

The Wisdom of Private Solomon

Now, my son, thou has reached the Promised Land where thy brothers have fought for two long years and more.

Long hast thou tarried by the way; thou hast eaten of the fat of the land of thy forefathers.

Thou hast made merry in the Great City; thy bed has rested in many places.

Thou hast seen many strange things but many things more strange await thee in this wonderful land.

For, verily, this is a land of many dangers and full of pitfalls for the unwary.

So harken well and pay tribute to the Great Rulers, with their tokens of Red and their halos of Gold.

For, verily, they are the chosen of the many and their words are as law unto thee.

Mark well the sayings of thy Colonel, thy Adjutant, thy Captain, thy Sergeant-Major, thy Sergeant, yea, even unto the sayings of thy Corporal.

For thou art but a soldier, and they do know many things and are learned in the customs of war.

Verily, it shall come to pass that thy

Colonel shall command thy Adjutant that a certain thing shall be done. Thy Adjutant shall make known to thy Captain the wishes of thy Colonel. Thy Captain shall converse with thy Sergeant-Major concerning this. Thy Sergeant-Major shall call thy Sergeant who will speak to thy Corporal.

And, verily, it shall come to pass that thy Corporal shall say unto you, "Thy Colonel desireth that this task shall be done forthwith. Go thou, therefore, and do this thing."

Then, my son, thou shalt obey the commands of thy leaders, that their wrath may not fall upon thee.

For woe unto him who obeys not their commands: many shall be his troubles and few his joys.

Yet, weep not, my son, but be of good cheer, even if many bags are required to be filled.

For, verily, when thy task is done, thy Sergeant-Major shall call thee unto his dwelling in the ground, and shall say unto thee these words: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

And from a vessel of earthen-ware, which he carrieth after the manner of a mother her first-born, shall he pour for thee a small portion thereof.

For it is well that a soldier have good spirits within him; then thou shalt feel content with thy lot.

Nevertheless, do not look with contempt upon Fritz across the way. For he hath an eye like unto the eagle and will ding thee in the dome and think nought of it.

Be thou like the creeping things upon the earth; yea, even like unto the serpent that crawleth upon its belly.

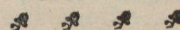
Be not like unto the gopher of thine own country, which hath an abundance of curiosity and loveth to sit upon his hind legs.

Therefore, I say unto thee, my son, be not curious of the things in front of thy parapet, but keep thy head down so that thou shalt not be cut off in the flower of thy manhood.

For what shall it profit a man if he enter into the deepest shell hole and hath not any cover for his head?

Go now, my son, to thy many duties. Be of good cheer.

(With apologies to The Brazier.)



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