

Thoughts on Coming Apart and the Coming Great Reset



**Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer**

Kit Webster

Themes and Theses

Why I'm Contemplating Out Loud

(Initially formulated in the early 90s, following decades of reading history, philosophy, religion, psychology and a lot of contemplation, particularly on the subject of cycles. In the end, this is a relatively straightforward story about human nature and of history rhyming.)

The US will enter a period of crisis in the early 2000s. In the late 90s, I incorporated Strauss' and Howe's terminology of the Fourth Turning (without incorporating their generations paradigm) and agreed with Howe that the end stage of the crisis began with the Great Financial Crisis and would last into the early 2030s. We are now at the beginning of the end stage of the crisis.

The crisis will be serious and could be existential.

Internal strife will increase, up to and including secession and civil war. International conflicts will increase as the vacuum created by the weakening of the US is filled by other players.

There will be many threads to the crisis, but the primary thread will be debt, deficits and entitlements. Other factors include, eg, demographics, a loss of meaning and myth and a loss of self-discipline.

Politics will move leftward as citizens look for some refuge from the chaos. The US will become increasingly susceptible to a (man) on a white horse, who can come from either the left or the right.

Inflation, as the most likely way to address debt since austerity is not politically acceptable, will significantly lower standards of living, exacerbating the civil crises.

Eventually, the dollar will be inflated away and lose its reserve status. Once the old rot is cleared out, and assuming continuity, there will be the basis for the establishment of a new order.

There will be what Strauss and Howe calls a First Turning . It will be constructed out of the physical infrastructure, wealth, energy sources, thoughts and values in the culture at the time. At this point in time, those components are unknowable. We can anticipate that the next

future will be increasingly chaotic. We can anticipate that there will be destruction, and then reconstruction from some level. We cannot yet anticipate the form of the reconstruction or the level from which it will begin.

(Added in the early 00s) While humans are contributing to global warming, policies implemented to address manmade global warming will create a significant energy crisis, probably toward the end of the Fourth Turning.

(Added around 2020) The loss of faith by our youth in our founding principles means that the new order will at least partially be based on new principles. As yet, I have no visibility as to what those principles might be.

(Added in 2023) The lowering / elimination of standards in education, the judiciary, law enforcement, the military and other segments of our society will create a population unable to adequately comprehend, do or respond to the challenges of democracy and culture.

(Added in 2025) China has won - at least for the next 5-10 years. The US is dependent on China for the materials it uses to create defense items. We literally cannot fight China without China's help. China's industrial base is impressive; the US has to rebuild. China is out-innovating the US. China is turning out more engineers and scientists than the US by far. This does not mean that China does not face challenges - demographics perhaps being its primary challenge. The US military remains stronger than China's, but in an age of drone warfare, that statement means less than it has historically. The US still has bargaining chips and will need to use them to maintain any kind of status quo.

(Added in 2025) AI has the potential to profoundly affect human culture. However, AI faces several significant hurdles, including the demand for massive amounts of electricity, which may not be available, and a cultural revolt against its existence. Since it could be existential, and since China is pursuing it, the US has no alternative, at least in the short term.

Coming To America

January 16, 2026

Quotes to Contemplate

The US Republic is falling, but the empire is rising - from X Revolution, like death and style, is the removal of rubbish, the surgery of the superfluous; it comes when many things are ready to die. - Will Durant

Summary of Primary Thoughts To Contemplate In This Issue

Life's not fair.

We have lived in one, brief, shining moment.

There are no adults to be found in politics - anywhere.

Camelot

I see myself as a hard-eyed realist who looks at reality without blinking. And I cry at "Run, boy, oh run, my boy," every time Richard Harris says it at the end of the movie, Camelot, as I watch a dream that flourished for one brief shining moment come to an end because of the necessities of human nature.

Both the noble, good Lancelot and the evil Mordred, Arthur's son, are the enemies and destroyers of the dream.

Deep down inside, I am an idealist who would vastly prefer a different world from the one we inherited.

At the same time, I am determined to see the world as it is and I need to live in that world.

America is ... was ... an idea. That's what made it special, exceptional. Not because it was better, but because it aspired to better things, even while necessarily falling short. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness - these things do not occur in nature - they have to be conjured into existence and nurtured and protected every day.

That exceptional America has been coming to an end for a long time.

Humans just must be human, and there we are.

I was motivated to write this by an entry on X:

"Trump isn't in process of rearranging the world's balance of power. And he's not ceding American hegemony. What he's doing is removing a veil of altruism that was sold as Pax Americana & in doing so revealing a reality that already existed."

If not Trump, it would have been somebody else.

But that "veil of altruism" was unique and wonderful. I am happy and honored to have been able to have experienced some of it and lived under it. To have been free to think its thoughts. I am devastated to see its destruction.

I hope there is a Tom of Warwick to carry the dream into another age.

There is a First Turning out there, if Tom can make it.

But first, we have to face the "reality that already existed."

Lancelot and Mordred are still out there.

Excalibur did break.

Camelot did end.

Arthur was killed by Mordred.

From X - "The U.S. from 1946–2009 was on easy mode. Most humans in history were never dealt a hand like that. We mistook an anomaly for the baseline."

The Minnesota Shooting

Oh, boy.

Let me declare my priors -

Don't care for Trump much at all.

I think Biden's immigration policy was an abomination - for a number of reasons, not the least of which was that there was going to be a backlash.

In theory, I support the deportation of illegal aliens.

In practice, boy is it complicated, particularly for those who we *have allowed* to live here for years - we have been complicit in their illegality.

I support managing the border and an intelligent immigration policy. We do not have one of the later.

I do not like many of ICE's methods, at all. Some of it is just pure thuggery. I literally hate some of what they are doing.

I have looked at all the video of the incident.

I think the shooting was both legal and wrong - much like the shooting of Ashli Babbitt.

I don't care about who the woman was or why she was there, except that I have not seen any indications of hostility or malice. She was a classic, outraged liberal white woman - basically a stereotype. She and her wife were exercising poor judgement, blocking the street in the first place, and particularly when the wife told her to "drive." Unfortunately, the officer was a stereotype of an unthinking, reactive ICE agent, also exercising poor judgement.

Most politicians on both sides have simply been irresponsible. In particular, Trump's continuing assertions that the officer was "run over" is absurd. The partisan rushes to judgement are destructive. Walz continues to be a piece of work and Omar continues to be Omar.

**No adults anywhere to be found.
A tragedy, augmented by partisan idiots.**

Coming To America

**Spoiler alert - shit happens and life's not fair.
Actually, life's massively, structurally not fair and your existence is the essence of that lack of fairness.
Therefore, I will come to no meaningful conclusion on illegal immigration.
But, I want to take a quick look at it from the immigrant's point of view.
We are worried about wealth and income inequality in the US, but we spend little to no time thinking about income inequality among countries. You, my friend, no matter who you are, are in the dreaded 1%. You won the lottery by picking your parents carefully. You could have just as easily wound up in Zimbabwe.
Freedom and justice are all right and good, but if you are starving and have no opportunity and can go to a country where they will give you food, education and medicine and, at times, shelter, for free, and where you can earn \$2,000 a month where jobs are plentiful, what's the problem?
Poverty in the US is literally heaven for most of the rest of the world.
Let's frame that for a second.
Our illegal immigrants primarily come from Mexico, El Salvador, Guatemala, India and Honduras. Following are the average salaries in each of those countries:**

US	\$89,947
Mexico	13,967
Guatemala	6,478
El Salvador	5,744
Honduras	3,637
India	2,818

So, we need to help everyone out, right?

Absolutely.

Let's think about that for a minute.

We have the same problem here that the proponents of taxing the rich in the US have - the problem is very, very large. If we were able to take our wealth and distribute it equally to every person on Earth, they would each get maybe \$20,000, one time, and our economy would be unable to produce much going forward - we would be as poor as the rest of the world. (This, by the way, is also the Achilles' heel of socialism.)

So, let's be a little pregnant. We are a nation of immigrants after all

That's a discussion for another day.

I want to look at this from the immigrant's perspective.

Essentially all immigration is economic or politically driven by oppression. Freedom is nice, and freedom may actually provide part of the foundations of economic performance and political stability. But, in general, most of today's immigration, legal and illegal, is driven by economic opportunity as opposed to idealism.

As Al put it, "The consistent through-line: people move toward economic opportunity and away from persecution, poverty, or instability."

As Maslow put it, you need to eat before worrying about self-actualization.

So, you are a poor peasant in Guatemala or in Syria. Your life is miserable.

(Overgeneralizing and oversimplifying as usual) You can go to a country that will give you free stuff - it varies by location, but in California and New York City you can get free food, free medical care, free schooling and sometimes free housing. That is beyond miraculous.

You are willing to travel miles, subject to crime, rape, abuse, the weather, the cost of the Coyote, (the person who promises to get you there), death, to get to the promised land.

The teaming masses are not so much yearning to be free as they want to survive and have a modicum of prosperity.

Here's Claude:

Understanding Poverty as a Migration Driver

The poverty that motivates migration isn't just about absolute deprivation—it's about the gap between current circumstances and perceived possibilities elsewhere, combined with the capacity to actually move.

The Poverty-Migration Paradox

Counterintuitively, the very poorest often don't migrate internationally.

Migration requires resources: funds for travel, smugglers, or visas; information networks; physical capacity for arduous journeys; and enough slack to take risks. Extreme poverty traps people in place. Migration tends to peak among those with some means but limited opportunity—people who can see a better life is possible and can scrape together resources to pursue it. This is why development economists observe that rising incomes in poor countries initially increase emigration before eventually reducing it.

What "Poverty" Means in Migration Decisions

The poverty motivating migration is multidimensional:

Economic desperation — Not just low income, but lack of any pathway forward. A farmer whose land no longer produces due to climate shifts. A young graduate in a country with 40% youth unemployment. Someone whose savings were wiped out by currency collapse or conflict.

Relative deprivation — Awareness of how others live creates powerful motivation. Smartphones and social media have made global inequality viscerally visible. Someone earning \$5/day knows people elsewhere earn that in minutes.

Structural hopelessness — Corruption, weak institutions, or discrimination that blocks advancement regardless of effort. When merit doesn't matter, exit becomes attractive.

Security poverty — Violence, persecution, or state failure that makes daily life precarious. This blurs the line between economic migrant and refugee.

Concrete Reference Points

To grasp the calculus: imagine earning \$200-400/month with no realistic prospect of improvement, knowing that cleaning toilets in a wealthy country pays \$2,000+. The math overwhelms almost every other consideration—family separation, legal risk, dangerous journeys, discrimination upon arrival.

(Kit) This is not the entire story, of course. Students want a better education, which they can get in the US. If you can get a visa, you can get a very well paying job. If you are a scientist, you get to work with the best minds and the best equipment.

But I am focusing on illegals here. No skills, no prospects, will likely be a drag on the economy. They compete for jobs and drive up the cost of housing. While statistically they commit fewer crimes than natives, those crimes would not have been committed if they were not here.

Bottom line, there are no reasons, other than humanitarian reasons, to allow an illegal alien in. We can regulate the types and numbers of legal aliens that we want or need - and we do need them - another topic for another time. (There are Democrat-political types who support illegals because they will likely vote Democrat, but that is too cynical for this article. And, yes, it is legal for illegals to vote in some elections, amazing as that sounds.)

Between guilt and natural humanitarian instincts, we do have sympathy for illegals.

When you allow millions of illegals in and allow them to establish lives, you create an irresolvable problem.

And, they really are starving before they get here, you know.

And there we are.

Shit happens.

Life's not fair.

There are no solutions - only endless compromises and half measures.

Markets

Updated charts

> Hanging in there.

So, You Say You Want A Revolution?

> Trump seems to be determined to directly interfere in all parts of life. He is proposing a 10% cap on credit card interest for a year. Can't wait to see what's next.

This is very political, but in a logical world, the primary result of doing this would be a reduction in the availability of credit and a reduction or elimination of frequent-flier types of points.

Anyway, here is a good take from X -

"Credit card rates are governed by the National Bank Act, which lets nationally chartered banks charge interest based on the rules of their home state. That's why so much credit card lending runs through places like Delaware and South Dakota. That setup was locked in by the 1978 Supreme Court case *Marquette v. First of Omaha*, which basically said banks can export their home state rate nationwide. A president can't override that by executive order. An executive order could tell agencies like the CFPB, OCC, FDIC, and even the Federal Reserve to study the issue, tighten supervision, or lean on banks through enforcement and exams. But without Congress changing the law, usually by amending the Truth in Lending Act or the National Bank Act itself..a hard 10% cap wouldn't legally stick and would almost certainly get challenged in court. That said, pressure still matters. Banks care deeply about regulatory heat and public optics. When a president is openly calling 20–30% APRs a rip off, regulators start asking questions, headlines turn ugly, and banks start managing risk. You probably don't get a clean 10% cap, but you can see behavior shift at the margins with more promo rates, lower APRs for prime customers, expanded hardship programs,

fee tweaks, or quieter changes meant to avoid looking predatory. So he's basically setting an anchor. A simple number people instantly understand. It reframes the issue from abstract rates or monetary policy to "banks are gouging consumers," which plays well when households are under pressure. More importantly, it signals to banks that this could become real legislation if the economy weakens and Congress feels forced to act. So i believe this is less about the mechanics of law and more about leverage and timing. Credit cards are the most visible consumer pain point. He's planting a flag there early. If Congress moves, he claims the win. If banks preemptively adjust, he still claims success. And if nothing changes, he still owns the narrative. That's the real play."

- > **The United States has repositioned two of its most powerful amphibious assault ships — the USS Iwo Jima and USS San Antonio — to waters just miles north of Cuba. Military experts assess that this deployment signals possible U.S action in Cuba.**
- > **Facing Contempt Threat, Clintons Refuse to Testify in Epstein Inquiry.**
- > **Transgender is on the Supreme Court's docket and several suits by transitioned teens saying they were misled are going to court. This will be a big transgender year.**
- > **Trump says that "any Country doing business with the Islamic Republic of Iran will pay a Tariff of 25% on any and all business being done with the United States of America."**
- > **Trump is coming after Powell. This is not about Powell, it is about intimidating the Fed. Backlash from all quarters, including Republicans.**
- > **At least six federal prosecutors in the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division reportedly resigned after the branch declined to launch**

an investigation into last week's fatal ICE shooting of 37-year-old Renee Good.

> Chagos islanders tell Donald Trump they could name an island after him if he blocks Labour's £30 billion giveaway to Mauritius.

> ExxonMobil, ConocoPhillips, and Chevron all told Trump in their own ways that they won't be committing to spending billions of dollars in Venezuela soon. Exxon was most direct — called VZ "uninvestable" and described the huge lift needed to change that.

> Pippa Malmgren - "The removal of Maduro in Venezuela was not regime change since his own Deputy now rules. Instead, Venezuela was a highly successful theatrical demonstration of American weapons capabilities." (Kit) And about keeping Venezuela out of China's and Russia's hands.

> Trump says Denmark doesn't own Greenland just because they landed some boats there 500 years ago. "We had lots of boats go there also."

> Here it comes - Indiana requested permission from feds to toll Interstate 70 to cross the state due to declining gas tax and other federal revenue.

> One lesson of history is that when you depose a dictator, creating a power vacuum, all hell breaks loose -The U.S. is urging Americans to exit Venezuela immediately, citing reports of armed groups erecting roadblocks as instability escalates across the country.

> China announced the world's largest trade surplus ever last year, despite challenges posed by U.S. tariffs.

> Chinese universities are rising in global rankings as U.S. schools slip.

> U.S. prosecutors are investigating Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell over his testimony last year regarding the central bank's renovation project. Powell said the Justice Department had sent grand jury subpoenas in a statement on Sunday night. "This is about whether the Fed will be able to continue to set interest rates based on evidence and economic conditions—or whether instead monetary policy will be directed by political pressure or intimidation," said Powell.

The Onion  @TheOnion · 23h

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Nicolás Maduro Charged With Felony Oil Possession



The Onion ✨ @TheOnion · 1h

🔗 ...

Archaeologists: D.C. Capitol May Have Once Been Used For Legislating



Archaeologists: D.C. Capitol May Have Once Been Used For ...

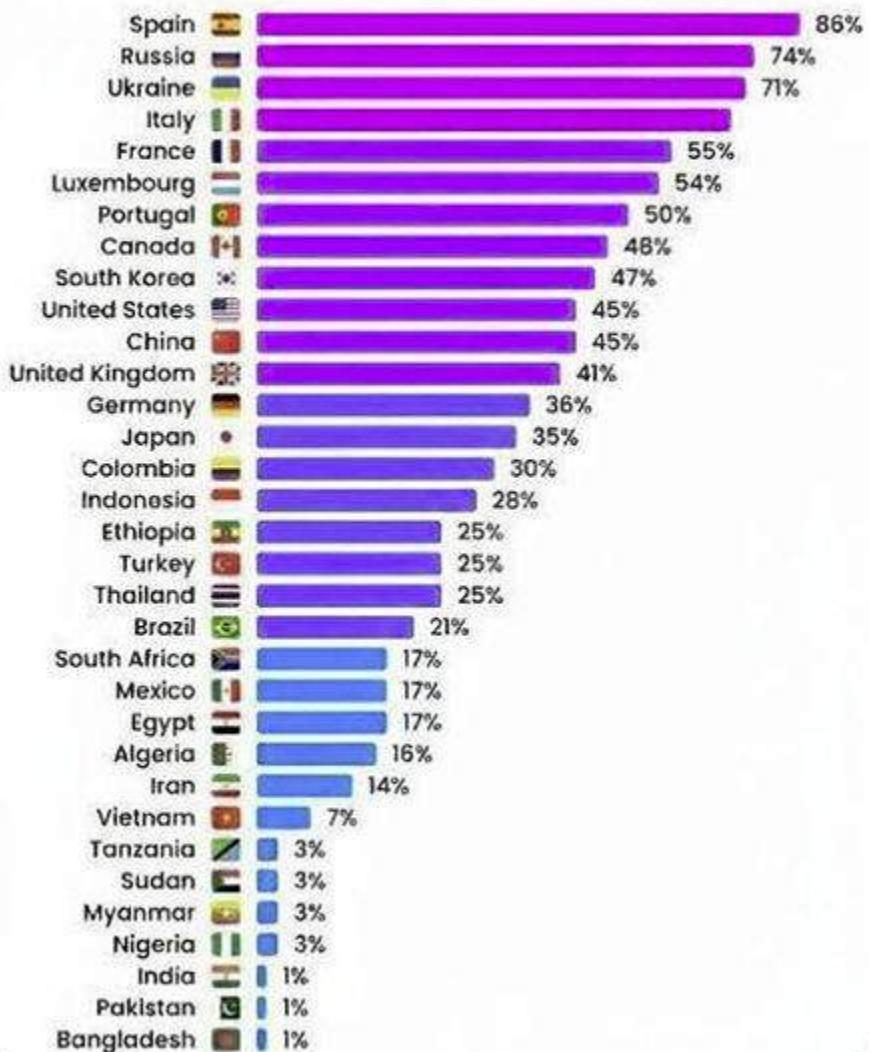
Short Takes

- > **Lawrence of Arabia portraits given trigger warning. National Portrait Gallery flags artwork of the First World War hero as 'sensitive' because he is seen wearing traditional tribal dress.**
- > **British Columbia will end its three-year experiment with decriminalizing possession of small amounts of drugs, with officials in the Canadian province saying that it "hasn't delivered the results" they were hoping for.**
- > **In Australia, nearly five million social media accounts belonging to teenagers have been deactivated or removed since the country barred those younger than 16 from using the services.**

Gallery

Global Divorce Rates

Percent of Marriages Ending in Divorce 2025 update



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Uber taxis attacked with rocks and clubs as licensed taxi drivers demonstrate against app

The protest comes two months after taxi drivers marched through Mexico City proclaiming "Uber out!"

Hardeep Matharu
Thursday 30 July 2015 16:10 BST

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Tech

Lyft and Uber drivers protest over rise of self-driving robotaxis

Waymo is owned by Google's parent company, Alphabet

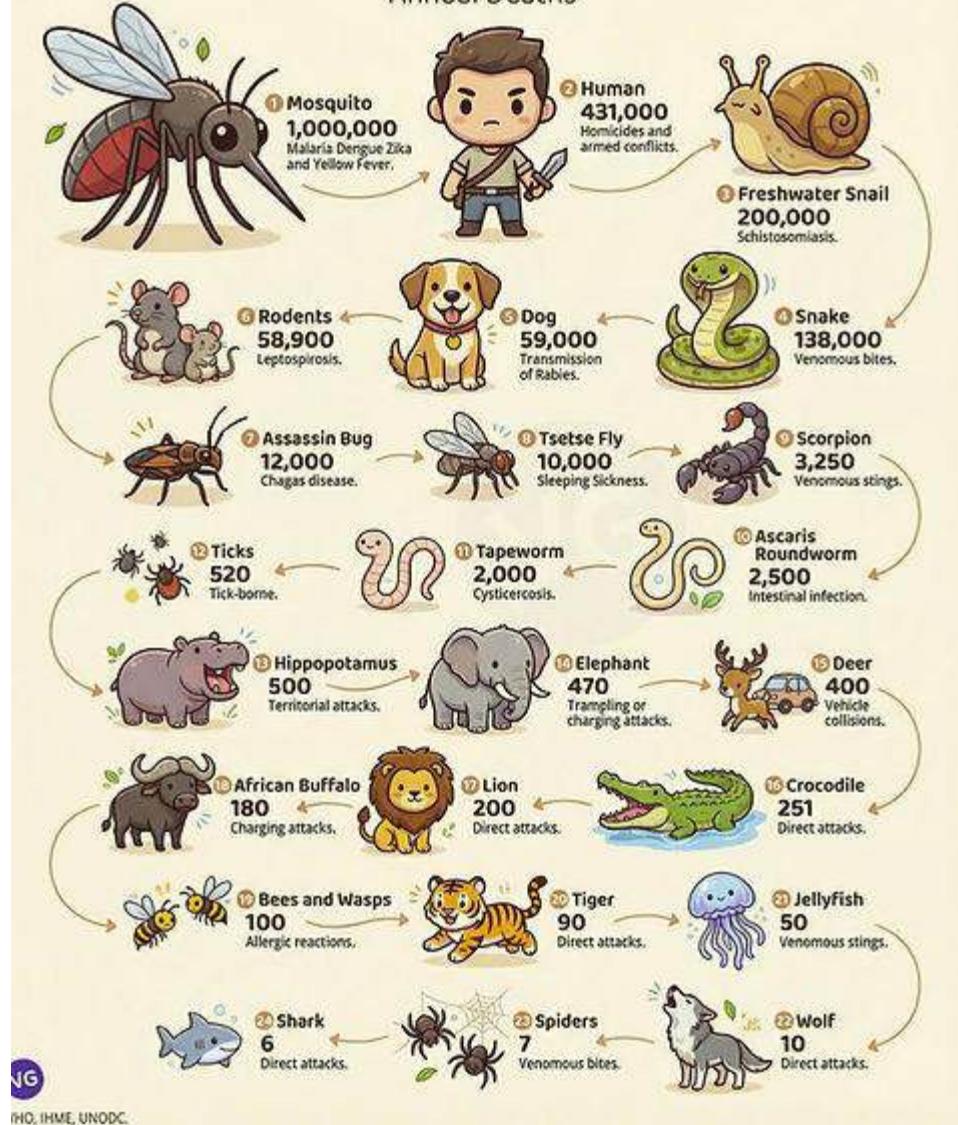
Haven Daley
Saturday 10 January 2026 12:49 GMT



The Most Dangerous Animals in the World

Annual Deaths



WHO, IHME, UNODC.

Miscellany



Camelot, The Final Scene

(Arthur has followed Lancelot and Guinevere and their armies are about to engage in battle. Arthur is alone with his thoughts before the battle.)

Who's there?

Come out, I say!

Forgive me, Your Majesty.

I was searching for the Sergeant of Arms and got lost.

I did not wish to disturb you.

Who are you? Where did you come from?

You ought to be in bed.

Are you a page?

I stowed away on one of the boats, Your Majesty.

I came to fight for the Round Table.

I'm very good with a bow.

And do you intend to kill people with this bow of yours?

Oh, yes, my lord! A great many, I hope!

But supposing that they...

...killed you?

Then I shall be dead, my lord.

But I don't intend to be dead. I intend to be a knight!

A knight?

Yes, my lord. Of the Round Table.

And when did you decide upon this extinct profession?

Was your village once protected by knights?

Did your father serve a knight? Was your mother once saved by a knight?

Oh, no, my lord! I'd never even seen a knight until I stowed away.

I only know of them...

...the stories people tell!

From the stories people tell...

...you wish to become...

...a knight?

Now tell me, what do you think you know of the Knights of the Round Table?

I know everything, milord.

Might for right!

Right for right!

Justice for all!

A Round Table where all knights would sit.

Everything!

Come.

-What's your name? -It is Tom, my lord.

-Where do you come from? -From Warwick, my lord.

Now listen to me, Tom of Warwick.

You won't fight in the battle, understand?

Yes, my lord.

You will run behind the lines and hide until it is over.

And then you will return home...

...to England...

...alive.

To grow up...

...and grow old.

You understand?

You will remember...

...what I, the King, tell you...

...and do as I command.

**Each evening From December to December Before you drift to sleep
Upon your cot Think back on all the tales That you remember Of
Camelot**

Ask every person If he's heard the story And tell it strong and clear If he

has not That once there was A fleeting wisp of glory Called Camelot

Now say it out With love and joy

Yes, Camelot...

...my boy.

Where once it never rained Till after sundown By eight a.m. the morning fog had flown

Don't let it be forgot That once there was a spot For one brief shining moment That was known as

Camelot!

Give me that sword.

Kneel, Tom.

With this sword Excalibur...

...I knight you Sir Tom of Warwick.

And I command you...

...to return home...

...and carry out my orders.

Yes, my lord!

What are you doing? You have a battle to fight.

I have won my battle, Pelly.

And here...

...is my victory!

What we did will be remembered. You'll see.

Now run, Sir Tom.

Behind the lines!

Who was that?

One of what we all are, Pelly.

Less than a drop in the great blue motion of the sunlit sea.

But it seems that some of the drops sparkle!

Some of them do sparkle!

Run, boy!

Oh, run...

...my boy!