been one too."

"Screw off, man. My dad wants me to be a professional, but not a killer. I'm going to be a lawyer or something."

"What's wrong with being a killer? I've done well by it. I mean, I have an ideal lifestyle."

"How does an astronomer get nights off, anyway?"

"I don't even get to look at the stars, man. I do infrared data analysis and computers record everything that we can possibly detect. So all I do is watch a bunch of sped up files, take notes, and hope that I find a planet that I can put my name on or something."

"Crazy."

We listened to the road noise for a while. I could tell that my realism had crushed a bit of his dreams. He is a good kid but he grew up on Disney movies and Sunday mass, so he isn't well grounded. That's not say that he is a live wire or anything. He's pretty low voltage. As much as I hate mediocrity, I envy the easy life he's had. I ask, "Which one do you want to be?"

"One what?"

"Ninja Turtle."

"[Leonardo](#)."

"Really? I don't peg you as the two-handed type."

"They all fight with both hands, bro."

"Good call." Another silence falls between us and he jumps from 75 mph to 100.

"So, you're still an atheist after all of the time you've spent in this family?" He finally chooses a topic that he knows he can't lose with.

"Should I thank God for random happenings? I'm a two-time orphan turned assassin. Your father and I have a business relationship. Besides, you think I'd kill people if I thought I was going to hell?"

"My dad is going to be absolved by a priest before he dies. Belief in God is what gets you into Heaven and killing people doesn't necessarily keep you out."

"Are you sure that's what the Bible says?"

"No, but it's what Father Savino says. Priests are like cops, they can interpret the law and tell you what you'll be judged for."

"Is that why you pay them off too each week?"

"Anyway, that's not the point. Why don't you believe in God though?"

"I don't know. I always tell people that my parents didn't raise me to."

"I don't see your dad as the type."

"Benito isn't my father. He's my father-in-law. He was friends with my adoptive father and took care of me since he died."

"My father always told me something in case he dies: You don't get to choose a father, but sometimes a father might choose you. I think that's what happened in your case. You don't think God made it happen?"

"No."

"I guess scientists don't need faith."

"Scientists need faith more than anyone. Faith is simply the ability to perceive that which is normally imperceptible. Whether that perception involves ability or is merely a fantasy is another matter. Scientists just have faith in things that are real."

We arrive at the Denny's in Hollywood. I extend my hand and say, "It's been a pleasure doing business. See you in another month or so."

He shakes and says, "Adios." I get out of his Cadillac and fall back into the luxury that I define as freedom.

CONVENTIONAL VERSUS UNCONVENTIONAL EDUCATION

To further identify with education as the aide to conform with societal roles; it may be better to peruse through the identifying markers of educators and why they teach, first, then look at the content or even the medium that they present such education. Given that it is unlikely for any single being or collective group to offer "information" without the sole purpose to influence. Influence can also include to change, alter, establish or reaffirm, etc. Then anything that is said or implied, inferred or derived, must be of some influence to any and all individuals (society) with the intent to open membership with that particular individual or group. This membership is purely a survival tactic, knowingly or unknowingly, to either the "influency" (educator) or the influenced (student). What is being previously said here; a significant identifying marker of an educator is the reason for them to influence. Lets say that anyone is or can be an educator; even if they themselves do not fully believe they can be or even want to be one (educator). It is not necessarily up to them. What is meant by this is that the lessons learned from them by any individual is subjective. Of course there are systems which are organized to reach a prescribed and known level of competency but given any single and set interpretation from that organized system cannot be fully and completely gauge. It is very likely that a student could learn far more "peripheral information" from an organized system of study than any educator could fathom. As human beings, our education must also include our personal and emotional states, our experiences, and even other ill-conceived factors (learned skills of interpretation) amongst others that regulate and legitimize anything learned. The form or medium is directly correlated, here, in this situation.

This is where conventionality is questioned; the medium that education is presented to teach and inform. The individual(s), the society(ies) are capable of learning by more than the accepted and expected conventional way. One such medium are the performing arts to include movies, plays, poetic readings, other theatrical performances, acrobatics and more. One in particular with such great influence of this time, because it is popular, and therefore has the ability to reach the masses is a movie. Unconventionally, know this has shifted the person or person who can know be considered the educators of our time. This does not solely mean they are the only educators of course but that through this medium, the content of these movies can educate with a profound effect upon society. One movie in particular that has pushed the envelope of conventional society, capitalism, and especially educational values is [Fight Club](#) which is considered a [cultist type film](#). Is it possible for films to produce cult members or is it easier for society to classify, section off, and itemize such renderings as cultist. Since, they are in opposition to mainstream societal views and in particular, educational views on individuality amongst others. It can be wondered that the influence of such a movie generated these ideas, or better yet, that these ideas were already generated within individuals and the movie (educational medium) just reinforced these lessons and built upon their educational premise or basis. Weren't these same individuals educated similarly, in society, like others. Is society also a cult? Is a cult bad, are new ideas bad or new ways these ideas bad? Are movies bad? Is it bad to not watch movies and do we jeopardize ourselves and our education in doing so? I think not! Society cannot abandon the interactive value of education in any of its forms because human individuality is so subjective, so didactic, so "individualistic" that to limit or parameterize this would be counterproductive to society as a whole.



SCENE FOUR

I sit and watch a groups of cheaply fed teenagers or half tipsy adults flop out of their cars and fall into an angry, wet, umbrella-wielding mob from behind the comfort of my Irish coffee.

Georgia, my server this evening, dutifully sets another full glass on my table. Her pretty, round face wears a smirk and a shamrock. I smile, realize that my lips had parted and decide to form a sentence with the opening: "Thanks."

She leans against my table and hangs her hand so that her green middle fingertip barely touches the glossy surface. "If you're Irish, I get to pinch you."

"Sure who isn't?"

Her hand pinches my face, but I've got a bad case of numb-face. "Let me know if you need anything, Sugar."

"Sugar."

"Yes?"

I wink at her. "I need some sugar."

She reaches into her apron pocket and bends her waist so that her face brightens my sphere of touch. I notice that the freckles beneath her eyes are wasted by the dull amber sconces between each window. A slight handful

of sugar falls into my palm and, still floating just above my eye level, she says, "I get off at six if you're still here then." I smile at her boldness. She returns my wink, twirls and heads back to the kitchen. I watch her auburn ponytail bounce away and notice for the first time that she isn't carrying a tray. I like watching her run around for me more when I know she's running around just for me.

I make my coffee Irish and wash down my third Xanax. Whenever I take strange drugs, I feel a oneness with the great tripped-out mass that is Hollywood.

"Bohemian Rhapsody" begins to play in my pocket. "Hola."

"Hola, yourself, hombre. I hear you bagged a wild boar recently; good job, son."

"Gracias."

"Enough with the Spanish."

"I think that's all I know, anyway. What are you calling for?"

"My daughter wants to know that you're OK. She's not exactly thrilled about you taking over the family business."

"I am family, after all."

"Listen, Cory got into an accident. He's alive but he isn't awake yet. Things are messy right now. He's lucky Rosa's working on him."

"Jesus... Can you take me to the hospital?"

"I'll see you soon."

I finish my cup, drop a picture of [Grant](#) on the table and go outside to wait in the burgeoning mist.

Thoughts of failure's consequences fill my mind. If he was in a wreck, the cops probably found my gear and they probably think that he used it. I'm going to have to risk my life and freedom, all because the boss' kid was dangerous to himself. It's not his fault; his role was always as a failure. Nobody taught him how to make a decision, but they're all surprised when he makes the wrong ones. If he lives, they'll want me to take the fall instead of him and if I refuse they'll want my blood, so I'll have to kill at least five or six of them to stay alive, but they'll probably keep coming for the rest of my life. I need a vacation, far away.

I call the observatory and leave a message, "Hi Jim, it's Jack. Listen, I need to use up my vacation time early this year. There's been a tragedy on my wife's side of the family. One of Rosa's aunt's was taking care of her grandmother in Brazil and the aunt died, so we're going for the funeral and to see if we can bring her grandma back. We're leaving at six tomorrow on her dad's plane. Sorry for being so abrupt. I'll call you as early as I can tomorrow. Thanks for understanding."

Francisco knows that the mafia needs me as much as I need it, but I sure can't replace his son, just like he couldn't replace me. That boy couldn't do what I do if he knew how to stop time.

Ben rolls up and gets me situated: "The Scaglioti's are responsible for this."

"What the hell did they attack Cory for!?"

"You were their target, boy. You just took out one of their bosses, remember?"

"What about my equipment?"

"It's safe. His car was towed home."

I brought four [UZIs](#) and enough ammo to level a village."

"What kind of village?"

"I don't know, Cicilian. The Scaglioti's run their operation from Santa Catalina, so that's where we're headed."

"So, you and I are going to take part in an international incident?"

"Unless you have a better idea. The truth of the matter is that if you run, they'll keep going after Cory and then you'll have two groups after you."

"I don't see either of us walking out of this alive, anyway. I can't involve you or Rosa in some punks who are after me. Tell Franky that I pulled a pistol on you and told you to tell him that they can find me on [Santa Catalina](#). Then tell him that you're leaving the country with Rosa for a while."

"Where are we going?"

"Anywhere but Brazil."

"Running away isn't like you."

"I'm not running away, you are. I'm going on vacation. I'm going to take them out at the head. I'm not going to let the boss or his kid's lack of skills get me killed. Tell Francisco that I'm the one to be afraid of, not him. He isn't the one who kills people for a living. I decide when they die, not him."

"I'll think about all that. Where do you want me to take you?"

"To the ferry in [Orange County](#)."

"So how's Cory?"

INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS VERSUS VALUE

School and its cousin, class, are inseparable. Class is synonymous with caste, rank, lecture, course, grade and the state of being proper. [Fish that coexist in schools](#) only have one class in terms of all of these synonyms, therefore the corpus of fish is united. On the other hand, humans are schooled progressively, at different intervals. This gradation is the result of society containing individuals who know a great deal more than the average member of society.

The [unbalance of power](#) that exists today is a result of natural conditions. The first condition is the exclusion of some members of the corpus, which creates a population of "others" that will eventually develop into an excess labor pool. They want to survive as well, so they trade their labor. The second condition is that control be



exerted over resources by the dominant group. Class is therefore a product of the survival of "excess people" and the concept that those people have value. In that sense, one aspect of school is for individuals to go to make themselves useful.

It is at this bifurcation that one's success and value arise. Success is a social abstraction that may be affected by individual motives. Value is the concrete, though is often not quantitative, principle on which society functions. Success and value are both teachable principles, but is a successful person who has no value (or even a negative value) in a societal context greater than one who has not attained success, but does good unto society?

SCENE FIVE

I've single handedly "cleaned-up" the island's mafia problem, not that I care: I just want to stay alive. Killing scum is kind of a nice bonus though. Maybe I should do this back home for my own self-esteem. I don't enjoy being on the brink of death nearly as much as I enjoy having control over it.

I am waiting, waiting again, waiting for the last one. Having to focus on survival leaves little time for much else. Waiting gives me time to myself, time to think. I've had so little time to entertain my own thoughts lately. One job forced me to look at the past and the other forced me to predict the future. It is in these empty moments that I see the continuity of my own actions and the absurdity of everything that brought me to where I am.

The sun is barely above the eastern horizon drawing the wind, like the opposing poles of magnets. The island jungle steams with life. Is he there? Don't take a chance. Discipline is the key skill of my profession. Waiting for a singular opportunity is nothing new, though I never thought I'd find it relaxing to kill someone in broad daylight.

I see a figure, but I can't see if it is my guy; it is a large figure. Bosses are always fat bastards. I'll be able to tell him apart from up close. It's because of his lack of discipline that he got to be so fat. "Weak and cowardly." But it's not a clear shot. It's almost impossible to penetrate the yacht's bullet proof glass from this distance. Physics won't allow it; the bullet's velocity will decrease too much.

An opportunity is presents itself when the old bastard walks out onto his yacht's deck. He's moving slowly to the breakfast table that has been set up by one of his bodyguards. The old man is wearing a hat so I can't tell if it's my target or some other John Candy look-alike. "Lift your head, dammit!" The wind is being annoying today and keeps shifting between north and south. I adjust my rear site aperture five clicks to the left. I look into the scope and think of his skeletal support and muscle control, and all of that other good stuff that makes me godly. "Don't muscle it, Jack. Easy does it. Remember aim small miss small. Target acquired. Breathe. Nothing in, nothing out. Buddha, Buddha, Buddha."

There is so much security, but it's just an illusion. It's all over. He makes a mistake; he removes his hat and raises his head. Target confirmed. A white light drowns in the dawn and is followed by silence.