

Hince Teipsum

F. A. Brennan '43

The little man on the deck of the departing vessel had just bade his friends a final farewell, and it was with heavy heart that he now watched their forms fading in the distance. Like tiny toys, set in motion, they waved their hands in fond farewell. Then smaller and smaller they became until they vanished from sight. Only the outline of the wharf could be seen now. Yet the little man kept his gaze fixed in that direction.

Then, as though influenced by an evil spirit, he began to curse his lot; for his old pride was again making itself felt, and it taunted him with visions of a lost liberty. Thoughts of the injuries he had suffered aroused hatred in his breast for those who were taking him away, and added fuel to the flames of his wrath. In the short space of about two minutes his whole spirit had changed to a seething cauldron of passion.

Suddenly a light hand was laid on his shoulder and a voice spoke softly to him.

"Pardon me, sir, I would like to speak with you for a moment."

The little man turned his head. A fiery retort died on his tongue as he met the childlike, sympathetic eyes of an old, grey-haired officer. Instead he spoke nothing. The old man went on.

"I know what is going on within you. It's your pride that has fallen again. Let me tell you, sir, that unless you conquer this pride you will have no peace. You will always be fretting over your wrongs, and in the end will die with this deadly sin on your soul."

"You are very outspoken," said the little man quietly, as he again turned his head in the direction of the wharf.

"I believe in speaking my mind, sir. But I really wish to help you. After all, you are showing the marks of a coward, though I know you are not one. Now think of those friends you left back there. They weep because you are leaving. Yes. But they also grieve for fear you will fret yourself to death. Tell me, is it worth all this?"

Still the little man kept staring at the wharf which was now but a speck on the calm surface of the water. At length he turned.

"I should resent what you are saying, but somehow I cannot. You're too sincere. I guess I really am everything you say I am—proud and all that. But I can't help it, *man*, I was born that way!"

"Listen my friend, that is an old excuse, and it never held any weight. You can overcome this pride. You have the power. It will be a war, with daily battles, more fierce than any you have fought before. There will be victories and defeats. At first you will appear to be losing the war, but as time goes on, you will meet with fewer reverses, until at last you will emerge from the din, a better man in the sight of heaven. Are you then willing to fight?"

Now the little man's eyes were shining, and his whole countenance seemed to be lighted up.

"War, battles, victories,—That's it! Another chance to prove my worth! Another fight, yes, another fight. This time I will win the greatest victory of my life!" And the little Corsican general shook hands with the old officer, as the lofty sails, filled with a fresh breeze, sent the ship speeding toward lonely St. Helena.



A gentleman has ease without familiarity, is respectful without meanness; genteel without affection, insinuating without seeming art.

—Chesterfield

He who overcomes his anger subdues his greatest enemy.

—Publius Syrus

