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| Cover Image | *Shoe Dog* Phil Knight  Scribner |

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# *306 notes/highlights • 2 bookmarks*

*Created by Tarang Shah*  – Last synced March 8, 2017

## *Dawn*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *college—­University of Oregon. Earned a master’s from a top business school—Stanford. Survived a yearlong hitch in the U.S. Army—Fort Lewis and Fort Eustis. My résumé said I was a learned, accomplished soldier, a twenty-four-year-old man in full . . . So why, I wondered, why do I still feel like a kid? Worse, like the same shy, pale, rail-thin kid I’d always been. Maybe because I still hadn’t experienced anything of life. Least of all its many temptations and excitements. I hadn’t smoked a cigarette, hadn’t tried a drug. I hadn’t broken a rule, let alone a law. The 1960s were just under way, the age of rebellion, and I was the only person in America who hadn’t yet rebelled. I couldn’t think of one time I’d cut loose, done the unexpected. I’d never even been with a girl. If I tended to dwell on all the things I wasn’t, the reason was simple. Money? Maybe. Wife? Kids? House? Sure, if I was lucky. These were the goals I was taught to aspire to, and part of me did aspire to them, instinctively. But deep down I was searching for something else, something more. I had an aching sense that our time is short, shorter than we ever know, short as a morning run, and I wanted mine to be meaningful. And purposeful. And creative. And impor­tant. Above all . . . different. I wanted to leave a mark on the world. I wanted to win. No, that’s not right. I simply didn’t want to lose.*  December 7, 2016 | [9](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA9.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The world was so overrun with war and pain and misery, the daily grind was so exhausting and often unjust—maybe the only answer, I thought, was to find some prodigious, improbable dream that seemed worthy, that seemed fun, that seemed a good fit, and chase it with an athlete’s single-minded dedication and purpose*  December 15, 2016 | [10](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA10.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Like it or not, life is a game. Whoever denies that truth, whoever simply refuses to play, gets left on the sidelines, and I didn’t want that. More than anything, that was the thing I did not want.*  December 12, 2016 | [10](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA10.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *What remains, however, is this one comforting certainty, this one anchoring truth that will never go away. At twenty-four I did have a Crazy Idea, and somehow, despite being dizzy with existential angst, and fears about the future, and doubts about myself, as all young men and women in their midtwenties are, I did decide that the world is made up of crazy ideas. History is one long processional of crazy ideas. The things I loved most—books, sports, democracy, free ­enterprise—started as crazy ideas*  December 12, 2016 | [11](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA11.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *For that matter, few ideas are as crazy as my favorite thing, running. It’s hard. It’s painful. It’s risky. The rewards are few and far from guaranteed. When you run around an oval track, or down an empty road, you have no real destination. At least, none that can fully justify the effort. The act itself becomes the destination. It’s not just that there’s no finish line; it’s that you define the finish line. Whatever pleasures or gains you derive from the act of running, you must find them within. It’s all in how you frame it, how you sell it to yourself. Every runner knows this. You run and run, mile after mile, and you never quite know why. You tell yourself that you’re running toward some goal, chasing some rush, but really you run because the alternative, stopping, scares you to death.*  December 12, 2016 | [12](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA12) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So that morning in 1962 I told myself: Let everyone else call your idea crazy . . . just keep going. Don’t stop. Don’t even think about stopping until you get there, and don’t give much thought to where “there” is. Whatever comes, just don’t stop. That’s the precocious, prescient, urgent advice I managed to give myself, out of the blue, and somehow managed to take. Half a century later, I believe it’s the best advice—maybe the only advice—any of us should ever give.*  December 15, 2016 | [12](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA12.w.0.0.0.2) | |

## *Part One*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But he also worshipped another secret deity—respectability. Colonial house, beautiful wife, obedient kids, my father enjoyed having these things, but what he really cherished was his friends and neighbors knowing he had them. He liked being admired. He liked doing a vigorous backstroke each day in the mainstream. Going around the world on a lark, therefore, would simply make no sense to him. It wasn’t done. Certainly not by the respectable sons of respectable men. It was something other people’s kids did. Something beatniks and hipsters did.*  The "log kya kahenge" mindset in 60s America  December 12, 2016 | [17](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA17) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I thanked my father and fled the nook before he had a chance to change his mind. Only later did I realize with a spasm of guilt that my father’s lack of travel was an ulterior reason, perhaps the main reason, that I wanted to go. This trip, this Crazy Idea, would be one sure way of becoming someone other than him. Someone less respectable. Or maybe not less respectable. Maybe just less obsessed with respectability. The rest of the family wasn’t quite so supportive*  December 12, 2016 | [18](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA18.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I SPENT WEEKS reading, planning, preparing for my trip. I went for long runs, musing on every detail while racing the wild geese as they flew overhead. Their tight V formations—I’d read somewhere that the geese in the rear of the formation, cruising in the backdraft, only have to work 80 percent as hard as the leaders. Every runner understands this. Front runners always work the hardest, and risk the most*  December 12, 2016 | [19](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA19.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *. We liked to sit with our fellow beachniks and surf bums, seekers and vagabonds, feeling smug about the one thing we had in our favor. Geography. Those poor suckers back home, we’d say. Those poor saps sleepwalking through their humdrum lives, bundled against the cold and rain. Why can’t they be more like us? Why can’t they seize the day? Our sense of carpe diem was heightened by the fact that the world was coming to an end. A nuclear standoff with the Soviets had been building for weeks*  December 15, 2016 | [24](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA24) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And then, surprise, the world was spared. The crisis passed. The sky seemed to sigh with relief as the air turned suddenly crisper, calmer. A perfect Hawaiian autumn followed. Days of contentment and something close to bliss. Followed by a sharp restlessness. One night I set my beer on the bar and turned to Carter. “I think maybe the time has come to leave Shangri-La,” I said.*  December 15, 2016 | [24](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA24.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The last thing I wanted was to pack up and return to Oregon. But I couldn’t see traveling around the world alone, either. Go home, a faint inner voice told me. Get a normal job. Be a normal person. Then I heard another faint voice, equally emphatic. No, don’t go home. Keep going. Don’t stop. The next day I gave my two weeks’ notice at the boiler room. “Too bad, Buck,” one of the bosses said, “you had a real future as a salesman.” “God forbid,” I muttered. That afternoon, at a travel agency down the block, I purchased an open plane ticket, good for one year on any airline going anywhere.*  December 15, 2016 | [25](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA25) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But first I’d need to change my whole approach. I was a linear thinker, and according to Zen linear thinking is nothing but a delusion, one of the many that keep us unhappy. Reality is nonlinear, Zen says. No future, no past. All is now*  December 15, 2016 | [27](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA27.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Perfection in the art of swordsmanship is reached . . . when the heart is troubled by no more thought of I and You, of the opponent and his sword, of one’s own sword and how to wield it. . . . All is emptiness: your own self, the flashing sword, and the arms that wield it. Even the thought of emptiness is no longer there.*  December 15, 2016 | [28](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA28) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I couldn’t look away. I watched and watched, asking myself, Is this what it’s all about? Really? I appreciated money as much as the next guy. But I wanted my life to be about so much more.*  December 12, 2016 | [28](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA28.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *In that case, the ex-GIs said, you’d better learn a few things about doing business with the Japanese. “The key,” they said, “is don’t be pushy. Don’t come on like the typical asshole American, the typical gaijin—rude, loud, aggressive, not taking no for an answer. The Japanese do not react well to the hard sell. Negotiations here tend to be soft, sinewy. Look how long it took the Americans and Russians to coax Hirohito into surrendering. And even when he did surrender, when his country was reduced to a heap of ashes, what did he tell his people? ‘The war situation hasn’t developed to Japan’s advantage.’ It’s a culture of indirection. No one ever turns you down flat. No one ever says, straight out, no. But they don’t say yes, either. They speak in circles, sentences with no clear subject or object. Don’t be discouraged, but don’t be cocky. You might leave a man’s office thinking you’ve blown it, when in fact he’s ready to do a deal. You might leave think ing you’ve closed a deal, when in fact you’ve just been rejected. You never know.”*  Dealing with the Japanese 🏯  December 15, 2016 | [30](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA30) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Mr. Knight—what company are you with?” he asked. “Ah, yes, good question.” Adrenaline surging through my blood, I felt the flight response, the longing to run and hide, which made me think of the safest place in the world. My parents’ house. The house had been built decades before, by people of means, people with much more money than my parents, and thus the architect had included servants’ quarters at the back of the house, and these quarters were my bedroom, which I’d filled with baseball cards, record albums, posters, books—all things holy. I’d also covered one wall with my blue ribbons from track, the one thing in my life of which I was unabashedly proud. And so? “Blue Ribbon,” I blurted. “Gentlemen, I represent Blue Ribbon Sports of Portland, Oregon.” Mr. Miyazaki smiled. The other executives smiled. A murmur went around the table. Blueribbon, blueribbon, blueribbon. The executives folded their hands and fell silent again and resumed staring at me. “Well,” I began again, “gentlemen, the American shoe market is enormous. And largely untapped. If Onitsuka can penetrate that market, if Onitsuka can get its Tigers into American stores, and price them to undercut Adidas, which most American athletes now wear, it could be a hugely profitable venture.”*  December 12, 2016 | [33](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA33.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *They barraged me with questions about the United States, about American culture and consumer trends, about different kinds of athletic shoes available in American sporting goods stores. They asked me how big I thought the American shoe market was, how big it could be, and I told them that ultimately it could be $1 billion. To this day I’m not sure where that number came from*  December 12, 2016 | [34](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA34.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *They leaned back, gazed at each other, astonished. Now, to my astonishment, they began pitching me. “Would Blue Ribbon . . . be interested . . . in representing Tiger shoes? In the United States?” “Yes,” I said. “Yes, it would.” I held forth the Limber Up. “This is a good shoe,” I said. “This shoe—I can sell this shoe.” I asked them to ship me samples right away. I gave them my address and promised to send them a money order for fifty dollars.*  December 12, 2016 | [34](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA34.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *was fascinated by all the great generals, from Alexander the Great to George Patton. I hated war, but I loved the warrior spirit. I hated the sword, but loved the samurai. And of all the great fighting men in history I found MacArthur the most compelling. Those Ray-Bans, that corncob pipe—the man didn’t lack for confidence. Brilliant tactician, master motivator, he also went on to head the U.S. Olympic Committee. How could I not love him?*  December 27, 2016 | [36](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA36.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Of course, he was deeply flawed. But he knew that. You are remembered, he said, prophetically, for the rules you break.*  December 12, 2016 | [36](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA36.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Don’t go to sleep one night, wrote Rūmī, the thirteenth-century Persian poet. What you most want will come to you then. Warmed by a sun inside you’ll see wonders*  December 26, 2016 | [38](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA38.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their result*  December 13, 2016 | [40](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA40.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It’s possible that everything I did in those days was motivated by some deep yearning to impress, to please, Bowerman. Besides my father there was no man whose approval I craved more, and besides my father there was no man who gave it less often. Frugality carried over to every part of the coach’s makeup. He weighed and hoarded words of praise, like uncut diamonds.*  December 14, 2016 | [50](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA50) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *. One story, told to me by a teammate, brought this fact pointedly home. Apparently there was a truck driver who often dared to disturb the peace on Bowerman Mountain. He took turns too fast, and frequently knocked over Bowerman’s mailbox. Bowerman scolded the trucker, threatened to punch him in the nose, and so forth, but the trucker paid no heed. He drove as he pleased, day after day. So Bowerman rigged the mailbox with explosives. Next time the trucker knocked it over—boom. When the smoke cleared, the trucker found his truck in pieces, its tires reduced to ribbons. He never again touched Bowerman’s mailbox*  Bowermans mailbox  December 30, 2016 | [52](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA52.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When their diametrically opposed personalities caused problems, my parents would fall back on the thing they had most deeply in common, their belief that family comes first*  December 15, 2016 | [57](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA57.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *there was the time my father refused to cut back on his salt, despite a doctor’s warnings that his blood pressure was up. My mother simply filled all the saltshakers in the house with powdered milk. And there was the day my sisters and I were bickering and clamoring for lunch, despite her pleas for quiet. My mother suddenly let out a savage scream and hurled an egg salad sandwich against the wall. She then walked out of the house, across the lawn, and disappeared. I’ll never forget the sight of that egg salad slowly dripping down the wall while my mother’s sundress dissolved in the distant trees*  December 15, 2016 | [58](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA58) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So I shouldn’t have been too surprised by my mother’s next move when my father accused me of jackassing around. Casually she opened her purse and took out seven dollars. “I’d like to purchase one pair of Limber Ups, please,” she said, loud enough for him to hear. Was it my mother’s way of digging at my father? A show of loyalty to her only son? An affirmation of her love of track? I don’t know. But no matter. It never failed to move me, the sight of her standing at the stove or the kitchen sink, cooking dinner or washing dishes in a pair of Japanese running shoes, size 6.*  December 15, 2016 | [59](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA59.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *PROBABLY BECAUSE HE didn’t want any trouble with my mother, my father loaned me the thousand bucks.*  December 15, 2016 | [59](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA59.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Driving back to Portland I’d puzzle over my sudden success at selling. I’d been unable to sell encyclopedias, and I’d despised it to boot. I’d been slightly better at selling mutual funds, but I’d felt dead inside. So why was selling shoes so different? Because, I realized, it wasn’t selling. I believed in running. I believed that if people got out and ran a few miles every day, the world would be a better place, and I believed these shoes were better to run in. People, sensing my belief, wanted some of that belief for themselves. Belief, I decided. Belief is irresistible.*  December 15, 2016 | [60](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA60.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *My “business” was two months old and I was embroiled in a legal battle? Served me right for daring to call myself happy. Next I sat down and dashed off a frantic letter to Onitsuka. Dear Sirs, I was very distressed to receive a letter this morning from a man in Manhasset, New York, who claims . . . ? I waited for a response. And waited. I wrote again. Nani mo. Nothing.*  December 15, 2016 | [63](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA63.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I went into a deep funk. I became such a grouch, such poor company, the girlfriend fell away. Each night I’d sit with my family at dinner, moving my mother’s pot roast and vegetables around my plate. Then I’d sit with my father in the nook, staring glumly at the TV. “Buck,” my father said, “you look like someone hit you in the back of the head with a two-by-four. Snap out of it.” But I couldn’t. I kept going over my meeting at Onitsuka. The executives had shown me such kei. They’d bowed to me, and vice versa. I’d been straightforward with them, honest—for the most part. Sure, I hadn’t “technically” owned a “business” called “Blue Ribbon.” But that was splitting hairs. I owned one now, and it had single-­handedly brought Tigers to the West Coast, and it could sell Tigers ten times faster if Onitsuka gave me half a chance. Instead the company was going to cut me out? Throw me over for the fricking Marlboro Man? Come to where the flavor is.*  December 15, 2016 | [63](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA63.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *TOWARD SUMMER’S END I still hadn’t heard from Onitsuka, and I’d all but given up on the idea of selling shoes. Labor Day, however, I had a change of heart. I couldn’t give up. Not yet. And not giving up meant flying back to Japan. I needed to force a showdown with Onitsuka.*  December 15, 2016 | [64](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA64.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I told myself that I needed to put aside hurt feelings, put aside all thoughts of injustice, which would only make me emotional and keep me from thinking clearly. Emotion would be fatal. I needed to remain cool. I thought back on my running career at Oregon. I’d competed with, and against, men far better, faster, more physically gifted. Many were future Olympians. And yet I’d trained myself to forget this unhappy fact. People reflexively assume that competition is always a good thing, that it always brings out the best in people, but that’s only true of people who can forget the competition. The art of competing, I’d learned from track, was the art of forgetting, and I now reminded myself of that fact. You must forget your limits. You must forget your doubts, your pain, your past. You must forget that internal voice screaming, begging, “Not one more step!” And when it’s not possible to forget it, you must negotiate with it. I thought over all the races in which my mind wanted one thing, and my body wanted another, those laps in which I’d had to tell my body, “Yes, you raise some excellent points, but let’s keep going anyway . . .” Despite all my negotiations with that voice, the skill had never come naturally, and now I feared that I was out of practice. As the plane swooped down toward Haneda Airport I told myself that I’d need to summon the old skill quickly, or lose. I could not bear the thought of losing.*  December 15, 2016 | [65](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA65.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d always considered myself a conscientious correspondent. (I’d sent countless letters and postcards home during my trip around the world. I’d written faithfully to Sarah.) And I always meant to answer Johnson’s letters. But before I got around to it there was always another one, waiting. Something about the sheer volume of his correspondence stopped me. Something about his neediness made me not want to encourage him. Many nights I’d sit down at the black Royal typewriter in my basement workshop, curl a piece of paper into the roller, and type, “Dear Jeff.” Then I’d draw a blank. I wouldn’t know where to begin, which of his fifty questions to start with, so I’d get up, attend to other things, and the next day there’d be yet another letter from Johnson. Or two. Soon I’d be three letters behind, suffering from crippling writer’s block. I asked Jeanne to deal with the Johnson File. Fine, she said. Within a month she thrust the file at me, exasperated. “You’re not paying me enough,” she said.*  December 15, 2016 | [77](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA77.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I did everything I could to discourage Johnson from thinking like this. At every turn I tried to dampen his enthusiasm for me and my company. Besides not writing back, I never phoned, never visited, never invited him to Oregon. I also never missed an opportunity to tell him the unvarnished truth. In one of my rare replies to his letters I put it flatly: “Though our growth has been good, I owe First National Bank of Oregon $11,000. . . . Cash flow is negative.” He wrote back immediately, asking if he could work for me full-time. “I want to be able to make it on Tiger, and the opportunity would exist for me to do other things as well—running, school, not to mention being my own boss.”*  December 15, 2016 | [79](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA79.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *My banker was upset with me. After posting eight thousand dollars in sales in my first year, I was projecting sixteen thousand dollars in my second year, and according to my banker this was a very troubling trend. “A one hundred percent increase in sales is troubling ?” I asked. “Your rate of growth is too fast for your equity,” he said. “How can such a small company grow too fast? If a small company grows fast, it builds up its equity.” “It’s all the same principle, regardless of size,” he said. “Growth off your balance sheet is dangerous.” “Life is growth,” I said. “Business is growth. You grow or you die.” “That’s not how we see it.” “You might as well tell a runner in a race that he’s running too fast.” “Apples and oranges.” Your head is full of apples and oranges, I wanted to say.*  December 15, 2016 | [79](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA79.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It was textbook to me. Growing sales, plus profitability, plus unlimited upside, equals quality company. In those days, however, commercial banks were different from investment banks. Their myopic focus was cash balances. They wanted you to never, ever outgrow your cash balance.*  December 15, 2016 | [80](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA80.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Mr. Knight,” he’d say, again and again, “you need to slow down. You don’t have enough equity for this kind of growth.” Equity. How I was beginning to loathe this word. My banker used it over and over, until it became a tune I couldn’t get out of my head.*  December 15, 2016 | [80](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA80.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To have cash balances sitting around doing nothing made no sense to me. Sure, it would have been the cautious, conservative, prudent thing. But the roadside was littered with cautious, conservative, prudent entrepreneurs. I wanted to keep my foot pressed hard on the gas pedal. Somehow, in meeting after meeting, I held my tongue. Everything my banker said, I ultimately accepted. Then I’d do exactly as I pleased. I’d place another order with Onitsuka, double the size of the previous order, and show up at the bank all wide-eyed innocence, asking for a letter of credit to cover it. My banker would always be shocked. You want HOW much? And I’d always pretend to be shocked that he was shocked. I thought you’d see the wisdom . . . I’d wheedle, grovel, negotiate, and eventually he’d approve my loan. After I’d sold out the shoes, and repaid the borrowing in full, I’d do it all over again. Place a mega order with Onitsuka, double the size of the previous order, then go to the bank in my best suit, an angelic look on my face.*  How Phil dealed with his Bankers and how he grew his business monetarily  December 15, 2016 | [81](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA81) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He didn’t like giving credit to anyone, for anything, but with my balance hovering always around zero, he saw me as a disaster waiting to happen. One slow season, one downturn in sales, I’d be out of business, the lobby of Wallace’s bank would be filled with my unsold shoes, and the holy grail of bank president would slip from his grasp.*  December 15, 2016 | [82](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA82.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But in 1965 there was no elsewhere. First National Bank was the only game in town and Wallace knew it. Oregon was smaller back then, and it had just two banks, First National and U.S. Bank. The latter had already turned me down. If I got thrown out of the former, I’d be done. (Today you can live in one state and bank in another, no problem, but banking regulations were much tighter in those days.)*  December 16, 2016 | [82](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA82.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Also, there was no such thing as venture capital. An aspiring young entrepreneur had very few places to turn, and those places were all guarded by risk-averse gatekeepers with zero imagination. In other words, bankers. Wallace was the rule, not the exception.*  December 16, 2016 | [83](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA83) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To make everything more difficult, Onitsuka was always late shipping my shoes, which meant less time to sell, which meant less time to make enough money to cover my loan. When I complained, Onitsuka didn’t answer. When they did answer, they failed to appreciate my quandary.*  December 16, 2016 | [83](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA83.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d typically get a telex that was maddeningly obtuse. Little more days. It was like dialing 911 and hearing someone on the other end yawn.*  December 16, 2016 | [83](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA83.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Given all these problems, given Blue Ribbon’s cloudy future, I decided that I’d better get a real job, something safe to fall back on when everything went bust. At the same moment Johnson devoted himself exclusively to Blue Ribbon, I decided to branch out.*  December 16, 2016 | [83](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA83.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *MOST DAYS I didn’t mind. For starters, I invested a healthy portion of my paycheck into Blue Ribbon’s account at the bank, padding my precious equity, boosting the company’s cash balance.*  December 16, 2016 | [83](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA83.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The work suited me better, too. Price Waterhouse boasted a great variety of clients, a mix of interesting start-ups and established companies, all selling everything imaginable—lumber, water, power, food. While auditing these companies, digging into their guts, taking them apart and putting them back together, I was also learning how they survived, or didn’t. How they sold things, or didn’t. How they got into trouble, how they got out. I took careful notes about what made companies tick, what made them fail. Again and again I learned that lack of equity was a leading cause of failure.*  December 16, 2016 | [84](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA84) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Running track gives you a fierce respect for numbers, because you are what your numbers say you are, nothing more, nothing less.*  December 16, 2016 | [85](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA85) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Sadly, he was discovering, as I had, that no matter how well you got along in person with the team at Onitsuka, things were different once you were back on your side of the Pacific. Most of Bowerman’s letters went unanswered. When there was an answer, it was cryptic, or curtly dismissive. It pained me at times to think the Japanese were treating Bowerman the way I was treating Johnson*  December 16, 2016 | [89](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA89.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *1966*  A lot of this chapter contains info about Johnson, his dedication to work and how he played a very important role for Phil. Johnson was introduced a few chapters back.  December 16, 2016 | [92](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA92.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Then one last plea for encouraging words, which I never sent. I didn’t have time for encouraging words. Besides, it wasn’t my style. I look back now and wonder if I was truly being myself, or if I was emulating Bowerman, or my father, or both. Was I adopting their man-of-few-words demeanor? Was I maybe modeling all the men I admired? At the time I was reading everything I could get my hands on about generals, samurai, shoguns, along with biographies of my three main heroes—Churchill, Kennedy, and Tolstoy. I had no love of violence, but I was fascinated by leadership, or lack thereof, under extreme conditions.*  December 16, 2016 | [93](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA93) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *One lesson I took from all my home-schooling about heroes was that they didn’t say much. None was a blabbermouth. None micromanaged.*  December 16, 2016 | [93](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA93.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results. So I didn’t answer Johnson, and I didn’t pester him. Having told him what to do, I hoped that he would surprise me. Maybe with silence.*  December 16, 2016 | [93](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA93.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To Johnson’s credit, though he craved more communication, he never let the lack of it discourage him. On the contrary, it motivated him. He was anal, he recognized that I was not, and though he enjoyed complaining (to boundless creativity and energy. He worked seven days a week, selling and promoting Blue Ribbon, and when he wasn’t selling, he was beaverishly building up his customer data files.*  Ignoring J luckily worked for Phil here, because Johnson was OK with it. But most people doing what J did do it for approval/validation, J didn't seek any of it. If you ignore employees who do what J did for validation and you ignore them, they would get pissed and probably quit (is that a good thing??)  December 16, 2016 | [93](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA93.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Each new customer got his or her own index card, and each index card contained that customer’s personal information, shoe size, and shoe preferences. This database enabled Johnson to keep in touch with all his customers, at all times, and to keep them all feeling special. He sent them Christmas cards. He sent them birthday cards. He sent them notes of congratulation after they completed a big race or marathon.*  December 16, 2016 | [94](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA94) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Whenever I got a letter from Johnson I knew it was one of dozens he’d carried down to the mailbox that day. He had hundreds and hundreds of customer-correspondents, all along the spectrum of humanity, from high school track stars to octogenarian weekend joggers. Many, upon pulling yet another Johnson letter from their mailboxes, must have thought the same thing I did: “Where does this guy find the time?”*  December 16, 2016 | [94](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA94.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Unlike me, however, most customers came to depend on Johnson’s letters. Most wrote him back. They’d tell him about their lives, their troubles, their injuries, and Johnson would lavishly console, sympathize, and advise. Especially about injuries.*  December 16, 2016 | [94](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA94.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *One man, for instance, complained that Tiger flats didn’t have enough cushion. He wanted to run the Boston Marathon but didn’t think Tigers would last the twenty-six miles. So Johnson hired a local cobbler to graft rubber soles from a pair of shower shoes into a pair of Tiger flats. Voilà. Johnson’s Frankenstein flat had space-age, full-length, midsole cushioning. (Today it’s standard in all training shoes for runners.) The jerry-rigged Johnson sole was so dynamic, so soft, so new, Johnson’s customer posted a personal best in Boston. Johnson forwarded me the results and urged me to pass them along to Tiger. Bowerman had just asked me to do the same with his batch of notes a few weeks earlier.*  December 16, 2016 | [94](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA94.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Good grief, I thought, one mad genius at a time.*  December 16, 2016 | [95](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA95.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *bills, he needed to inquire about the long-term prospects of Blue Ribbon. How did image of Johnson, single, lonely, his body wrapped in plaster of Paris, gamely trying to keep himself and my company alive, I sounded an upbeat tone. Blue Ribbon, I said, would probably morph over the years into a generalized sporting goods company. We’d probably have offices on the West Coast. And one day, maybe, in Japan. “Farfetched,” I wrote. “But it seems worth shooting for.”*  March 8, 2017 | [96](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA96.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This last line was wholly truthful. It was worth shooting for. If Blue Ribbon went bust, I’d have no money, and I’d be crushed. But I’d also have some valuable wisdom, which I could apply to the next business.*  December 16, 2016 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Wisdom seemed an intangible asset, but an asset all the same, one that justified the risk. Starting my own business was the only thing that made life’s other risks—marriage, Vegas, alligator wrestling—seem like sure things. But my hope was that when I failed, if I failed, I’d fail quickly, so I’d have enough time, enough years, to implement all the hard-won lessons. I wasn’t much for setting goals, but this goal kept flashing through my mind every day, until it became my internal chant: Fail fast.*  EACH AND EVERY LINE OF THIS PARAGRAPH... Spot on 🎯. BEST PARAGRAPH OF THE BOOK SO Far. Best line from it... "Starting my own business was the only thing that made life’s other risks—marriage, Vegas, alligator wrestling—seem like sure things"  December 17, 2016 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He fired back a sarcastic thanks for the tax advice. He wouldn’t be filing taxes, he said, “because gross income was $1,209 while expenses total $1,245.” His leg broken, his heart broken, he told me that he was also flat broke. He signed off: “Please send encouraging words.” I didn’t.*  Poor little Johnson, pity him sometimes  December 16, 2016 | [97](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA97.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It was a morbid puppet show, a dark kabuki play, starring a wit less victim and a micro-kraken—was it a sign, a metaphor for our dilemma? One living thing being eaten by another? This was nature, wet in tooth and claw, and I couldn’t help wondering if it was also to be the story of Blue Ribbon and the Marlboro Man.*  December 17, 2016 | [100](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA100.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He said in a few terse words that this would not be possible. Onitsuka wanted for its U.S. distributor someone bigger, more established, a firm that could handle the workload. A firm with offices on the East Coast. “But, but,” I spluttered, “Blue Ribbon does have offices on the East Coast.” Kitami rocked back in his chair. “Oh?” “Yes,” I said, “we’re on the East Coast, the West Coast, and soon we may be in the Midwest. We can handle national distribution, no question.” I looked around the table. The grim faces were becoming less grim. “Well,” Kitami said, “this change things.” He assured me that they would give my proposal careful consideration. So. Hai. Meeting adjourned. I walked back to my hotel and spent a second night pacing. First thing the next morning I received a call summoning me back to Onitsuka, where Kitami awarded me exclusive distribution rights for the United States. He gave me a three-year contract. I tried to be nonchalant as I signed the papers and placed an order for five thousand more shoes, which would cost twenty thousand dollars I didn’t have. Kitami said he’d ship them to my East Coast office, which I also didn’t have. I promised to wire him the exact address.*  It's ok to say a white lie, if you can make it true. So it isn't a lie anymore. Phil didn't have an east coast office but he still told them that he did, and it was enough to tip the decision in his favour. Unintuitive but true.  December 17, 2016 | [103](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA103.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But somewhere over the Pacific the full weight of my “victory” came over me. I imagined the look on Wallace’s face when I asked him to cover this gigantic new order. If he said no, when he said no, what then? On the other hand, if he said yes, how was I going to open an office on the East Coast? And how was I going to do it before those shoes arrived? And who was I going to get to run it? I stared at the curved, glowing horizon. There was only one person on the planet rootless enough, energetic enough, gung-ho enough, crazy enough, to pick up and move to the East Coast, on a moment’s notice, and get there before the shoes did. I wondered how Stretch was going to like the Atlantic Ocean.*  December 17, 2016 | [104](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA104.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I explained that I’d been forced to lie to Onitsuka and claim we already had an office on the East Coast. Thus, we were in one heck of a jam. The shoes would soon be on the water, an enormous shipment steaming for New York, and no one but Johnson could handle the task of claiming those shoes and setting up an office. The fate of Blue Ribbon rested on his shoulders. Johnson was flabbergasted. Then furious. Then freaked. All in the space of one minute. So I got on a plane and flew down to visit him at his store.*  December 17, 2016 | [105](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA105.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Ah. Yes. Well. Anywhere on the East Coast with a port. Just don’t go to Portland, Maine.” “Why?” “A company based in two different Portlands? That’ll confuse the heck out of the Japanese.”*  December 17, 2016 | [106](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA106.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I phoned Bowerman and told him that Full-time Employee Number One was staging a mutiny. Bowerman listened quietly, considered all the angles, weighed the pros and cons, then rendered his verdict. “Fuck him.” I said I wasn’t sure “fucking him” was the best strategy. Maybe there was some middle way of mollifying Johnson, of giving him a stake in the company. But as we talked about it in greater detail, the math just didn’t pencil out. Neither Bowerman nor I wanted to surrender any portion of our stake, so Johnson’s ultimatum, even if I’d wanted to accept it, was a nonstarter.*  Johnson's mutiny  December 17, 2016 | [107](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA107.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He was waiting for me to bend, to up my offer, but for once in my life I had leverage, because I had nothing left to give. “Take it or leave it” is like four of a kind. Hard to beat.*  December 17, 2016 | [109](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA109) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Before long I felt that I’d have given Woodell a job even if he’d been a stranger. Gladly. He was my kind of people. I wasn’t certain what Blue Ribbon was, or if it would ever become a thing at all, but whatever it was or might become, I hoped it would have something of this man’s spirit.*  December 17, 2016 | [111](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA111.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I WAS DEVELOPING an unhealthy contempt for Adidas. Or maybe it was healthy. That one German company had dominated the shoe market for a couple of decades, and they possessed all the arrogance of unchallenged dominance. Of course it’s possible that they weren’t arrogant at all, that to motivate myself I needed to see them as a monster. In any event, I despised them. I was tired of looking up every day and seeing them far, far ahead. I couldn’t bear the thought that it was my fate to do so forever.*  Competion as fuel/motivation  December 17, 2016 | [112](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA112.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The situation put me in mind of Jim Grelle. In high school, Grelle—pronounced Grella, or sometimes Gorilla—had been the fastest runner in Oregon, and I had been the second-fastest, which meant four years of staring at Grelle’s back. Then Grelle and I both went to the University of Oregon, where his tyranny over me continued. By the time I graduated I hoped never again to see Grelle’s back. Years later, when Grelle won the 1,500 in Moscow’s Lenin Stadium, I was wearing an army uniform, sitting on a couch in the day room at Fort Lewis. I pumped my fist at the screen, proud of my fellow Oregonian, but I also died a little at the memory of the many times he’d bested me. Now I began to see Adidas as a second Grelle. Chasing them, being legally checked by them, irritated me to no end. It also drove me. Hard*  December 17, 2016 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *. I would replay Bowerman’s epic speeches, hear him telling us that Oregon State wasn’t just any opponent. Beating USC and Cal was important, he said, but beating Oregon State was (pause) different. Nearly sixty years later it gives me chills to recall his words, his tone. No one could get your blood going like Bowerman, though he never raised his voice. He knew how to speak in subliminal italics, to slyly insert exclamation marks, like hot keys against the flesh*  December 17, 2016 | [113](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA113.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *he said the right shoes were important, but almost any shoes would work. “Probably the shoes you wear for gardening, or working around the house, will do just fine.” What? As for workout clothes, Bowerman told readers that proper clothing “may help the spirit,” but added that people shouldn’t get hung up on brands. Maybe he thought this was true for the casual jogger, as opposed to the trained athlete, but by God did he need to say so in print? When we were fighting to establish a brand? More to the point, what did this mean about his true opinion of Blue Ribbon—and me? Any shoe would do? If that were true, why in the world were we bothering to sell Tigers? Why were we jackassing around?*  December 17, 2016 | [114](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA114.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *the thought crossed my mind that it might make more sense to give up the apartment altogether, just move into the office, since I’d Waterhouse, making the rent, I’d be at Blue Ribbon, and vice versa. I could shower at the gym. But I told myself that living in your office is the act of a crazy person. And then I got a letter from Johnson saying he was living in his new office.*  December 17, 2016 | [116](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA116.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I was putting in six days a week at Price Waterhouse, spending early mornings and late nights and all weekends and vacations at Blue Ribbon. No friends, no exercise, no social life—and wholly content. My life was out of balance, sure, but I didn’t care. In fact, I wanted even more imbalance. Or a different kind of imbalance. I wanted to dedicate every minute of every day to Blue Ribbon. I’d never been a multitasker, and I didn’t see any reason to start now. I wanted to be present, always. I wanted to focus constantly on the one task that really mattered. If my life was to be all work and no play, I wanted my work to be play. I wanted to quit Price Waterhouse. Not that I hated it; it just wasn’t me. I wanted what everyone wants. To be me, full-time. But it wasn’t possible. Blue Ribbon simply couldn’t support me. Though the company was on track to double sales for a fifth straight year, it still couldn’t justify a salary for its cofounder. So I decided to I applied to Portland State University, and got a job as an assistant professor, at seven hundred dollars a month.*  December 17, 2016 | [118](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA118.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Miss Parks saw my bewitchment, I think. There were several long looks between us, several meaningfully awkward pauses. I recall one burst of particularly nervous laughter, one portentous silence. I remember one long moment of eye contact that kept me awake that night. Then it happened. On a cold afternoon in late November, when Miss Parks wasn’t in the office, I was walking toward the back of the office and noticed her desk drawer open. I stopped to close it and inside I saw . . . a stack of checks? All her paychecks—uncashed. This wasn’t a job to her. This was something else. And so ­perhaps . . . was I? Maybe? Maybe.*  December 18, 2016 | [123](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA123.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Most were ex-runners, and eccentrics, as only ex-runners can be. But when it came to selling they were all business. Because they were inspired by what we were trying to do, and because they worked solely on commission (two dollars a pair), they were burning up the roads, hitting every high school and college track meet within a thousand-mile radius, and their extraordinary efforts were boosting our numbers even more*  December 18, 2016 | [136](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA136.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I decided that Blue Ribbon was doing well enough to justify a salary for its founder. Right before my thirty-first birthday I made the bold move. I quit Portland State and went full-time at my company, paying myself a fairly generous eighteen thousand dollars a year*  December 18, 2016 | [136](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA136.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The ad featured a photo of Bowerman and me . . . staring at a shoe. Not as if we were shoe innovators; more as if we’d never seen a shoe before. We looked like morons. It was embarrassing*  December 18, 2016 | [137](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA137) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He told me about the scandalous behavior of Puma and Adidas throughout the Games. The world’s two biggest athletic shoe companies—­run by two German brothers who despised each other—had chased each other like Keystone Kops around the Olympic ­Village, jockeying for all the athletes. Huge sums of cash, often stuffed in running shoes or manila envelopes, were passed around. One of Puma’s sales reps even got thrown in jail. (There were rumors that Adidas had framed him.) He was married to a female sprinter, and Bowerman joked that he’d only married her to secure her endorsement. Worse, it didn’t stop at mere payouts. Puma had smuggled truckloads of shoes into Mexico City, while Adidas cleverly managed to evade Mexico’s stiff import tariffs. I heard through the grapevine they did it by making a nominal number of shoes at a factory in Guadalajara. Bowerman and I didn’t feel morally offended; we felt left out. Blue Ribbon had no money for payouts, and therefore no presence at the Games.*  December 18, 2016 | [138](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA138.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“I’ve taken what I think is a big step to keep us informed. I’ve hired a spy. He works full-time in the Onitsuka Export Department. Without going into a lengthy discussion of why I will just tell you that I feel he is trustworthy. “This spy may seem somewhat unethical to you, but the spy system is ingrained and completely accepted in Japanese business circles. They actually have schools for industrial spies, much as we have schools for typists and stenographers.” I can’t imagine what made me use the word “spy” so wantonly, so boldly, other than the fact that James Bond was all the rage just then. Nor can I understand why, when I was revealing so much, I didn’t reveal the spy’s name. It was Fujimoto, whose bicycle I’d replaced. I think I must have known, on some level, that the memo was a mistake, a terribly stupid thing to do. And that I would live to regret it. I think I knew. But I often found myself as perplexing as Japanese business practices.*  December 18, 2016 | [140](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA140.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I was trying to build a company and a marriage. Penny and I were learning to live together, learning to meld our personalities and idiosyncrasies, though we agreed that she was the one with all the personality and I was the idiosyncratic one. Therefore it was she who had more to learn.*  December 18, 2016 | [141](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA141.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *She was learning that I was absentminded, that I would drive to the grocery store and come home empty-handed, without the one item she’d asked me to buy, because all the way there and all the way back I’d been puzzling over the latest bank crisis, or the most recent Onitsuka shipping delay.*  December 18, 2016 | [141](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA141.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *She was learning that I misplaced everything, especially the important things, like wallets and keys. Bad enough that I couldn’t multitask, but I insisted on trying. I’d often scan the financial pages while eating lunch—and driving. My new black Cougar didn’t remain new for long. As the Mr. Magoo of Oregon, I was forever bumping into trees and poles and other people’s fenders.*  December 18, 2016 | [142](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA142) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *She was learning that I didn’t like to lose, at anything, that losing for me was a special form of agony. I often flippantly blamed Bowerman, but it went way back*  December 18, 2016 | [142](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA142.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Above all, she was learning that marrying a man with a start-up shoe company meant living on a shoestring budget. And yet she thrived. I could give her only twenty-five dollars a week for groceries, and still she managed to whip up delicious meals. I gave her a credit card with a two-thousand-dollar limit to furnish our entire apartment, and she managed to buy a dinette table, two chairs, a Zenith TV, and a big couch with soft arms, perfect for napping. She also bought me a brown recliner, which she stuck in a corner of the living room. Now, each night, I could lean back at a forty-five-­degree angle and spin inside my own head all I wanted. It was more comfortable, and safer, than the Cougar*  December 18, 2016 | [142](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA142.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I got into the habit every night of phoning my father from my recliner. He’d always be in his recliner, too, and together, recliner to recliner, we’d hash out the latest threat confronting Blue Ribbon. He no longer saw my business as a waste of my time, apparently. Though he didn’t say so explicitly, he did seem to find the problems I faced “interesting,” and “challenging,” which amounted to the same thing.*  December 18, 2016 | [143](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA143.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And in which part of town should we buy? Where were the best schools? And how was I supposed to research real estate prices and schools, plus all the other things that go into buying a house, while running a start-up company? Was it even feasible to run a start-up company while starting a family? Should I go back to accounting, or teaching, or something more stable?*  December 18, 2016 | [143](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA143.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Leaning back in my recliner each night, staring at the ceiling, I tried to settle myself. I told myself: Life is growth. You grow or you die.*  December 18, 2016 | [143](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA143.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When I was growing up my sisters asked me several times what my dream house would look like, and one day they handed me a charcoal pencil and a pad and made me draw it. After Penny and I moved in, my sisters dug out the old charcoal sketch. It was an exact picture of the Beaverton house.*  December 18, 2016 | [144](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA144) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *That night I told Penny that if Blue Ribbon failed we’d lose the house. She put a hand on her stomach and sat down. This was the kind of insecurity she’d always vowed to avoid. Okay, she kept saying, okaaaay.*  December 18, 2016 | [144](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA144.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If I was ever tempted to take myself too se riously, Woodell’s story always reminded me that things could be worse. And the way he handled himself was a constant, bracing lesson in the virtue, and value, of good spirits.*  December 18, 2016 | [146](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA146.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I struggle to remember. I close my eyes and think back, but so many precious moments from those nights are gone forever. Numberless conversations, breathless laughing fits. Declarations, revelations, confidences. They’ve all fallen into the sofa cushions of time. I remember only that we always sat up half the night, cataloging the past, mapping out the future. I remember that we took turns describing what our little company was, and what it might be, and what it must never be. How I wish, on just one of those nights, I’d had a tape recorder. Or kept a journal, as I did on my trip around the world. Still, at least I can always call to mind the image of Woodell, seated at the head of our dinette, carefully dressed in his blue jeans, his trademark V-neck sweater over a white T. And always, on his feet, a pair of Tigers, the rubber soles pristine.*  December 19, 2016 | [147](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA147.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At Blue Ribbon I spent so much time talking about quality control, about craftsmanship, about delivery—but this, I realized, this was the real thing. “We made this,” I said to Penny. We. Made. This.*  December 19, 2016 | [150](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA150.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I reminded Bork that in any company there could only be one boss, and sadly for him the boss of Blue Ribbon was Buck Knight. I told him if he wasn’t happy with me or my management style, he should know that quitting and being fired were both viable options.*  Phil(buck Knight) realises (in the next paragraph) that he should not have written this as Bork was a really valuable part and he couldn't afford to lose this employee. Stubbornness is required when somebody who is easily replaceable rebels. But when it is someone crucial who rebels, meeting in person and humbly resolving is the best way to fix things. If the situation still doesn't change for the good, best is to let go.  December 19, 2016 | [152](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA152) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *As with my “spy memo,” I suffered instant writer’s remorse. The moment I dropped it in the mail I realized that Bork was a valuable part of the team, that I didn’t want to lose him, that I couldn’t afford to lose him. I dispatched our new operations manager, Woodell, to Los Angeles, to patch things up. Woodell took Bork to lunch and tried to explain that I wasn’t sleeping much, with a new baby and all. Also, Woodell told him, I was feeling tremendous stress after the visit from Kitami and Mr. Onitsuka. Woodell joked about my unique management style, telling Bork that everyone bitched about it, everyone pulled their hair out about my nonresponses to their memos and letters. In all Woodell spent a few days with Bork, smoothing his feathers, going over the operation. He discovered that Bork was stressed, too. Though the retail store was thriving, the back room, which had basically become our national warehouse, was in shambles. Boxes everywhere, invoices and papers stacked to the ceiling. Bork couldn’t keep pace. When Woodell returned he gave me the picture. “I think Bork’s back in the fold,” he said, “but we need to relieve him of that warehouse. We need to transfer all warehouse operations up here.” Moreover, he added, we needed to hire Woodell’s mother to run it. She’d worked for years in the warehouse at Jantzen, the legendary Oregon outfitter, so it wasn’t nepotism, he said. Ma Woodell was perfect for the job. I wasn’t sure I cared. If Woodell was good with it, I was good with it. Plus, the way I saw it: The more Woodells the better.*  Putting out the fires and finding out The actual reason for t h e mutiny.  December 19, 2016 | [152](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA152.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Ultimately we withdrew the offering. It was a humiliation, and in its wake I had many heated conversations with myself. I blamed the shaky economy. I blamed Vietnam. But first and foremost I blamed myself. I’d overvalued Blue Ribbon. I’d overvalued my life’s work. More than once, over my first cup of coffee in the morning, or while trying to fall asleep at night, I’d tell myself: Maybe I’m a fool? Maybe this whole damn shoe thing is a fool’s errand? Maybe, I thought. Maybe.*  December 19, 2016 | [158](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA158.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Standing before the mirror I said to my reflection: “Uh-oh.” But it was more than the Stroganoff. Somehow, I’d gotten out of the running habit. Blue Ribbon, marriage, fatherhood—­there was never time. Also, I’d felt burned out. Though I’d loved running for Bowerman, I’d hated it, too. The same thing happens to all kinds of college athletes. Years of training and competing at a high level take their toll. You need a rest. But now the rest was over. I needed to get back out there. I didn’t want to be the fat, flabby, sedentary head of a running-shoe company*  December 20, 2016 | [160](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA160.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And when the day of the big race came—with Woodell on the stopwatch—I took thirty-six dollars from Grelle. (The victory was made all the sweeter the following week when Grelle jumped into an all-comers meet and ran 4:07.) As I drove home that day I felt immensely proud. Keep going, I told myself. Don’t stop*  December 20, 2016 | [161](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA161.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The moment he was out of sight I jumped from behind my desk. I opened his briefcase and rummaged through and took out what looked like the folder he’d been referring to. I slid it under my desk blotter, then jumped behind my desk and put my elbows on the blotter. Waiting for Kitami to return, I had the strangest thought. I recalled all the times I’d volunteered with the Boy Scouts, all the times I’d sat on Eagle Scout review boards, handing out merit badges for honor and integrity. Two or three weekends a year I’d question pink-cheeked boys about their probity, their honesty, and now I was stealing documents from another man’s briefcase? I was headed down a dark path. No telling where it might lead. Wherever, there was no getting around one immediate consequence of my actions. I’d have to recuse myself from the next review board.*  December 20, 2016 | [168](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA168) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The company, my company, born from nothing, and now finishing 1971 with sales of $1.3 million, was on life support. I talked with Hayes. I talked with my father. I talked with every other accountant I knew, one of whom mentioned that Bank of California had a charter allowing it to do business in three western states, including Oregon. Plus, Bank of Cal had a branch in Portland. I hurried over and, indeed, they welcomed me, gave me shelter from the storm. And a small line of credit.*  December 21, 2016 | [175](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA175.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When I got back to Oregon I invited her to the office again and told her we needed a logo. “What kind?” she asked. “I don’t know,” I said. “That gives me a lot to go on,” she said. “Something that evokes a sense of motion,” I said. “Motion,” she said, dubious. She looked confused. Of course she did, I was babbling. I wasn’t sure exactly what I wanted. I wasn’t an artist. I showed her the soccer-­football shoe and said, unhelpfully: This. We need something for this. She said she’d give it a try.*  December 21, 2016 | [178](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA178.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Woodell and I and a few others looked them over. I remember Johnson being there, too, though why he’d come out from Wellesley, I can’t recall. Gradually we inched toward a consensus. We liked . . . this one . . . slightly more than the others. It looks like a wing, one of us said. It looks like a whoosh of air, another said. It looks like something a runner might leave in his or her wake. We all agreed it looked new, fresh, and yet somehow—ancient. Timeless. For her many hours of work, we gave Carolyn our deepest thanks and a check for thirty-five dollars, then sent her on her way.*  December 21, 2016 | [179](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA179.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Something eye-catching about it,” Johnson said. Woodell agreed. I frowned, scratched my cheek. “You guys like it more than I do,” I said. “But we’re out of time. It’ll have to do.” “You don’t like it?” Woodell said. I sighed. “I don’t love it. Maybe it will grow on me.” We sent it to Canada. Now we just needed a name to go with this logo I didn’t love*  December 21, 2016 | [179](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA179.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Again and again I lobbied for Dimension Six. Again and again I was told by my employees that it was unspeakably bad. Someone, I forget who, summed up the situation neatly. “All these names . . . suck.” I thought it might have been Johnson, but all the documentation says he’d left and gone back to Wellesley by then.*  December 21, 2016 | [180](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA180.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *THE DAY OF decision arrived. Canada had already started producing the shoes, and samples were ready to go in Japan, but before anything could be shipped, we needed to choose a name. Also, we had magazine ads slated to run, to coincide with the shipments, and we needed to tell the graphic artists what name to put in the ads. Finally, we needed to file paperwork with the U.S. Patent Office.*  December 21, 2016 | [181](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA181) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Woodell wheeled into my office. “Time’s up,” he said. I rubbed my eyes. “I know.” “What’s it going to be?” “I don’t know.” My head was splitting. By now the names had all run together into one mind-melting glob. Falconbengaldimensionsix. “There is . . . one more suggestion,” Woodell said. “From who?” “Johnson phoned first thing this morning,” he said. “Apparently a new name came to him in a dream last night.” I rolled my eyes. “A dream?” “He’s serious,” Woodell said. “He’s always serious.” “He says he sat bolt upright in bed in the middle of the night and saw the name before him,” Woodell said. “What is it?” I asked, bracing myself. “Nike.” “Huh?” “Nike.” “Spell it.” “N-I-K-E,” Woodell said. I wrote it on a yellow legal pad. The Greek goddess of victory. The Acropolis. The Parthenon. The Temple. I thought back. Briefly. Fleetingly. “We’re out of time,” I said. “Nike. Falcon. Or Dimension Six.” “Everyone hates Dimension Six.” “Everyone but me.” He frowned. “It’s your call.” He left me. I made doodles on my pad. I made lists, crossed them out. Tick, tock, tick, tock. I needed to telex the factory—now.*  December 21, 2016 | [181](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA181.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I hated making decisions in a hurry, and that’s all I seemed to do in those days. I looked to the ceiling. I gave myself two more minutes to mull over the different options, then walked down the hall to the telex machine. I sat before it, gave myself three more minutes.*  December 21, 2016 | [181](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA181.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *A lot of things were rolling around in my head, consciously, unconsciously. First, Johnson had pointed out that seemingly all iconic brands—Clorox, Kleenex, Xerox—have short names. Two syllables or less. And they always have a strong sound in the name, a letter like “K” or “X,” that sticks in the mind. That all made sense. And that all described Nike. Also, I liked that Nike was the goddess of victory. What’s more important, I thought, than victory? I might have heard, in the far recesses of my mind, Churchill’s voice. You ask, What is our aim? I can answer in one word. It is victory. I might have recalled the victory medal awarded to all veterans of World War II, a bronze medallion with Athena Nike on the front, breaking a sword in two. I might have. Sometimes I believe that I did. But in the end I don’t really know what led me to my decision. Luck? Instinct? Some inner spirit? Yes. “What’d you decide?” Woodell asked me at the end of the day. “Nike,” I mumbled. “Hm,” he said. “Yeah, I know,” I said. “Maybe it’ll grow on us,” he said. Maybe.*  December 21, 2016 | [182](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA182) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *MY BRAND-NEW RELATIONSHIP with Nissho was promising, but it was brand new, and who would dare predict how it might evolve? I’d once felt the relationship with Onitsuka was promising, and look where that stood. Nissho was infusing me with cash, but I couldn’t let that make me complacent. I needed to develop as many sources of cash as possible. Which brought me back to the idea of a public offering*  Best time to raise money is when you don't actually need it.  December 21, 2016 | [182](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA182.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Also, this time we decided not to sell stocks, but convertible debentures. If business truly is war without bullets, then debentures are war bonds. The public loans you money, and in exchange you give them quasi-stock in your . . . cause. The stock is quasi because debenture holders are strongly encouraged, and incentivized, to hold their shares for five years. After that, they can convert the shares to common stock or get their money back with interest. With our new plan, and our gung-ho salesman, we announced in June 1971 that Blue Ribbon would be offering two hundred thousand shares of debentures, at one dollar per, and this time the shares sold fast. One of the first to buy was my friend Cale, who didn’t hesitate to cut a check for ten thousand dollars, a princely sum. “Buck,” he said, “I was there at the start, I’ll be there at the bitter end.”*  December 21, 2016 | [182](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA182.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *the man was a genuine, head-to-toe shoe dog. I’d heard this phrase a few times. Shoe dogs were people who devoted themselves wholly to the making, selling, buying, or designing of shoes. Lifers used the phrase cheerfully to describe other lifers, men and women who had toiled so long and hard in the shoe trade, they thought and talked about nothing else. It was an all-consuming mania, a recognizable psychological disorder, to care so much about insoles and outsoles, linings and welts, rivets and vamps. But I understood. The average person takes seventy-­five hundred steps a day, 274 million steps over the course of a long life, the equivalent of six times around the globe—shoe dogs, it seemed to me, simply wanted to be part of that journey. Shoes were their way of connecting with humanity. What better way of connecting, shoe dogs thought, than by refining the hinge that joins each person to the world’s surface?*  December 21, 2016 | [183](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA183.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The hell’s a swoosh? The answer flew out of me: It’s the sound of someone going past you*  December 22, 2016 | [198](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA198) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There were about thirty people there. I expected to be nervous. They expected me to be nervous. On any different day, under any other circumstances, I would have been. For some reason, however, I felt weirdly at peace. I laid out the situation we faced. “We’ve come, folks, to a crossroads. Yesterday, our main supplier, Onitsuka, cut us off.” I let that sink in. I watched everyone’s jaw drop. “We’ve threatened to sue them for damages,” I said, “and of course they’ve threatened to file a lawsuit of their own*  December 22, 2016 | [202](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA202) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We’re not going to win a lawsuit in Japan, so we’ll have to beat them to the courthouse, get a quick verdict here, to pressure them into withdrawing. “Meanwhile, until it all sorts out, we’re completely on our own. We’re set adrift. We have this new line, Nike, which the reps in Chicago seemed to like. But, well, frankly, that’s all we’ve got. And as we know, there are big problems with the quality. It’s not what we hoped. Communications with Nippon Rubber are good, and Nissho is there at the factory at least once a week, trying to get it all fixed, but we don’t know how soon they can do it. It better be soon, though, because we have no time and suddenly no margin for error.”*  December 22, 2016 | [202](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA202.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I looked down the table. Everyone was sinking, slumping forward. I looked at Johnson. He was staring at the papers before him, and there was something in his handsome face, some quality I’d never seen there before. Surrender. Like everyone else in the room, he was giving up. The nation’s economy was in the tank, a recession was under way. Gas lines, political gridlock, rising unemployment, Nixon being Nixon—Vietnam. It seemed like the end times. Everyone in the room had already been worrying about how they were going to make the rent, pay the light bill. Now this.*  When this happens, it's the leader who has to take charge and boost morale  December 22, 2016 | [202](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA202.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I cleared my throat. “So . . . in other words,” I said. I cleared my throat again, pushed aside my yellow legal pad. “What I’m trying to say is, we’ve got them right where we want them.”*  Motivation from the ceo  December 22, 2016 | [203](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA203) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Johnson lifted his eyes. Everyone around the table lifted their eyes. They sat up straighter. “This is—the moment,” I said. “This is the moment we’ve been waiting for. Our moment. No more selling someone else’s brand. No more working for someone else. Onitsuka has been holding us down for years. Their late deliveries, their mixed-up orders, their refusal to hear and implement our design ideas—who among us isn’t sick of dealing with all that? It’s time we faced facts: If we’re going to succeed, or fail, we should do so on our own terms, with our own ideas—our own brand. We posted two million in sales last year . . . none of which had anything to do with Onitsuka. That number was a testament to our ingenuity and hard work. Let’s not look at this as a crisis. Let’s look at this as our liberation. Our Independence Day. “Yes, it’s going to be rough. I won’t lie to you. We’re definitely going to war, people. But we know the terrain. We know our way around Japan now. And that’s one reason I feel in my heart this is a war we can win. And if we win it, when we win it, I see great things for us on the other side of victory. We are still alive, people. We are still. Alive.” As I stopped speaking I could see a wave of relief swirl around the table like a cool breeze. Everyone felt it. It was as real as the wind that used to swirl around the office next to the Pink Bucke*  December 22, 2016 | [203](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA203) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Johnson said he wanted to buy me a cup of coffee. “Your finest hour,” he said. “Ach,” I said. “Thanks.” But I reminded him: I just told the truth. As he had in Chicago. Telling the truth, I said. Who knew?*  December 22, 2016 | [204](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA204) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d never witnessed anything quite like that race. And yet I didn’t just witness it. I took part in it. Days later I felt sore in my hams and quads. This, I decided, this is what sports are, what they can do. Like books, sports give people a sense of having lived other lives, of taking part in other people’s victories. And defeats. When sports are at their best, the spirit of the fan merges with the spirit of the athlete, and in that convergence, in that transference, is the oneness that the mystics talk about.*  December 23, 2016 | [207](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA207.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I knew that race was part of me, would forever be part of me, and I vowed it would also be part of Blue Ribbon. In our coming battles, with Onitsuka, with whomever, we’d be like Pre. We’d compete as if our lives depended on it. Because they did*  December 23, 2016 | [207](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA207.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Sure there will be a lot of pressure,” he told Sports Illustrated. “And a lot of us will be facing more experienced competitors, and maybe we don’t have any right to win. But all I know is if I go out and bust my gut until I black out and somebody still beats me, and if I have made that guy reach down and use everything he has and then more, why then it just proves that on that day he’s a better man than I*  December 23, 2016 | [208](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA208) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The cowards never started and the weak died along the way—that leaves us*  December 24, 2016 | [209](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA209.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I always called them my Ducks, but now they really were. They were in my shoes. Every step they took, every cut they made, was partly mine. It’s one thing to watch a sporting event and put yourself in the players’ shoes. Every fan does that. It’s another thing when the athletes are actually in your shoes.*  December 24, 2016 | [211](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA211.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *there was Bowerman. Pre and the coach were clashing constantly, two headstrong guys with different ideas about training methods and running styles. Bowerman took the long view: a distance runner peaks in his late twenties. He therefore wanted Pre to rest, preserve himself for certain select races. Save something, Bowerman kept pleading. But of course Pre refused. I’m all-out, all the time, he said. In their relationship I saw a mirror of my relationship with banks. Pre didn’t see the sense in going slow—ever. Go fast or die. I couldn’t fault him. I was on his side. Even against our coach*  December 24, 2016 | [214](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA214.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *A race is a work of art,” he told a reporter, “that people can look at and be affected in as many ways as they’re capable of understanding.*  December 24, 2016 | [216](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA216) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Around the close of 1972 each man handed his house keys to the other, and now in early 1973 they switched places. Talk about team players. It was an enormous sacrifice, and I was deeply grateful. But in keeping with my personality, and Blue Ribbon tradition, I expressed no gratitude. I spoke not a word of thanks or praise*  December 24, 2016 | [219](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA219.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Better yet, he was a tenacious competitor.*  December 24, 2016 | [221](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA221.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But the main reason I chose Cousin Houser was poverty. I had no money for legal fees, and Cousin Houser talked his firm into taking my case on contingency.*  December 24, 2016 | [221](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA221.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And my “borrowing” Kitami’s folder from his briefcase? How could a judge view that as anything but theft? MacArthur came to mind. You are remembered for the rules you break.*  December 24, 2016 | [221](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA221.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I contemplated hiding these painful facts from the court. In the end, however, there was only one thing to do. Play it straight. It was the smart thing, the right thing. I’d simply have to hope the court would see the stealing of Kitami’s folder as a kind of self-defense.*  Honesty, in the court  December 24, 2016 | [221](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA221.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *For all my belief that business was war without bullets, I’d never felt the full fury of conference-­room combat until I found myself at a table surrounded by five lawyers. They tried everything to get me to say I’d violated my contract with Onitsuka. They tried trick questions, hostile questions, squirrelly questions, loaded questions. When questions didn’t work, they twisted my answers*  Phil's deposition  December 24, 2016 | [222](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA222) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *A deposition is strenuous for anyone, but for a shy person it’s an ordeal. Badgered, baited, harassed, mocked, I was a shell of myself by the end. My condition was worsened by the sense that I hadn’t done very well—a sense Cousin Houser reluctantly confirmed.*  December 24, 2016 | [222](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA222.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At the close of those difficult days, it was my nightly six-mile run that saved my life. And then it was my brief time with Matthew and Penny that preserved my sanity. I’d always try to find the time and energy to tell Matthew his bedtime story*  December 24, 2016 | [222](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA222.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We’re going to win, Buck. That magical pronoun, “we”—he’d always use it, and it would always make me feel better.*  December 24, 2016 | [223](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA223.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We had a huge laugh over the fact that Oregon’s basketball coach that year was Dick Harter, while the football coach was still Dick Enright. The popular cheer at Oregon State games was: “If you can’t get your Dick Enright, get your Dick Harter!” After we stopped laughing, Strasser started up again. I was amazed by the pitch of his laughter. High, giggly, twee, it was startling from a man his size*  December 24, 2016 | [225](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA225.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *WHEN I WASN’T obsessing about the trial, I was fixated on sales. Every day I’d get a telex from our warehouses with a “pair count,” meaning the exact number of pairs shipped that day to all customers*  December 24, 2016 | [226](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA226.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *the daily pair count determined my mood, my digestion, my blood pressure, because it largely determined the fate of Blue Ribbon. If we didn’t “sell through,” sell all the shoes in our most recent order, and quickly convert that product into cash, we’d be in big trouble. The daily pair count told me if we were on our way to selling through.*  December 24, 2016 | [226](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA226.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He had a superb talent for underplaying the bad, and underplaying the good, for simply being in the moment. For instance, after the dummy reversal, Woodell occupied an office that was hardly deluxe*  December 24, 2016 | [226](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA226.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Supply and demand is always the root problem in business. It’s been true since Phoenician traders raced to bring Rome the coveted purple dye that colored the clothing of royals and rich people; there was never enough purple to go around. It’s hard enough to invent and manufacture and market a product, but then the logistics, the mechanics, the hydraulics of getting it to the people who want it, when they want it—this is how companies die, how ulcers are born.*  December 24, 2016 | [227](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA227.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *In 1973 the supply-and-demand problems facing the running-­shoe industry were unusually knotty, seemingly insoluble. The whole world was suddenly demanding running shoes, and the supply wasn’t simply inconsistent, it was slowing to a sputter. There were never enough shoes in the pipeline. We had many smart people working on the problem, but no one could figure out how to significantly boost supply without taking on huge inventory risks.*  December 24, 2016 | [227](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA227.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *There was some consolation in the fact that Adidas and Puma were having the same problems—but not much. Our problems could tip us into bankruptcy. We were leveraged to the hilt, and like most people who live from paycheck to paycheck, we were walking the edge of a precipice. When a shipment of shoes was late, our pair count plummeted. When our pair count plummeted, we weren’t able to generate enough revenue to repay Nissho and the Bank of California on time. When we couldn’t repay Nissho and the Bank of California on time, we couldn’t borrow more. When we couldn’t borrow more we were late placing our next order. Round and round it went.*  December 24, 2016 | [227](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA227.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *that fall, I had an idea. Why not go to all of our biggest retailers and tell them that if they’d sign ironclad commitments, if they’d give us large and nonrefundable orders, six months in advance, we’d give them hefty discounts, up to 7 percent? This way we’d have longer lead times, and fewer shipments, and more certainty, and therefore a better chance of keeping cash balances in the bank. Also, we could use these long-term commitments from heavyweights like Nordstrom, Kinney, Athlete’s Foot, United Sporting Goods, and others, to squeeze more credit out of Nissho and the Bank of California. Especially Nissho.*  December 25, 2016 | [228](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA228.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The retailers were skeptical, of course. But I begged. And when that didn’t work I made bold predictions. I told them that this program, which we were calling “Futures,” was the future, for us and everyone else, so they’d better get on board. Sooner rather than later. I was persuasive because I was desperate. If we could just take the lid off our annual growth limits. But retailers continued to resist. Over and over we heard: “You newbies at Nike don’t understand the shoe industry. This new idea will never fly.”*  December 25, 2016 | [229](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA229) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *1974*  Court case, new beginnings,  December 26, 2016 | [231](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA231.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Of all the pitches in my life, this might have been the most carefully prepared and rehearsed, because I wanted Strasser, and I knew there would be pushback. He had before him a clear path to the very top of Cousin Houser’s firm, or any other firm he might choose. Without much effort he could become partner, secure a life of means, privilege, prestige. That was the known, and we were offering him The Unknown. So Hayes and I spent days role-playing, polishing our arguments and counterarguments, anticipating what objections Strasser might raise.*  December 26, 2016 | [243](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA243) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I opened by telling Strasser that it was all a foregone conclusion, really. “You’re one of us,” I said. One of us. He knew what those words meant.*  December 26, 2016 | [243](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA243.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We were the kind of people who simply couldn’t put up with corporate nonsense. We were the kind of people who wanted our work to be play. But meaningful play. We were trying to slay Goliath, and though Strasser was bigger than two Goliaths, at heart he was an utter David. We were trying to create a brand, I said, but also a culture. We were fighting against conformity, against boringness, against drudgery. More than a product, we were trying to sell an idea—a spirit.*  December 26, 2016 | [243](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA243.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I don’t know if I ever fully understood who we were and what we were doing until I heard myself saying it all that day to Strasser.*  December 26, 2016 | [243](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA243.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Later, while Johnson and I were on a run, he asked me how we were going to pay a quarter of a million dollars for a factory when we could barely pay for Giampietro’s steak. I told him calmly—in fact with the calm of a madman—that I was going to have Nissho pay for it. “Why on earth is Nissho going to give you money to run a factory?” he asked. “Simple,” I said, “I’m not going to tell them.” I stopped running, put my hands on my knees, and told Johnson, furthermore, that I was going to need him to run that factory. His mouth opened, then shut. Just one year ago I’d asked him to move across the country to Oregon. Now I wanted him to move back east again?*  December 26, 2016 | [246](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA246.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *he said. “Never mind the inconvenience, never mind the insanity of schlepping all the way back to the East Coast, what do I know about running a factory? I’d be in completely over my head.” I laughed. I laughed and laughed. “Over your head?” I said. “Over your head ! We’re all in over our heads! Way over!”*  December 26, 2016 | [247](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA247.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He moaned. He sounded like a car trying to start on a cold morning. I waited. Just give it a second, I thought. He denied, fumed, bargained, got depressed, then accepted. The Five Stages of Jeff. At last he let out a long sigh and said he knew this was a big job, and, like me, he didn’t trust anyone else to handle it.*  5 stages of Jeff  December 26, 2016 | [247](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA247.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *that, when it came to Blue Ribbon, each of us was willing to do whatever was necessary to win, and if “whatever was necessary” fell outside our area of expertise, hey, as Giampietro would say, “No fucking problem.” He didn’t know anything about running a factory, but he was willing to try. To learn.*  December 26, 2016 | [247](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA247.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Fear of failure, I thought, will never be our downfall as a company. Not that any of us thought we wouldn’t fail; in fact we had every expectation that we would. But when we did fail, we had faith that we’d do it fast, learn from it, and be better for it.*  December 26, 2016 | [247](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA247.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *OUR CONTACT AT the Bank of California, a man named Perry Holland, was very much like Harry White at First National.*  December 26, 2016 | [248](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA248) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *his bosses, like White’s, were always pressing us to slow down.*  December 26, 2016 | [248](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA248.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We responded in 1974 by mashing the accelerator. We were on pace for $8 million in sales, and nothing, but nothing, was going to stop us from hitting that number. In defiance of the bank, we made deals with more stores, and opened several stores of our own—and continued to sign celebrity athlete endorsers we couldn’t afford.*  December 26, 2016 | [248](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA248.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *in the summer of 1974 I phoned Connors’s agent and made my pitch. We’d signed Nastase for ten thousand dollars, I said, and we were willing to offer his boy half that. The agent jumped at the deal. Before Connors could sign the papers, however, he left the country for Wimbledon. Then, against all odds, he won Wimbledon. In our shoes. Next, he came home and shocked the world by winning the U.S. Open. I was giddy. I phoned the agent and asked if Connors had signed those papers yet. We wanted to get started promoting him. “What papers?” the agent said. “Uh, the papers. We had a deal, remember?” “Yeah, I don’t remember any deal. We’ve already got a deal three times better than your deal, which I don’t remember.”*  December 26, 2016 | [248](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA248.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It wasn’t easy paying anyone. We were undergoing an explosion in assets, and inventory, which put enormous strains on our cash reserves. With any growth company, this is the typical problem. But we were growing faster than the typical growth company, faster than any growth company I knew of. Our problems were unprecedented. Or so it seemed.*  December 26, 2016 | [250](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA250.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I was also partly to blame, of course. I refused to even consider ordering less inventory. Grow or die, that’s what I believed, no matter the situation. Why cut your order from $3 million down to $2 million if you believed in your bones that the demand out there was for $5 million? So I was forever pushing my conservative bankers to the brink, forcing them into a game of chicken. I’d order a number of shoes that seemed to them absurd, a number we’d need to stretch to pay for, and I’d always just barely pay for them, in the nick of time, and then just barely pay our other monthly bills, at the last minute, always doing just enough, and no more, to prevent the bankers from booting us. And then, at the end of the month, I’d empty our accounts to pay Nissho and start from zero again. To most observers this would’ve seemed a brazenly reckless, dangerous way of doing business, but I believed the demand for our shoes was always greater than our annual sales. Besides, eight of every ten orders were solid gold, guaranteed, thanks to our Futures program. Full speed ahead.*  December 26, 2016 | [250](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA250.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Hayes didn’t like this state of affairs. It was hard on his nerves. “So what do you want to do,” I’d ask him, “slow down?” Which would always draw a guilty smile. Silly question.*  December 26, 2016 | [252](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA252.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Then I realized that I hadn’t yet told him the bad part. “Be that as it may,” I said, “they did throw us out, Mr. Ito, they did, and the net-net is that I have no bank. And thus I have no money. And I need to make payroll. And I need to pay my other creditors. And if I can’t meet those obligations, I am out of business. Today. In which case, not only can I not pay you the million dollars I owe you, sir . . . but I need to ask to borrow another one million dollars.” Ito and Sumeragi slid their eyes toward each other for one half second, then slid them back to me. Everything in the room came to a stop. The dust motes, the molecules of air, paused midflight. “Mr. Knight,” Ito said, “before giving you another cent . . . I will need to look at your books.”*  December 26, 2016 | [256](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA256.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Not me. I sat up all night, playing out a hundred different scenarios, castigating myself for taking such a risk. When I finally crawled into bed, my mind wouldn’t stop. Lying in the dark I thought over and over: Am I going to jail?*  December 26, 2016 | [257](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA257.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Then I went into the den and researched the homestead laws. I was relieved to learn that the Feds couldn’t take the house. They could take everything else, but not this little sixteen-hundred-square-f oot sanctuary. I sighed, but the relief didn’t last. I started thinking about my life. I scrolled back years, questioning every decision I’d ever made that led to this point. If only I’d been better at selling encyclopedias, I thought. Everything would be different.*  December 26, 2016 | [257](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA257.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I tried to give myself the standard catechism. What do you know? But I didn’t know anything. Sitting in my recliner I wanted to cry out: I know nothing! I’d always had an answer, some kind of answer, to every problem. But this moment, this night, I had no answers. I got up, found a yellow legal pad, started making lists. But my mind kept drifting; when I looked down at the pad there were only doodles. Check marks, squiggles, lightning bolts. In the eerie glow of the moon they all looked liked angry, defiant swooshes.*  December 26, 2016 | [257](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA257.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Don’t go to sleep one night. What you most want will come to you then.*  December 26, 2016 | [258](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA258.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *They were going to see right away that we’d used a big chunk of their financing not to purchase shoes from overseas but to run a secret factory in Exeter. Best case, this would make them mad. Worst case, it would make them lose their minds. If they considered our accounting sleight of hand a full-fledged betrayal, they would abandon us, faster than the bank had, in which case we’d be out of business. Simple as that. We talked about hiding the factory from them. But everyone around the table agreed that we needed to play this one straight. As in the Onitsuka trial, full disclosure, total transparency, was the only course. It made sense, strategically and morally.*  December 26, 2016 | [259](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA259) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Without a word of small talk we stacked our books in front of them. Sumeragi lit a cigarette, Ito uncapped a fountain pen. They commenced. Pecking at calculators, scratching at legal pads, drinking bottomless cups of coffee and green tea, they slowly peeled back the layers of our operation and peered inside. I walked in and out, every fifteen minutes or so, to ask if they needed anything. They never did*  December 26, 2016 | [260](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA260) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We’d reached that fateful moment. Leaning over the books, Ito realized what he was looking at and did a slow double-take. Exeter. Secret factory. Then I saw the realization dawn that he was the sucker who’d paid for it. He looked up at me and pushed his head forward on his neck, as if to say: Really? I nodded. And then . . . he smiled. It was only a half smile, a mohair sweater smile, but it meant everything. I gave him a weak half smile in return, and in that brief wordless exchange countless fates and futures were decided*  December 26, 2016 | [260](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA260.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If they cross paths in the hall, if one unhappy creditor meets another unhappy creditor, and if they should have a chance to compare notes, they will freak out. They could team up and decide on some sort of collaborative payment schedule! Which would be Armageddon.” We drew up a plan. We assigned a person to each creditor, someone who would keep an eye on him at all times, even escorting him to the restroom. Then we assigned a person to coordinate everything, to be like air traffic control, making sure the creditors and their escorts were always in separate airspace. Meanwhile, I would scurry from room to room, apologizing and genuflecting*  December 26, 2016 | [262](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA262.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *In the end, somehow, it worked. None of the creditors met any of the others. Both Shesky and Manowitz left the building that night feeling reassured, even murmuring nice things about Blue Ribbon.*  December 26, 2016 | [263](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA263) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It was the ultimate high-stakes game. Only aces or better. Ito touched his chin and decided he would open. Right away he went all in. All. Fucking. In. “Gentlemen,” he said, though he was speaking only to Holland, “it is my understanding that you refuse to handle Blue Ribbon’s account any longer?” Holland nodded. “Yes, that’s right, Mr. Ito.” “In that case,” Ito said, “Nissho would like to pay off the debt of Blue Ribbon—in full.” Holland stared. “The full . . . ?” Ito grunted. I glowered at Holland. I wanted to say, That’s Japanese for: Did I stutter? “Yes,” Ito said. “What is the number?” Holland wrote a number on his pad and slid the paper toward Ito, who glanced quickly down. “Yes,” Ito said. “That is what your people have already told my people. And so.” He opened his briefcase, removed an envelope, and slid it across the table at Holland. “Here is a check for the full amount.” “It will be deposited first thing in the morning,” Holland said. “It will be deposited first thing today!” Ito said. Holland stammered. “Okay, right, today.” The cohorts looked bewildered, terrified. Ito swiveled in his chair, took them all in with a subzero gaze. “There is one more thing,” he said. “I believe your bank has been negotiating in San Francisco to become one of Nissho’s banks?” “That’s right,” Holland said. “Ah. I must tell you that it will be a waste of your time to pursue those negotiations any further.” “Are you sure?” Holland asked. “I am quite sure.” The Ice Man cometh. I slid my eyes toward Hayes. I tried not to smile. I tried very hard. I failed. Then I looked right at Holland. It was all there in his unblinking eyes. He knew the bank had overplayed its hand. He knew the bank’s officers had overreacted. I could see, in that moment, there would be no more FBI investigation. He and the bank wanted this matter closed, over, done with. They’d treated a good customer shabbily, and they didn’t want to have to answer for their actions. We would never hear of them, or him, again. I looked at the suits on either side of Holland. “Gentlemen,” I said, standing. Gentlemen. Sometimes that’s Business-ese for: Take your FBI and shove it.*  December 26, 2016 | [263](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA263.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *WHEN WE WERE all outside the bank, I bowed to Ito. I wanted to kiss him, but I only bowed. Hayes bowed, too, though for a moment I thought he was pitching forward from the stress of the last three days. “Thank you,” I said to Ito. “You will never be sorry that you defended us like that.” He straightened his tie. “Such stupidity,” he said. At first I thought he was talking about me. Then I realized he meant the bank. “I do not like stupidity,” he said. “People pay too much attention to numbers.”*  December 26, 2016 | [265](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA265) | |

## *Part Two*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“No brilliant idea was ever born in a conference room,” he assured the Dane. “But a lot of silly ideas have died there,” said Stahr. —F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Last Tycoon*  December 26, 2016 | [266](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA266.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Somebody may beat me—but they’re going to have to bleed to do it.*  December 26, 2016 | [268](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA268) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Somebody may beat me, I told myself, some banker or creditor or competitor may stop me, but by God they’re going to have to bleed to do it.*  December 26, 2016 | [268](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA268.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *At twenty-four I didn’t yet know who I was, and Pre not only knew who he was, the world knew.*  December 26, 2016 | [269](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA269) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Someone needed to curate Pre’s rock, and I decided that someone needed to be us. We didn’t have money for anything like that. But I talked it over with Johnson and Woodell and we agreed that, as long as we were in business, we’d find money for things like that.*  December 26, 2016 | [269](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA269.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *1976*  First half is about pre, Olympics, and company finally making their own shoes in Taiwan, Rest is about the company, the people who matter, the culture etc.  December 28, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I could go back to asking the deep questions. What are we trying to build here? What kind of company do we want to be?*  December 27, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *. Sony, for instance. Sony was the Apple of its day. Profitable, innovative, efficient—and it treated its workers well*  December 27, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *When pressed, I often said I wanted to be like Sony. At root, however, I still aimed and hoped for something bigger, and vaguer. I would search my mind and heart and the only thing I could come up with was this word—­“winning.” It wasn’t much, but it was far, far better than the alternative. Whatever happened, I just didn’t want to lose. Losing was death. Blue Ribbon was my third child, my business child, as Sumeragi said, and I simply couldn’t bear the idea of it dying. It has to live, I told myself. It just has to. That’s all I know*  December 27, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *This question of winning and losing. Money wasn’t our aim, we agreed. Money wasn’t our end game. But whatever our aim or end, money was the only means to get there. More money than we had on hand.*  December 27, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Going public would generate a ton of money in a flash. But it would also be highly perilous, because going public often meant losing control. It could mean working for someone else, suddenly being answerable to stockholders, hundreds or maybe thousands of strangers, many of whom would be large investment firms. Going public could turn us overnight into the thing we loathed, the thing we’d spent our lives running from. For me there was an added consideration, a semantic one. Defined by shyness, intensely private, I found that phrase itself off-­putting: going public. No thank you.*  December 27, 2016 | [271](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA271.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *So I ordered our factories to start making the waffle trainer in blue, which would go better with jeans, and that’s when it really took off.*  December 27, 2016 | [274](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA274.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I remembered that the best way to reinforce your knowledge of a subject is to share it, so we both benefited from my transferring everything I knew about Japan, Korea, China, and Taiwan to Gorman’s brain.*  December 27, 2016 | [275](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA275.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Korea has elected to go with a few giant factories, whereas Taiwan is building a hundred smaller ones. So that’s why we’re choosing Taiwan: Our demand is too high, our volume too low, for the biggest factories. And in smaller factories we’ll have the dominant position. We’ll be in charge.*  December 27, 2016 | [275](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA275.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Manila. Personal errand, I said vaguely. I went to Manila to visit a shoe factory, a very good one. Then, closing an old loop, I spent the night in MacArthur’s suite. You are remembered for the rules you break. Maybe. Maybe not*  December 27, 2016 | [279](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA279.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If watching Shorter go off in shoes other than mine could affect me so deeply, it was now official: Nike was more than just a shoe. I no longer simply made Nikes; Nikes were making me. If I saw an athlete choose another shoe, if I saw anyone choose another shoe, it wasn’t just a rejection of the brand alone, but of me. I told myself to be reasonable, not everyone in the world was going to wear Nike. And I won’t say that I became upset every time I saw someone walking down the street in a running shoe that wasn’t mine. But it definitely registered. And I didn’t care for it. At some point that night I phoned Hollister. He was devastated, too. There was raw anger in his voice. I was glad. I wanted people working for me who would feel that same burn, that same gut-punch rejection*  December 28, 2016 | [285](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA285) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I concluded in 1976 that we were a formidable team. (Years later a famous Harvard business professor studying Nike came to the same conclusion. “Normally,” he said, “if one manager at a company can think tactically and strategically, that company has a good future. But boy are you lucky: More than half the Buttfaces think that way!”)*  December 28, 2016 | [287](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA287.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *But in fact we were more alike than different, and that gave a coherence to our goals and our efforts. We were mostly Oregon guys, which was important.*  December 28, 2016 | [288](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA288) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We had an inborn need to prove ourselves, to show the world that we weren’t hicks and hayseeds*  December 28, 2016 | [288](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA288.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *we were nearly all merciless self-loathers, which kept the egos in check. There was none of that smartest-guy-in-the-room foolishness. Hayes, Strasser, Woodell, Johnson, each would have been the smartest guy in any room, but none believed it of himself, or the next guy. Our meetings were defined by contempt, disdain, and heaps of abuse.*  December 28, 2016 | [288](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA288.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Oh, what abuse. We called each other terrible names. We rained down verbal blows. While floating ideas, and shooting down ideas, and hashing out threats to the company, the last thing we took into account was someone’s feelings. Including mine. Especially mine. My fellow Buttfaces, my employees, called me Bucky the Bookkeeper, constantly. I never asked them to stop. I knew better. If you showed any weakness, any sentimentality, you were dead.*  December 28, 2016 | [288](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA288.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Strasser’s nickname was Rolling Thunder. Hayes, meanwhile, was Doomsday. Woodell was Weight. (As in Dead Weight.) Johnson was Four Factor, because he tended to exaggerate and therefore everything he said needed to be divided by four. No one took it personally.*  December 29, 2016 | [289](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA289) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The only thing truly not tolerated at a Buttface was a thin skin*  December 29, 2016 | [289](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA289.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And yet, in the midst of those intense discussions, in the middle of one of the most trying years in the company’s history, those Butt­face meetings were nothing but a joy. Of all those hours spent at Sunriver, not one minute felt like work.*  December 29, 2016 | [290](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA290.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It was us against the world, and we felt damned sorry for the world*  December 29, 2016 | [291](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA291) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *That is, when we weren’t righteously pissed off at it. Each of us had been misunderstood, misjudged, dismissed. Shunned by bosses, spurned by luck, rejected by society, shortchanged by fate when looks and other natural graces were handed out. We’d each been forged by early failure. We’d each given ourselves to some quest, some attempt at validation or meaning, and fallen short. Hayes couldn’t become a partner because he was too fat. Johnson couldn’t cope in the so-called normal world of nine-to-five. Strasser was an insurance lawyer who hated insurance—and lawyers. Woodell lost all his youthful dreams in one fluke accident. I got cut from the baseball team. And I got my heart broken. I identified with the born loser in each Buttface, and vice versa, and I knew that together we could become winners.*  December 29, 2016 | [291](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA291) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I still didn’t know exactly what winning meant, other than not losing, but we seemed to be getting closer to a defining moment when that question would be settled, or at least more sharply defined. Maybe going public would be that moment.*  December 29, 2016 | [291](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA291.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *If I had any doubts about Blue Ribbon’s management team in 1976, they were mainly about me. Was I doing right by the Buttfaces, giving them so little guidance? When they did well I’d shrug and deliver my highest praise: Not bad. When they erred I’d yell for a minute or two, then shake it off. None of the Buttfaces felt the least threatened by me—was that a good thing? Don’t tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results. It was the right tack for Patton and his GIs. But did that make it right for a bunch of Buttfaces? I worried. Maybe I should be more hands-on. Maybe we should be more structured. But then I’d think: Whatever I’m doing, it must be working, because mutinies are few. In fact, ever since Bork, no one had thrown a genuine tantrum, about anything, not even what they were paid, which is unheard of in any company, big or small. The Buttfaces knew I wasn’t paying myself much, and they trusted that I was paying them what I could. Clearly the Buttfaces liked the culture I’d created. I trusted them, wholly, and didn’t look over their shoulders, and that bred a powerful two-way loyalty. My management style wouldn’t have worked for people who wanted to be guided, every step, but this group found it liberating, empowering. I let them be, let them do, let them make their own mistakes, because that’s how I’d always liked people to treat me.*  December 29, 2016 | [291](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA291.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Often I’d walk into my house and Matthew and Travis would meet me at the door. “Where have you been?” they’d ask. “Daddy was with his friends,” I’d say, picking them up. They’d stare, confused. “But Mommy told us you were working.”*  December 29, 2016 | [292](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA292.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Mr. Knight, we’ve come up with a way to inject . . . air . . . into a running shoe.”*  December 29, 2016 | [294](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA294.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He saw me appraising him, saw my skepticism, and wasn’t the least fazed.*  December 29, 2016 | [294](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA294.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It didn’t seem all too likely that, at this late date in history, something so new, so revolutionary, was going to be dreamed up. “Air shoes” sounded to me like jet packs and moving sidewalks. Comic book stuff. Rudy still wasn’t discouraged. He kept at it, unflappable, earnest. Finally he shrugged and said that he understood. He’d tried to pitch Adidas and they’d been skeptical, too. Abracadabra. That was all I needed to hear.*  December 29, 2016 | [295](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA295.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d hired Strasser for his legal mind, but by 1977 I’d discovered his true talent. Negotiating. The first few times I asked him to work out a contract with sports agents, the toughest negotiators in the world, he more than held his own.*  December 29, 2016 | [295](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA295.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Every time, Strasser walked away with more than we’d ever hoped. No one scared him, no one matched him in a clash of wills. By 1977 I was sending him into every negotiation with total confidence, as if I were sending in the Eighty-Second Airborne.*  December 29, 2016 | [296](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA296) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *His secret, I think, was that he just didn’t care what he said or how he said it or how it went over. He was totally honest, a radical tactic in any negotiation. I recall one tug-of-war Strasser had over Elvin Hayes, the Washington Bullets all-star, whom we badly wanted to sign again. Elvin’s agent told Strasser, “You should give Elvin your whole damn company!” Strasser yawned. “You want it? Help yourself. We’ve got ten grand in the bank. “Final offer, take it or leave it.” The agent took it.*  December 29, 2016 | [296](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA296.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I told Hollister to lobby the players steadily over the next twelve months. Which he did. And the 1977 vote was 12–0 for Nike. The next day I met Harter in Jaqua’s office, and he told us he still wasn’t ready to sign. Why not? “Where’s my twenty-five hundred dollars?” he said. “Ah,” I said. “Now I get it.” I mailed Harter a check. At last my Ducks would wear Nikes on the hardboards*  December 29, 2016 | [297](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA297) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *All the great basketball schools—UCLA, Indiana, North Carolina, and so on—had long-standing deals with Adidas or Converse. So who was left? And what could we offer? We hurriedly dreamed up an “Advisory Board,” another version of our Pro Club, our NBA reward system—but it was small beer. I fully expected Strasser and Vaccaro to fail. And I expected to see neither of them for a year, at least. One month later Strasser was standing in my office, beaming. And shouting. And ticking off names.*  December 29, 2016 | [297](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA297.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Some of the credit went to Hollywood. We had a guy out there giving Nikes to stars, all kinds of stars, big, little, rising, fading. Every time I turned on the TV our shoes were on a character in some hit show*  December 29, 2016 | [300](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA300.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Sure enough, one day I received in the mail a perfect replica of our Nike Bruin, including the trademark swoosh. Imitation is flattery, but knockoff is theft, and this theft was diabolical. The detail and workmanship, without any input from our people, was startlingly good. I wrote the president of the factory and demanded he cease and desist or I’d have him thrown in jail for a hundred years. And by the way, I added, how would you like to work with us? I signed a contract with his factory in the summer of 1977, which ended our knockoff problem for the moment. More important, it gave us the capacity to shift production in a huge way, if need be. It also ended once and for all our dependence on Japan.*  December 29, 2016 | [300](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA300.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *THE PROBLEMS WERE never going to stop, I realized, but for the moment we had more momentum than problems. To build on this momentum we rolled out a new ad campaign with a sexy new slogan: “There is no finish line.”*  December 29, 2016 | [301](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA301.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Everyone around me thought the ad was bold, fresh. It didn’t focus on the product, but on the spirit behind the product, which was something you never saw in the 1970s. People congratulated me on that ad as if we’d achieved something earth-shattering. I’d shrug. I wasn’t being modest.*  December 29, 2016 | [301](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA301.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I still didn’t believe in the power of advertising. At all. A product, I thought, speaks for itself, or it doesn’t. In the end, it’s only quality that counts. I couldn’t imagine that any ad campaign would ever prove me wrong or change my mind. Our advertising people, of course, told me I was wrong, wrong, a thousand percent wrong. But again and again I’d ask them: Can you say definitively that people are buying Nikes because of your ad? Can you show it to me in black-and-white numbers? Silence. No, they’d say . . . we can’t say that definitively. So then it’s a little hard to get enthused, I’d say—isn’t it? Silence.*  December 29, 2016 | [301](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA301.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I OFTEN WISHED I had more time to kick back and debate the niceties of advertising. Our semidaily crises were always bigger and more pressing than what slogan to print under a picture of our shoes.*  December 29, 2016 | [302](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA302.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He said going public wasn’t an option. It was mandatory. I needed to solve this cash flow problem, he said, attack it, wrestle it to the ground, or else I could lose the company.*  December 29, 2016 | [303](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA303) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *For the first time ever I saw going public as inevitable, and I couldn’t help it, the realization made me sad. Of course we stood to make a great deal of money. But getting rich had never factored in my decisions, and it mattered even less to the Buttfaces. So when I brought it up at the next meeting and told them what Chuck had said, I didn’t ask for another debate. I just put it to a vote.*  December 29, 2016 | [303](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA303.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Essentially the American Selling Price law, or ASP, said that import duties on nylon shoes must be 20 percent of the manufacturing cost of the shoe—unless there’s a “similar shoe” manufactured by a competitor in the United States. In which case, the duty must be 20 percent of the competitor’s selling price. So all our competitors needed to do was make a few shoes in the United States, get them declared “similar,” then price them sky high—and boom. They could send our import duties sky high, too. And that’s just what they did. One dirty little trick, and they’d managed to spike our import duties by 40 percent—­retroactively. Customs was saying we owed them import duties dating back years, to the tune of $25 million. Dirty trick or not, Strasser told me customs wasn’t joking around. We owed them $25 million, and they wanted it. Now.*  Lobbying by competition  December 29, 2016 | [304](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA304.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Some inside Nike worried about Werschkul’s seriousness, fearing it bordered on obsession. Fine by me, I thought. Obsessives were the only ones for the job. The only ones for me. Some questioned his stability. But when it came to stability, I asked, who among us will throw the first stone?*  December 29, 2016 | [311](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA311) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I rose from my chair and yelled into the phone, “You dummies! What do I need with a nonworking factory in Saco, Maine?” “Storage?” they said. “And one day it could be a complement to our factory in Exeter.” In my best John McEnroe I screamed, “You cannot be serious! Don’t you dare!” “Too late. We already bought it.” Dial tone. I sat down. I didn’t even feel mad. I was too upset to be mad. The Feds were dunning me for $25 million I didn’t have and my men were running around the country writing checks for hundreds of thousands of dollars more, without even asking me. Suddenly I became calm. Quasi-comatose. I told myself, Who cares? When the government comes in, when they repossess everything, lock, stock, and barrel, let them figure out what to do with a nonworking factory in Saco, Maine. Later Hayes and Woodell called back and said they’d only been kidding about buying the factory. “Pulling your chain,” they said. “But you do need to buy it. You must.” Okay, I said wearily. Okay. Whatever you dummies think best.*  December 29, 2016 | [312](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA312.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Aside from our war with the government, we were in great shape. Which seemed like saying: Aside from being on death row, life was grand*  December 29, 2016 | [313](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA313) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *now I was sitting in a giant mitt, in a swank new office, presiding over a company that sold “sports things” to professional baseball players. But instead of cherishing how far we’d come, I saw only how far we had to go. My window looked onto a beautiful stand of pines, and I definitely couldn’t see the forest for the trees. I didn’t understand what was happening, in the moment, but now I do. The years of stress were taking their toll. When you see only problems, you’re not seeing clearly. At just the moment I needed to be my sharpest, I was approaching burnout.*  December 29, 2016 | [313](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA313.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *We needed to hire people with sharp minds, that was our priority, and accountants and lawyers had at least proved that they could master a difficult subject. And pass a big test. Most had also demonstrated basic competence. When you hired an accountant, you knew he or she could count. When you hired a lawyer, you knew he or she could talk. When you hired a marketing expert, or product developer, what did you know? Nothing. You couldn’t predict what he or she could do, or if he or she could do anything. And the typical business school graduate? He or she didn’t want to start out with a bag selling shoes. Plus, they all had zero experience, so you were simply rolling the dice based on how well they did in an interview. We didn’t have enough margin for error to roll the dice on anyone*  December 29, 2016 | [314](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA314.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I WAS NO fashion plate. But I knew how to wear a decent suit. And because my company was launching an apparel line, I now started paying closer attention to what I wore, and what those around me wore. On the second front I was appalled. Bankers and investors, reps from Nissho, all kinds of people we needed to impress, were passing through our new halls, and whenever they saw Strasser in his Hawaiian shirts, or Hayes in his bulldozer-driving outfits, they did triple-takes. Sometimes our eccentricity was funny. (A top executive at Foot Locker said, “We think of you guys as gods—until we see your cars.”) But most times it was embarrassing. And potentially damaging. Thus, around Thanksgiving, 1978, I instituted a strict company dress code.*  December 29, 2016 | [315](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA315.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The reaction wasn’t terribly enthusiastic. Corporate bullshit, many grumbled. I was mocked. Mostly I was ignored. To even a casual observer, it became clear that Strasser started dressing worse. When he showed up to work one day in baggy-seated Bermuda shorts, as if he were walking a Geiger counter down the beach, I couldn’t stand by. This was rank insubordination. I intercepted him in the halls and called him out. “You need to wear a coat and tie!” I said. “We’re not a coat-and-tie company!” he shot back. “We are now.” He walked away from me.*  December 29, 2016 | [316](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA316) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Nelson pulled each item from a dirty brown paper bag, which looked as if it also contained his lunch. At first we were in shock. None of us knew what to say. Finally, someone chuckled. Strasser, probably. Then someone haw-hawed. Woodell, maybe. Then the dam burst. Everyone was laughing, rocking back and forth, falling out of their chairs. Nelson saw that he’d goofed, and in a panic he started stuffing the clothes back into the paper bag, which ripped apart, which made everyone laugh harder. I was laughing, too, harder than anyone, but at any moment I felt as if I might start sobbing. Shortly after that day I transferred Nelson to the newly formed production department, where his considerable accounting talents helped him do a great job. Then I quietly shifted Woodell to apparel. He did his typically flawless job, assembling a line that gained immediate attention and respect in the industry. I asked myself why I didn’t just let Woodell do everything. Including my job. Maybe he could fly back east and get the Feds off my back.*  December 29, 2016 | [317](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA317.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And maybe it would cure my burnout. Maybe the cure for any burnout, I thought, is to just work harder*  December 29, 2016 | [320](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA320.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Senator,” I said, “the reason we’ve come to see you today—” He held up his hand. “I know all about your situation. My staff has read Werschkul on American Selling Price, and briefed me on it. What can I do to help?” I stopped, stunned. I turned to Werschkul, whose face was the color of his pink bow tie. We’d spent so much time rehearsing this negotiation, preparing to convince Hatfield of the rightness of our cause, we weren’t ready for the possibility of . . . success. We leaned into each other. In half whispers we talked about different ways Hatfield might help. Werschkul thought he should write a letter to the president of the United States, or maybe the head of customs. I wanted him to pick up the phone. We couldn’t agree. We started to argue. The air conditioner seemed to be laughing at us. Finally, I shushed Werschkul, shushed the air conditioner, turned to Hatfield. “Senator,” I said, “we were not prepared for you to be so obliging today. The truth is, we don’t know what we want. We’ll have to get back to you.” I walked out, not looking back to see if Werschkul was coming.*  December 29, 2016 | [325](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA325) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *People were clamoring to try on . . . ­everything. I had to jump in and help. For a moment I was back in my parents’ living room, measuring feet, fitting runners with the right shoes. It was a ball, a blast, and a timely reminder of why we were in this*  December 29, 2016 | [325](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA325.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’ve given this a lot of thought,” I said, “and I think what we need to do is . . . ­American Selling Price ourselves.” The Buttfaces laughed. Then they stopped laughing and looked at each other. We spent the rest of the weekend kicking it around. Was it possible? Nah, it couldn’t be. Could we? Oh, no way. But . . . maybe? We decided to give it a try. We launched a new shoe, a running shoe with nylon uppers, and called it One Line. It was a knockoff, dirt cheap, with a simple logo, and we manufactured it in Saco, at Hayes’s ancient factory. We priced it low, just above cost. Now customs officials would have to use this “competitor” shoe as a new reference point in deciding our import duty. That was the jab. That was just to get their attention. Then we threw the left hook. We produced a TV commercial telling the story of a little company in Oregon, fighting the big bad government. It opened on a runner doing his lonely road work, as a deep voice extolled the ideals of patriotism, liberty, the American way. And fighting tyranny. It got people pretty fired up. Then we threw the haymaker. On February 29, 1980, we filed a $25 million antitrust suit in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, alleging that our competitors, and assorted rubber companies, through underhanded business practices, had conspired to take us out.*  Nike's final blows against the government, that worked.  December 29, 2016 | [330](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA330.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“Well . . . there might be a way to go public without losing any control,” he said. “What?” “You could issue two classes of stock—class A and class B. The public would get class Bs, which would carry one vote per share. The founders and inner circle, and your convertible debenture holders, would get class As, which would entitle them to name three-­quarters of the board of directors. In other words, you raise enormous sums of money, turbocharge your growth, but ensure that you keep control.” I looked at him, dumbstruck. “Can we really do that?” “It’s not easy. But the New York Times and the Washington Post and a couple of others have done it. I think you can do it.” Maybe it wasn’t satori, or kensho, but it was instant enlightenment. In a flash. The breakthrough I’d been seeking for years. “Chuck,” I said, “that sounds like . . . the answer.”*  December 29, 2016 | [332](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA332) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *She brought it to me for my signature. We looked at each other and of course we were both thinking about the time I’d written that check for $1 million, which I couldn’t cover. Now I was writing a check for $9 million, and there was no way it was going to bounce. I looked at the signature line. “Nine million,” I whispered. I could still remember selling my 1960 MG with racing tires and a twin cam for eleven hundred dollars. Like yesterday. Lead me from the unreal to the real*  December 29, 2016 | [333](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA333) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To get cool, Chinese passengers thought nothing of stripping down to their underwear, and Hayes and Strasser thought this gave them license to do the same. If I live to be two hundred years old, I won’t forget the sight of those leviathans walking up and down the train car in their T-shirts and BVDs. Nor will any Chinese man or woman who was on the train that day*  😂😂  December 29, 2016 | [336](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA336.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *As with all previous meetings, there were several rounds of long speeches, mainly by officials. Hayes was bored during the first round. By the third round he was suicidal. He started playing with the loose threads on the front of his polyester dress shirt. Suddenly he became annoyed with the threads. He took out his lighter. As the deputy minister of foreign trade was hailing us as worthy partners, he stopped and looked up to see that Hayes had set himself on fire. Hayes beat on the flame with his hands, and managed to put it out, but only after ruining the moment, and the speaker’s mojo. It didn’t matter. Just before getting on the plane home we signed deals with two Chinese factories, and officially became the first American shoemaker in twenty-five years to be allowed to do business in China*  😂😂 hilarious hayes  December 29, 2016 | [337](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA337.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It seems wrong to call it “business.” It seems wrong to throw all those hectic days and sleepless nights, all those magnificent triumphs and desperate struggles, under that bland, generic banner: business. What we were doing felt like so much more. Each new day brought fifty new problems, fifty tough decisions that needed to be made, right now, and we were always acutely aware that one rash move, one wrong decision could be the end. The margin for error was forever getting narrower, while the stakes were forever creeping higher—and none of us wavered in the belief that “stakes” didn’t mean “money.” For some, I realize, business is the all-out pursuit of profits, period, full stop, but for us business was no more about making money than being human is about making blood. Yes, the human body needs blood. It needs to manufacture red and white cells and platelets and redistribute them evenly, smoothly, to all the right places, on time, or else. But that day-to-day business of the human body isn’t our mission as human beings. It’s a basic process that enables our higher aims, and life always strives to transcend the basic processes of living—and at some point in the late 1970s, I did, too. I redefined winning, expanded it beyond my original definition of not losing, of merely staying alive. That was no longer enough to sustain me, or my company. We wanted, as all great businesses do, to create, to contribute, and we dared to say so aloud. When you make something, when you improve something, when you deliver something, when you add some new thing or service to the lives of strangers, making them happier, or healthier, or safer, or better, and when you do it all crisply and efficiently, smartly, the way everything should be done but so seldom is—you’re participating more fully in the whole grand human drama. More than simply alive, you’re helping others to live more fully, and if that’s business, all right, call me a businessman. Maybe it will grow on me.*  One of the best sections - about business and startups  December 29, 2016 | [337](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA337.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *the process of going public was in full swing. Big choices needed to be made. Especially: who was going to manage the offering. Public offerings don’t always succeed. On the contrary, when mismanaged, they turn into train wrecks. So this was a critical decision right out of the blocks. Chuck, having worked at Kuhn, Loeb, still had strong relationships with their people, and thought they’d be best. We interviewed four or five other firms but in the end decided to go with Chuck’s instincts. He hadn’t steered us wrong yet. Next we had to create a prospectus. It took fifty drafts, at least, to get it looking and sounding the way we wanted. Finally, at the tail end of summer, we handed all our paperwork to the Securities and Exchange Commission, and at the start of September we released the formal announcement. Nike will be creating 20 million shares of class A stock and 30 million shares of class B. The price of the stock, we told the world, would be somewhere between eighteen and twenty-two dollars a share. TBD. Of 50 million shares, total, almost 30 million would be held in reserve, and about 2 million class Bs would be sold to the public. Of the roughly 17 million remaining class A shares, the preexisting shareholders, or insiders, meaning me, Bowerman, the debenture holders, and the Buttfaces, would own 56 percent*  December 30, 2016 | [338](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA338.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The cowards never started and the weak died along the way. That leaves us, ladies and gentlemen. Us.*  December 30, 2016 | [340](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA340.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Johnson and I especially. A strange sentimentality was stealing over us. On the airplanes, in the hotel bars, we talked about our salad days. His endless letters. Please send encouraging words. My silence. We talked about the name Nike coming to him in a dream. We talked about Stretch, and Giampietro, and the Marlboro Man, and all the different times I’d jerked him back and forth across the country. We talked about the day he was almost strung up by his Exeter employees, when their paychecks had bounced. “After all that,” Johnson said one day in the back of a town car, headed to the next meeting, “and now we’re the toasts of Wall Street.” I looked at him. Things do change. But he hadn’t. He now reached into his bag, took out a book, and began to read.*  Johnson and Phil  December 30, 2016 | [341](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA341) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *THE NEXT MORNING Hayes and I drove downtown to our law firm. A clerk showed us into the senior partner’s office. A paralegal dialed Kuhn, Loeb in New York, then clicked a button on a speaker in the middle of the big walnut desk. Hayes and I stared at the speaker. Disembodied voices filled the room. One of the voices grew louder, clearer. “Gentlemen . . . good morning.” “Good morning,” we said. The loud voice took the lead. It gave a long and careful explanation of Kuhn, Loeb’s reasoning on the stock price, which was jabberwocky. And so, the loud voice said, we can’t go any higher than twenty-one dollars. “No,” I said. “Our number is twenty-two.” We heard the other voices murmuring. They came up to twenty-­one-fifty. “I’m afraid,” said the loud voice, “that’s our final offer.” “Gentlemen, twenty-two is our number.” Hayes stared at me. I stared at the speaker. Cracking silence. We could hear heavy breaths, pops, scrapes. Papers being shuffled. I closed my eyes and let all that white noise wash over me. I relived every negotiation in my life to that point. So, Dad, you remember that Crazy Idea I had at Stanford . . . ? Gentlemen, I represent Blue Ribbon Sports of Portland, Oregon. You see, Dot, I love Penny. And Penny loves me. And if things continue in this vein, I see us building a life together. “I’m sorry,” the loud voice said angrily. “We’ll have to call you back.” Click. We sat. We said nothing. I took long deep breaths. The clerk’s face slowly melted. Five minutes passed. Fifteen minutes. Sweat ran down Hayes’s forehead and neck. The phone rang. The clerk looked at us, to make sure we were ready. We nodded. He pressed the button on the speaker. “Gentlemen,” the loud voice said. “We have a deal. We’ll send it out to market this Friday.”*  December 30, 2016 | [342](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA342.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I turned out the light and went and sat in front of the TV with Penny. Neither of us was really watching. She was reading a book and I was doing calculations in my head. By this time next week Bowerman would be worth $9 million. Cale—$6.6 million. Woodell, Johnson, Hayes, Strasser—each about $6 million. Fantasy numbers. Numbers that meant nothing. I never knew that numbers could mean so much, and so little, at the same time. “Bed?” Penny said. I nodded. I went around the house, turning off lights, checking doors. Then I joined her. For a long time we lay in the dark. It wasn’t over. Far from it. The first part, I told myself, is behind us. But it’s only the first part. I asked myself: What are you feeling? It wasn’t joy. It wasn’t relief. If I felt anything, it was . . . regret? Good God, I thought. Yes. Regret. Because I honestly wished I could do it all over again*  December 30, 2016 | [343](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA343.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *The world was the same as it had been the day before, as it had always been. Nothing had changed, least of all me. And yet I was worth $178 million. I showered, ate breakfast, drove to work. I was at my desk before anyone else.*  December 30, 2016 | [344](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA344.w.0.0.0.2) | |

## *Night*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I need only look up at the blue sky or the white ceiling (any blank screen will do) and I see myself, dangling my bare feet over his truck bed, feeling the fresh green wind on my face, licking glaze off a warm doughnut. Could I have risked as much, dared as much, walked the razor’s edge of entrepreneurship between safety and catastrophe, without the early foundation of that feeling, that bliss of safety and contentment? I don’t think so*  December 30, 2016 | [347](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA347.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Amid the campus buildings, along the campus walkways, there are enormous banners: action photos of the super athletes, the legends and giants and titans who’ve elevated Nike to something more than a brand. Jordan. Kobe. Tiger. Again, I can’t help but think of my trip around the world. The River Jordan. Mystical Kobe, Japan. That first meeting at Onitsuka, pleading with the executives for the right to sell Tigers . . . Can this all be a coincidence? I think of the countless Nike offices around the world. At each one, no matter the country, the phone number ends in 6453, which spells out Nike on the keypad. But, by pure chance, from right to left it also spells out Pre’s best time in the mile, to the tenth of a second: 3:54.6. I say by pure chance, but is it really? Am I allowed to think that some coincidences are more than coincidental? Can I be forgiven for thinking, or hoping, that the universe, or some guiding daemon, has been nudging me, whispering to me? Or else just playing with me? Can it really be nothing but a fluke of geography that the oldest shoes ever discovered are a pair of nine-thousand-year-old sandals . . . salvaged from a cave in Oregon? Is there nothing to the fact that the sandals were discovered in 1938, the year I was born?*  December 30, 2016 | [348](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA348) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I ALWAYS FEEL a thrill, a shot of adrenaline, when I drive through the intersection of the campus’s two main streets, each named after a Nike Founding Father. All day, every day, the security guard at the front gate gives visitors the same directions. What you wanna do is take Bowerman Drive all the way up to Del Hayes Way . . . I also take great pleasure in strolling past the oasis at the center of campus, the Nissho Iwai Japanese Gardens.*  December 30, 2016 | [348](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA348.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *“And Nike was born in 1972.” “Well. Born—? Yes. I suppose.” “Right. So I went to my jeweler and had them find a Rolex watch from 1972.” He hands me the watch. It’s engraved: With thanks for taking a chance on me.*  December 30, 2016 | [349](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA349.w.0.0.0.2) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *To study the self is to forget the self. Mi casa, su casa. Oneness—in some way, shape, or form, it’s what every person I’ve ever met has been seeking.*  December 30, 2016 | [354](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA354) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Strasser passed suddenly, too. Heart attack, 1993. He was so young, it was a tragedy, all the more so because it came after we’d had a falling out. Strasser had been instrumental in signing Jordan, in building up the Jordan brand and wrapping it around Rudy’s air soles. Air Jordan changed Nike, took us to the next level, and the next, but it changed Strasser, too. He felt that he should no longer be taking orders from anyone, including me. Especially me. We clashed, too many times, and he quit. It might have been okay if he’d just quit. But he went to work for Adidas. An intolerable betrayal. I never forgave him. (Though I did recently—happily, proudly—hire his daughter, Avery. Twenty-two years old, she works in Special Events, and she’s said to be thriving. It’s a blessing and a joy to see her name in the company directory.) I wish Strasser and I had patched things up before he died, but I don’t know that it was possible. We were both born to compete, and we were both bad at forgiving. For both of us, betrayal was extra potent kryptonite.*  December 30, 2016 | [354](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA354.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Of course, there will always be the question of wages. The salary of a Third World factory worker seems impossibly low to Americans, and I understand. Still, we have to operate within the limits and structures of each country, each economy; we can’t simply pay whatever we wish to pay. In one country, which shall be nameless, when we tried to raise wages, we found ourselves called on the carpet, summoned to the office of a top government official and ordered to stop. We were disrupting the nation’s entire economic system, he said. It’s simply not right, he insisted, or feasible, that a shoe worker makes more than a medical doctor. Change never comes as fast as we want it.*  About variation in incomes across countries...  December 30, 2016 | [357](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA357.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I said simply: “How did you do it?” I thought I saw the corners of his mouth flicker. A smile? Maybe? He thought. And thought. “I was,” he said, “a professor of the jungle.*  December 30, 2016 | [358](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA358.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I complained about my business. Even after going public, there were so many problems. “We have so much opportunity, but we’re having a terrible time getting managers who can seize those opportunities. We try people from the outside, but they fail, because our culture is so different.” Mr. Hayami nodded. “See those bamboo trees up there?” he asked. “Yes.” “Next year . . . when you come . . . they will be one foot higher.” I stared. I understood. When I returned to Oregon I tried hard to cultivate and grow the management team we had, slowly, with more patience, with an eye toward more training and more long-term planning. I took the wider, longer view. It worked. The next time I saw Hayami, I told him. He merely nodded, once, hai, and looked off.*  December 30, 2016 | [359](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA359.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It’s always a happy occasion to be walking a campus, but also bracing, because while I find students today much smarter and more competent than in my time, I also find them far more pessimistic. Occasionally they ask in dismay: “Where is the U.S. going? Where is the world going?” Or: “Where are the new entrepreneurs?” Or: “Are we doomed as a society to a worse future for our children?” I tell them about the devastated Japan I saw in 1962. I tell them about the rubble and ruins that somehow gave birth to wise men like Hayami and Ito and Sumeragi. I tell them about the untapped resources, natural and human, that the world has at its disposal, the abundant ways and means to solve its many crises. All we have to do, I tell the students, is work and study, study and work, hard as we can. Put another way: We must all be professors of the jungle.*  December 30, 2016 | [360](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA360.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *He’s one of the best storytellers in the history of Nike. My favorite, naturally, is the one about the day we went public. He sat his parents down and told them the news. “What does that mean?” they whispered. “It means your original eight-thousand-dollar loan to Phil is worth $1.6 million.” They looked at each other, looked at Woodell. “I don’t understand,” his mother said. If you can’t trust the company your son works for, who can you trust?*  December 30, 2016 | [361](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA361.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *WHEN IT CAME rolling in, the money affected us all. Not much, and not for long, because none of us was ever driven by money. But that’s the nature of money. Whether you have it or not, whether you want it or not, whether you like it or not, it will try to define your days. Our task as human beings is not to let it.*  December 30, 2016 | [362](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA362.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *On a plaque next to the entrance will go an inscription: Because mothers are our first coaches*  December 30, 2016 | [363](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA363) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Whenever I go back to Eugene, and walk the campus, I think of her. Whenever I stand outside Hayward Field, I think of the silent race she ran. I think of all the many races that each of us have run. I lean against the fence and look at the track and listen to the wind, thinking of Bowerman with his string tie blowing behind him. I think of Pre, God love him. Turning, looking over my shoulder, my heart leaps. Across the street stands the William Knight Law School. A very serious-looking edifice. No one ever jackasses around in there.*  December 30, 2016 | [363](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA363.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *It might be nice to tell the story of Nike. Everyone else has told the story, or tried to, but they always get half the facts, if that, and none of the spirit. Or vice versa. I might start the story, or end it, with regrets. The hundreds—maybe thousands—of bad decisions. I’m the guy who said Magic Johnson was “a player without a position, who’ll never make it in the NBA.” I’m the guy who tabbed Ryan Leaf as a better NFL quarterback than Peyton Manning*  December 30, 2016 | [363](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA363.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Of course, above all, I regret not spending more time with my sons. Maybe, if I had, I could’ve solved the encrypted code of Matthew Knight. And yet I know that this regret clashes with my secret regret—­that I can’t do it all over again.*  December 30, 2016 | [364](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA364) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *God, how I wish I could relive the whole thing. Short of that, I’d like to share the experience, the ups and downs, so that some young man or woman, somewhere, going through the same trials and ordeals, might be inspired or comforted. Or warned. Some young entrepreneur, maybe, some athlete or painter or novelist, might press on. It’s all the same drive. The same dream. It would be nice to help them avoid the typical discouragements. I’d tell them to hit pause, think long and hard about how they want to spend their time, and with whom they want to spend it for the next forty years.*  December 30, 2016 | [364](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA364.w.0.0.0.1) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d tell men and women in their midtwenties not to settle for a job or a profession or even a career. Seek a calling. Even if you don’t know what that means, seek it. If you’re following your calling, the fatigue will be easier to bear, the disappointments will be fuel, the highs will be like nothing you’ve ever felt. I’d like to warn the best of them, the iconoclasts, the innovators, the rebels, that they will always have a bull’s-eye on their backs. The better they get, the bigger the bull’s-eye. It’s not one man’s opinion; it’s a law of nature.*  December 30, 2016 | [364](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA364.w.0.0.0.3) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’d like to remind them that America isn’t the entrepreneurial Shangri-La people think. Free enterprise always irritates the kinds of trolls who live to block, to thwart, to say no, sorry, no. And it’s always been this way. Entrepreneurs have always been outgunned, outnumbered. They’ve always fought uphill, and the hill has never been steeper. America is becoming less entrepreneurial, not more. A Harvard Business School study recently ranked all the countries of the world in terms of their entrepreneurial spirit. America ranked behind Peru.*  December 30, 2016 | [364](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA364.w.0.0.0.4) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *And those who urge entrepreneurs to never give up? Charlatans. Sometimes you have to give up. Sometimes knowing when to give up, when to try something else, is genius. Giving up doesn’t mean stopping. Don’t ever stop*  December 30, 2016 | [365](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA365) | |

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *Luck plays a big role. Yes, I’d like to publicly acknowledge the power of luck. Athletes get lucky, poets get lucky, businesses get lucky. Hard work is critical, a good team is essential, brains and determination are invaluable, but luck may decide the outcome. Some people might not call it luck. They might call it Tao, or Logos, or Jñāna, or Dharma. Or Spirit. Or God. Put it this way. The harder you work, the better your Tao. And since no one has ever adequately defined Tao, I now try to go regularly to mass. I would tell them: Have faith in yourself, but also have faith in faith. Not faith as others define it. Faith as you define it. Faith as faith defines itself in your heart. In what format do I want to say all this? A memoir? No, not a memoir. I can’t imagine how it could all fit into one unified narrative.*  December 30, 2016 | [365](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA365.w.0.0.0.1) | |

## *Acknowledgments*

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| |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | |  | *I’ve spent a fair portion of my life in debt. As a young entrepreneur I became distressingly familiar with that feeling of going to sleep each night, waking up each day, owing many people a sum far greater than I could repay. Nothing, however, has made me feel quite so indebted as the writing of this book.*  December 30, 2016 | [367](http://play.google.com/books/reader?printsec=frontcover&output=reader&id=r4V4CgAAAEAJ&source=books-notes-export&pg=GBS.PA367.w.0.0.0.0.1) | |