

The JOURNEY

By Mary Oliver

One day you finally knew
what you had to do, and began,
though the voices around you
kept shouting
their bad advice--
though the whole house
began to tremble
and you felt the old tug
at your ankles.
"Mend my life!"
each voice cried.
But you didn't stop.
You knew what you had to do,
though the wind pried
with its stiff fingers
at the very foundations,
though their melancholy
was terrible.
It was already late
enough, and a wild night,
and the road full of fallen
branches and stones.
But little by little,
as you left their voices behind,
the stars began to burn
through the sheets of clouds,
and there was a new voice
which you slowly
recognized as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world,
determined to do
the only thing you could do--
determined to save
the only life you could save.



What Is a Hero?

By Michael Gonchar / The New York Times
August 25, 2015

1 We often talk about soldiers, firefighters and fictional characters with supernatural powers as heroes. Recently, the news media have used the term to describe three Americans who helped foil an attack on a speeding train in Europe.

2 But what really is a hero? Does heroism always involve physical strength, or are there other qualities that define being a hero?

3 In “Americans Resist Hero Label After Foiling Train Attack,” Adam Nossiter writes:

4 PARIS — Looking awed by the sumptuous gilded surroundings of the United States ambassador’s residence here, the three young American men who thwarted an attack on a Paris-bound express train appeared at a news conference on Sunday, brushing aside suggestions that they were heroes.

5 Airman First Class Spencer Stone; Alek Skarlatos, a specialist in the Oregon National Guard; and Anthony Sadler, a friend of theirs, sat side by side, soberly recounting how a European vacation swiftly turned into something else. In their telling, the dramatic moments in the railway car could have been a particularly lively finish to an otherwise great night out: no heroics, and nothing dramatic about it.

6 Asked what had motivated him to confront a heavily armed man, Mr. Stone, his arm in a sling and one eye bruised from the struggle with the young Moroccan suspect, said simply, “To survive.”

7 There was no mistaking the gunman’s determination, Mr. Stone said. “He seemed like he was ready to fight to the end, and so were we,” he told reporters.

8 He was the first of the Americans to tackle the suspect, Ayoub El Khazzani, and he spoke first, blurting out the story as if he were eager to get it over with.

9 “I kind of woke up from the middle of a deep sleep,” Mr. Stone said. “I turned around and I saw he had an AK-47 and it looked like” the weapon “wasn’t working, and he was trying to charge his weapon, and Alek just hit on my shoulder and said, ‘Let’s go,’ ” Mr. Stone said. “And I went down, tackled him and put him on the ground, and Alek came up and grabbed the thing out of his hand.”

10 But the trouble was not over. “It seemed like he just kept pulling more weapons,” Mr. Stone said. Those included a box cutter with which he sliced up the young airman’s hand.

11 The three held Mr. Khazzani and punched him until he fell unconscious. “The guy had a lot of ammo,” Mr. Skarlatos said.

12 Right to the end of the brief encounter with reporters here, the men remained modest. “It was just, mostly, survival,” Mr. Skarlatos said.

13 “Hiding and sitting back is not going to do anything,” Mr. Sadler said.

Teen Brother Takes Younger Sister to Father-Daughter Dance

By Rachel Murphy / Care.com



- 1** The high school boy took his 6-year-old sister to her school's dad dance after their father left.
- 2** I'm calling it now. Brother of The Year goes to 17-year-old Mohammad Hasher after he took his younger sister to her school dance in place of his absent father.
- 3** Hasher's parents divorced six months ago, and the Michigan native told us he hasn't heard from his dad since. So when his 6-year-old sister, Noor Hasher, came home with an invitation to her school's father/daughter dance, Hasher knew he had to step up.
- 4** "At first, she was sad she couldn't go because our dad isn't around," Hasher, a senior at Portage Northern High School, told Care.com. "It's important because she needs to know she has someone who cares for her and is there for her. I want to be that person for her."
- 5** Since his parents divorced, Hasher said that life has been stressful at times and that the situation "feels like a lot of responsibility but I'm glad I get to be there for her."
- 6** With the weight of his father's absence weighing heavily on him, Hasher decided to have some fun and take his little sister shopping at Target so she could find her perfect dress. He told us, "she knew what she wanted" and picked up a sequined black dress to dance the night away in.
- 7** When the day of the dance arrived, the sweet sibling duo took to the dance floor, and Hasher even brought home first place at the event's dad dance contest.
- 8** Hasher told us it meant a lot to be able to take his little sister to the dance.
- 9** "I know she wanted to be able to participate in going to the dance, so I'm glad I was able to do that for her."
- 10** Afterward, Hasher took to Twitter to talk about their special sibling bond.
- 11** "Got to take my baby sister to her first daddy daughter dance the other night. Sorry you don't have a dad but I'll always be there for you," the loving brother wrote on Twitter.
- 12** We know it's not always easy to get along with your sibling but this story really warms our hearts.