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### Do (not) Followthrough

This is a memoir exercise. Write a non-fiction story (that is, write a story about something that happened to you or someone you know) that uses these four elements as a basic plot line:

-A prohibition

-Doing the prohibited

-Personal/immediate consequences

-Long-term/authority consequences

To us small creatures growing up in the big world. Most of us had yet to realize whether or not we could handle the consequences of defiance. Can overcome the fear of the unknown and break free from the grasp of authority? ... NO. However, there exists this little thing I like to call 'taking action without reaction.' Or simply, doing something without thought. A child's mind is often too preoccupied with wonder to make room to think about consequences. Back then, I was no exception. I was a shy little guy, easily hidden amongst a class of 15 or so. The teachers appreciated this sort of thing and the kids didn't think much of it. That of course, was until the fence gate incident of '06. The day I gained recognition.

One day, a group of us congregated around the gate. The gateway between us and the open world. This wide open world of grass was restricted. This makes sense given

that it's right next to the roadway, but that hadn't concerned us kids. It was in fact, more than a whole blue whale's length away. I remember that being one of the main measurements we used for distances longer than, well... a blue whale. After the blue whale measurement incident of '05. I remember the day we learned 'bigology' that day, the study of how big stuff is. The teachers brought out massive measuring tapes outside to visualize the enormity of things compared to us tiny creatures. I, as per usual, was well hidden amongst the class, but I still had a good point of observation.

This time was different, this was the time for action. But first, I had to gather some intel on the situation. What were they looking at? What were they yelling about? Is the teacher around? I answered these swiftly, "Gate latch, got it. They kept daring each other to open it, some even fantasizing about the possibility of it because surely no one would actually do it, understood." And the last question, well, remember we weren't thinking about the after. So that's irrelevant. With this data, I used my keen kindergarten intuition and went to work. I forced my way through the mob, making my way directly in front of the gate. My sudden presence did nothing to quiet the crowd. With haste, I took the latch and raised it up and over. In doing so, the crowd, in unison, offered me a gasp of shock and surprise. I turn to face them and receive my praise. Just before I could do so, they all cut and run, but not without first letting out yells that would surely draw attention to the scene. I took off running. I needed to shelter myself from suspicion.

So, here it is, the weird door everyone has been talking about. A large brown door that dawned a large red bar in the middle. It had a small red sign with white letters. It was high up, so we couldn't read it that well. Word around the class was that no one ever came in or out through that door. What's behind the door? Did it actually open? We

needed to find out. It's now almost the end of the school year. Two months have passed since the gate incident. No consequences had followed me then. I was ratted out, of course, yes, but the funny thing was that the gate only opened up to another gate that was locked, so all it really led to was a stern 'don't touch that again', and well, that was that. Except for me, it wasn't. The rush is still there. I made a name for myself amongst the class. I was unpredictable. I was the one who could take action, the one who could follow through. I realized the consequences weren't worth the forethought. Between then in now, I've made a few hits here and there, some light marker graffiti, and the occasional trespassing during naptime. However, I was due for another big one. I had the chance to cement my name in this class for years beyond. I was a man of action now, and I was prepared to take my chance.

The door was an arm's length away now. I stand there, this time only accompanied by two other classmates. Two out of the rest daring enough to even come this close. After everything, they still doubt I actually have any intent. Surely, I wouldn't actually do it. That's fine, they can stand there, smirk, egg me on all they want, but the consequences haven't followed me yet. Well, at least nothing I couldn't handle. This was it, I wanted to test the limits. How far could I go? How far was I willing to go? The two classmates grow quiet as I inch closer to the door. Placing my hands on the red bar, I push.

As the door creaks open, I squint from the harsh change of light, and my hair is forced back by a gust of wind. Realizing I was outside, I quickly shut the door. I turned around to a similar sight, my classmates were already dashing away. I hope they saw what's behind them. We know now. I know now. More importantly, nothing happened. No teacher saw it either. Perhaps nothing will happen. I did it. It's done, and nothing

has been done about it. The limits have been raised. The rules have been tested. I can now pass the torch to my classmates. May they finally follow through.