

You Were Inevitable

No matter what your family history or personal problems of the past, you are what you are today. That may be extraordinary, if you know what to do with yourself. Read on to learn.

"Life only starts to make sense when you realize that sometimes--often all the time--two completely contradictory ideas can be true.

Everything that led up to you was wrong. Therefore, you should not have been born.

But everything about you is right: You *had* to be born.

You were inevitable."

- Jonathan Coe, *The Rain Before it Falls*, Viking (U.K.), 2007

Perhaps the most inspiring words I have ever read.

Jonathan Coe's multi-generational narrative takes the reader through decades of grievous family history, where everything including abandonment, emotional abuse and the beating of a child that blinded her points to a cold, dire, sometimes brutal existence for the recent descendants. Yet the blinded girl had to be born and grew up to be happy and fulfilled, according to the narrator of the story.

But, *That's me*, I thought. And it could be you.

Maybe the terrible family history and problems you had to face in your life prepared you for the total person you are today.

You are not the tragedies of the past in your life, nor the calamities that befell your family before you came along. You were the product of them, yes, but you came through them.

To the average person, the rock that will one day become a beautiful sculpture is nothing but a rough, crass chunk of space debris. To a sculptor, the rock is the protection that has surrounded the beauty he will soon reveal from within, for eons. Somehow or another, the rock clothing that surrounded you has been chipped and drilled away to reveal something beautiful. Something beautiful that is you.

If you identify yourself as being the product of a troubled past, you will act the role of the troubled person of the present waiting for something else to go wrong to destroy your life. If you see yourself as the beautiful creation you have become, you will be a different person.

You are not your past, nor the inheritor of the troubled history of your family. You are who you are. Not only are most of your ancestors not alive today, not even you can live in your own past. You are who you are today, no matter what happened in the past.

Your past is no more real today than the genocides of Hitler, the agonies of The Great War to End All Wars or Joan of Arc tied to the stake. Today is today. It can only be today. The past brought you to where you are today, but it does not force you to be its victim.

You were inevitable.

If you want to make yourself useful to the world, make it better for someone. The more people whose today you improve, the more likely they are to pay the favour forward.

The world improves not by those who destroy, but by those who create and improve in preparation for the future. Generally speaking, your life is better than the lives of any ancestor in your past. If it doesn't seem that way, then maybe you aren't looking at what is right and good.

When you see what is right and good in your life, pass it on. You don't know how much better the future can be for your descendants. But you can try to do what is right and good for them.

Teach right. Teach good. Teach peace. (What I call the Philosophy of T3)

Bill Allin

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