

## Rules for a Knight (Hawke, Ethan)

My soul felt wild, and I could not discern for what reason I had been born. This lack of purpose weighed so heavily on me that at times I felt despondent, as if I were made of lead and sinking to the bottom of the ocean. Other times my idle nature made me feel so light and insignificant, I worried I might float away.

CREATE time alone with yourself. When seeking the wisdom and clarity of your own mind, silence is a helpful tool.

“One wolf is evil,” he continued. “It is anger, envy, greed, arrogance, self-pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, deceit, false pride.” He paused, poking the embers of our fire with a long stick he’d been carving. “The other is good. It is joy, love, hope, serenity, humility, loving-kindness, forgiveness, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion, faith.” I considered that for a minute, then tentatively asked, “Which wolf will win?” Sparks danced towards the stars as the old man stared into the glare of the flames and replied: “Whichever one you feed.”

NEVER announce that you are a knight, simply behave as one. You are better than no one, and no one is better than you.

Understanding that he relies on all that surrounds him, a knight is kind above all. He knows he will need many friends. Proper manners are not trivial. Being polite is part of our daily meditation on the equality of mankind. A knight says “please” and “thank you.” He never charges into battle alone. His kindness, compassion, and humility serve as his banners that many may rally around.

For Grandfather, humility was the essential element to a magnificent life. Humility is the ability to see yourself in the context of a much larger world.

“Be humble or get humbled,”

“When people speak, listen.” This was a point he would consistently stress. “As much as you like to be heard and understood, so does everyone else.” As the youngest child of a

“Expect nothing, and you will enjoy everything!”

THE only intelligent response to the ongoing gift of life is gratitude. For all that has been, a knight says, “Thank you.” For all that is to come, a knight says, “Yes!”

NEVER pretend you are not a knight or attempt to diminish yourself because you deem it will make others more comfortable. We show others the most respect by offering the best of ourselves.

Arrogance is born of insecurity. Pride is different. It is born of dignity, self-worth, and self-respect. We all see the world through the prism of our identity. If our self-worth is low, it affects everything we do. The point of life is to contribute to others, but without a certain self-regard, it is sometimes difficult to make breakfast.

There is no dirt in Heaven, and we are here to make the earth as much like Heaven as we can. A knight is the best kind of servant, leaving every space he enters brighter and cleaner than when he arrived. His surroundings reflect his state of mind.

Constant awareness of even the smallest detail trains your mind to be observant and conscientious.

As knights, understanding and respecting our distinctiveness is vital to our ability to harness our collective strength. The use of force may be necessary to protect in an emergency, but only justice, fairness, and cooperation can truly succeed in leading men. We must live and work together as brothers or perish together as fools.

I learned that evening that rain falls equally on all things. Jealousy, fear, and anger are obstacles to a knight’s first goal: a clear mind. Through his practice a knight should cultivate an open, unclouded mind, so that his instincts will guide him and he is free to act spontaneously. Understanding that our “talents” are simply gifts we have received

There are only two possible outcomes whenever you compare yourself to another, vanity or bitterness, and both are without value.

THE quality of your life will, to a large extent, be decided by with whom you elect to spend your time.

Remember, a friend does not need you to impress him. A friend loves you because you are true to yourself, not because you agree with him. Beware of grand gestures; the real mettle of friendship is forged in life's daily workings.

Perhaps more significantly, though, a good friend is also one to whom others rush to tell their good news. It's difficult to explain, but in some ways it can be easy to be supportive when your friend is hurt or sad. You may find it is more challenging to be wholeheartedly supportive when extreme good fortune befalls a friend and not you.

THOSE who cannot easily forgive will not collect many friends. Look for the best in others and yourself.

Your disappointments can transform into the elements of change and growth.

You will make mistakes, and people you love will make mistakes. But remember to judge yourself not at your worst but at your best. A knight knows that "success" is most easily measured by how he handles his disappointments.

A DISHONEST tongue and a dishonest mind waste time, and therefore waste our lives. We are here to grow, and the truth is the water, the light, and the soil from which we rise. The armor of falsehood is subtly wrought out of the darkness and hides us not only from others but from our own soul.

But more often and more insidiously people lie because they feel the truth will cause pain to themselves or others. Don't fear suffering. The strongest steel is forged in the hottest fire. The facts are always friendly. Without a little agony, none of us would bother to learn a thing.

ANYTHING that gives light must endure burning.

Later he told me when he was younger he learned the secret to performing under pressure: don't do it for yourself. Do it for someone else. "I know your grandfather always tells us to think of nothing. But when I get scared I just think of someone I love."

GRACE is the ability to accept change. Be open and supple; the brittle break.

This may seem like contradictory counsel: to both accept the inevitability of change and attempt to remain constant. But to live well, sometimes you will need to hold two seemingly opposing truths, one in each hand, and carry them both comfortably. Nature creates its balance with opposites. We need the sun and the rain, the glacier and the desert. Likewise, inside ourselves, we must accept the inevitability of change while deepening and strengthening our foundation.

THERE is no such thing as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. A hurried mind is an addled mind; it cannot see clearly or hear precisely; it sees what it wants to see, or hears what it is afraid to hear, and misses much. A knight makes time his ally. There is a moment for action, and with a clear mind that moment is obvious.

YOU were born owning nothing and with nothing you will pass out of this life. Be frugal and you can be generous.

There have always been two ways to be rich: by accumulating vast sums or by needing very little.

He took a pause, considering what he had said. "I've begun to be dubious of any invitation that requires me to buy new clothes."

IN the field of battle, as in all things, you will perform as you practice; so practice hard. With practice, you build the road to accomplish your goals. Excellence lives in attention to detail. Give your all, all the time. Don't save anything for the walk home. The better a knight prepares, the less willing he will be to surrender.

Oddly, with discipline, structure, and order, you will find there is freedom. Inside this kind of freedom, anything is possible. Without it, locating your saddle may take all morning.

Often we imagine that we will work hard until we arrive at some distant goal, and then we will be happy. This is a delusion. Happiness is the result of a life lived with purpose. Happiness is not an objective. It is the movement of life itself, a process, and an activity. It arises from curiosity and discovery. Seek pleasure and you will quickly discover the shortest path to suffering. Other people, friends, brothers, sisters, neighbors, spouses, even your mother and I are not responsible for your happiness.

Your life is your responsibility, and you always have the choice to do your best. Doing your best will bring happiness. Do not be overconcerned with avoiding pain or seeking pleasure. If you are concentrating on the results of your actions, you are not dedicated to your task.

You are not fragile. Engage. Being timid is often the result of being too self-critical and too self-concerned.

You are not fragile. Engage. Being timid is often the result of being too self-critical and too self-concerned. A knight does not stop at each victory; he pushes on to risk a more significant failure. Grandfather used to say, "There

Be resolute in your beliefs, my children. Your friendship cannot be bought.

Under the guise of love or loyalty, people can use guilt or fear to manipulate. A healthy conscience should be used like an internal compass: it is yours, not an instrument for others to play.

ORDINARY effort, ordinary result. Take steps each day to better follow these rules. Luck is the residue of design. Be steadfast. The anvil outlasts the hammer.

Remember, Noah had to build the ark before the flood; likewise, you must not wait for the inevitable storms of life before you ready your mind. Thought precedes action. How we handle times of peace and calm will determine our behavior in moments of crisis.

A knight does not whine. He concerns himself with affecting change, not burdening the world with his grievances.

Whatever well our lives are drawn from, it is deep, wild, mysterious, and unknowable. I am not in control of it, and neither are you. In fact, we are in control of very little outside of how we choose to handle each situation that presents itself. Don't forget there are some things that are so beautiful, so exquisite, that they should not be talked about, they can only be experienced.

Why am I alive? Where was I before I was born? What will happen to me when I die? Why should I follow these rules? Ask the tough questions. Read how your elders have answered these same questions. Our ancestors were not fools.

You did not create the mountains, the oceans, the sun, or the rain. You did not even create yourself. So you can loosen your shoulders; the responsibility of the world does not rest on your back alone.

EVERY knight holds human equality as an unwavering truth. A knight is never present when men or women are being degraded or compromised in any way, because if a knight were present, those committing the hurtful acts or words would be made to stop.

"Sir Doyle is saying," Grandfather scolded, "that often people who claim to be knights are among the smug and self-righteous. Convinced we understand everything that's happening around us, we consider ourselves among the fair, noble, and wise, or even believe that we are doing all we can. When it is obvious, most of us don't think very deeply at all, and each one of us has far to aspire before we can claim we have even really done our best."

LOVE is the end goal. It is the music of our lives. There is no obstacle that enough love cannot move.

This does not mean they skirt or evade confrontation. Sometimes you must fight for your beliefs. Confrontation is always preferable to dishonesty, or injustice.

If you are unable to control your anger, keep your distance and your mouth shut until you can. It is easy to intimidate or to make others feel small or afraid; this is not strength. A great knight or lady uses power to empower others. Do the good you have the power to do.

LIFE is a long series of farewells; only the circumstances should surprise us. A knight concerns himself with gratitude for the life he has been given. He does not fear death, for the work one knight begins, others may finish.