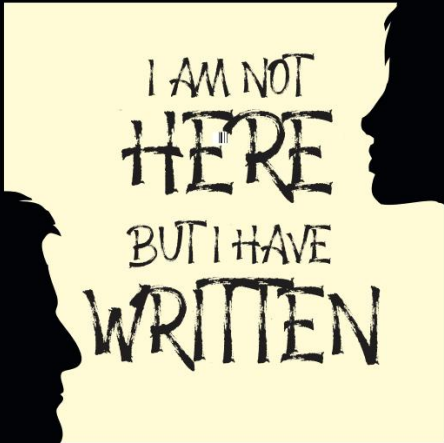


The background of the entire cover is black. At the top, there are faint, golden geometric patterns, including a large circle with internal lines forming a star-like shape, and various smaller triangles and lines scattered around it.

# THE XVII-TH

LETTERS TO THE ONE WHO WILL COME

A central rectangular area with a light yellow background. On the left and right sides of this rectangle are black silhouettes of two human profiles facing each other. The text is centered within the yellow rectangle.

I AM NOT  
HERE  
BUT I HAVE  
WRITTEN

BENEDICT  
ADUROSAKIN

A ZEPHRA BOOK

FIRST HARDCOVER EDITION

PUBLISHED BY FORTUNE O. ADUROSAKIN 2025

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I, Benedict Adurosakin, am not him yet. Or perhaps I already am. It's difficult to say where the line is drawn—between the man who pens these words and the one who will emerge from them. Maybe what you read is written in my voice, or perhaps in his, the voice of someone who has already passed through fire, or someone still waiting to be born through the ash. There's a strange dissonance here, as if I'm both the messenger and the message. Or maybe I'm neither. Maybe I am only the echo of the man who vanished to make room for something greater. Maybe I am the whisper of one who has not yet arrived, but already knows where he is going.

To you who holds this letter now, who has not yet become, but is dangerously close to crossing over, I write not from triumph, but from a summit built of cost. Not of celebration, but of confession. This is not a letter of advice. It is a reckoning. I stand where I never thought I would: above the silence, behind the applause, inside the shell of a name that has outgrown the soul who first bore it. What I offer you here is not a guide, it is a gate. And if you are not ready, even now, you must turn back. This first letter is not a beginning. It is an invitation to vanish.

Power, you'll learn, does not announce itself when it arrives. It doesn't come with thunder. It doesn't break through the door. It slips in quietly, with the calm of inevitability. It is not something you chase, it is something that notices you. It is the sudden hush in a room when you enter. It is the agreement you never asked for, but everyone offers. It is the yes they whisper when they long to say no. It is the silence that follows your footsteps, not out of reverence, but resignation. You will think they are honoring you. You will believe they are choosing you. But understand this: what they are really doing is surrendering to the gravity of your becoming. And you will lose yourself inside that gravity long before you realize what's happening.

They will cheer for you, not knowing they are clapping for their own disappearance. They will elevate you, forgetting it means they cannot reach you anymore. They will ask for your leadership, not understanding that it means they'll never again know your laughter, your vulnerability, your uncertainty. And you—you will think this is progress. You will mistake obedience for intimacy. You will call the silence around you peace. But it is not peace. It is distance. And distance, unchecked, becomes exile.

Before you step through this first door, ask yourself with ruthless honesty: *Are you ready to vanish?* Not in body, but in essence. Are you ready to become a reflection that no longer recognizes the light that made it? Are you prepared to abandon the version of yourself that once wept freely, that once failed loudly, that once dreamed without consequence? Because that version of you cannot come with you. He is too whole. And wholeness does not belong in the corridors of power. Wholeness does not wear a crown.

Power does not ask for the best of you. It demands what is left after everything soft has been burned away. If you are not ready to pay that price, close this letter. Fold it quietly. Walk away. Let your name remain untouched by legacy. Let your laughter echo through the rooms of your children. Let your hands remain clean of the burden that breaks kings. There is no shame in turning away from fire. Some flames are beautiful from a distance and deadly up close.

But if your answer is yes, if something inside you leans forward rather than back, if you feel not courage but clarity, then take the key. Open the first door. Walk through, not with pride, but with surrender. Walk knowing this: from the

moment you cross the threshold, you will no longer walk as yourself. You will walk as the fading outline of who you were, and the unfinished shadow of who you must become.

This is the first truth of power, and it will never be printed on monuments. Before you rise, before you lead, before you are named, you must vanish.

## I.

There is no fanfare when it begins. No ceremony. No golden hour. No divine trumpet announcing your transition. No prophet to mark the moment. It begins subtly, like a breath you didn't notice leaving. You won't even know you've crossed the threshold until one morning, you feel the burn hiding behind your smile, the exhaustion in your own peace, and the strange delay between your name and your own recognition of it. This first door is not made of metal, wood or marble. It is made of silence, the kind of silence that follows a decision no one else knows you've made.

You will leave yourself without telling anyone. And worse, they will applaud you for it. They will call your detachment "strength." They will praise the hollowing.

But listen to me closely:

The man you used to be will knock, again and again, especially when you are tired. Especially when no one is watching. And when he does, you must not let him back in.

Because if you do, everything you are about to become will evaporate like breath on cold glass. It will vanish like a rumor. The self you abandon cannot come with you. Not through this door.

## II.

In this new season, they will offer you mirrors. Mirrors polished with expectation and illusion. They will not ask you who you are, they will tell you. They will assign you roles, titles, postures. They will drape you in interpretations and call it destiny. In those moments, speak less. Say nothing. Power is not gained through performance. It is claimed in silence. Learn the weight of your own silence.

The first door opens not when you speak or when you announce yourself, but when you can look at power and say:

*"I do not need you. But I will use you."*



Most men fail here. They grab the crown with both hands and forget to guard their soul. I did not fail in that way. But I bent. And bending, I've come to learn, is just failure waiting for a witness. Be sharper than I was. Be stiller. Be quieter.

### III.

You will be celebrated for what you do. But you will be judged for what you become. They will not ask how many times you bled privately or care about how much you sacrificed; they will only punish you for not bleeding publicly. They want your victory, not your vulnerability. They want your ascent, not your transformation.

So I leave you this:

Power will not corrupt you. It will reveal you. Whatever is already inside you, power will drag it to the surface and magnify it.

If you are not ready to see who you really are, not who they believe you to be, then do not open this door. Stay where it's comfortable. Stay where people love the version of you

that has not yet been tested. Because once the crown meets your spirit, nothing inside you will remain hidden. Not your desires. Not your shadows. Not even your shame.

#### IV.

This letter was never meant to instruct. It was written to haunt. It is not a guide, it is a ghost. I offer no conclusions nor answers. No formulas. Just footprints, scattered like bones across the terrain of becoming. Some belong to me. Some may already belong to you. All that matters is that you realize this: the first door is the easiest to miss, because it requires nothing but surrender.

Surrender to the vanishing. Surrender to the silence. Surrender to the man you must become; by killing who you were.

It does not ask you to act. It asks you to let go. Let go of the man you have called “me.” Let go of the stories that coddled you. Let go of your craving for applause. If this frightens you, leave. Now. There is no shame in surviving. But if something in this burns, burns in a way that wakes you up,

then the door is already open. Step through. And don't look back.

## NOTE FROM THE ASHES

*Not all doors are meant to be opened loudly.  
Some require your silence more than your strength.*

*The First Door will not test your wisdom.  
It will test your willingness to let go of what you called “you.”*

*If your soul needs applause to survive,  
you are not yet ready.*

*If you believe the past owes you,  
you are not yet worthy.*

*Because power, in its truest form, is not acquired,  
it is inherited by disappearance.*

*There is no guide for what happens next.  
Only what is left of you  
when the noise stops.*

## SEAL OF BECOMING I

*“The door did not open because you knocked.  
It opened because you vanished.”*