
THE
LAST STEP

THRESHOLD 9

The Last Step

As children we believe the world ends where our gaze ends.

The hill beyond the town.

The street beyond the neighborhood.

The horizon beyond the sea.

We think the boundary coincides with what we know.

Then we grow up.

And we discover that the most important edges are not geographical.

They are inner.

For many years I imagined my life as a set of reachable territories.

A job.

A position.

A goal.

A project.

Every time I reached a goal, another one appeared.

Every time I crossed a boundary, I found a new one.

At first it was exciting.

It seemed a form of progress.

Then I began to notice something.

It was not the milestones that transformed me.

It was the passages.

The moment in which I left the known ground and set foot on something I no longer controlled.

That is where the important things happened.

Always there.

Never in safety.

Always on the edge.

The edge is a particular place.

It does not belong to the past.

It does not belong to the future.

It is a thin line where certainties end and possibilities begin.

This is why it is frightening.

And this is why it is precious.

I have crossed many edges in my life.

Some professional.

Some personal.

Some invisible to anyone but me.

The day I left a safety.

The day I accepted a greater responsibility.

The day an illness changed the meaning of time.

The day a loss changed the meaning of love.

Every time the mechanism was the same.

First the fear.

Then the doubt.

Then the step.

Finally the discovery.

As the years passed I learned that almost all the important things live beyond the edge.

Love lives beyond the edge of control.

Trust lives beyond the edge of fear.

Growth lives beyond the edge of habit.

Freedom lives beyond the edge of safety.

And meaning lives beyond the edge of the ego.

This does not mean that the edge is comfortable.

It never is.

No one truly crosses an inner boundary without paying something.

One must leave behind convictions.

Habits.

Identities.

Outdated versions of oneself.

Every transformation requires a detachment.

And every detachment produces a form of pain.

This is why many people prefer to stay.

Not because they are weak.

Because they understand the price.

The problem is that staying also has a price.

A less visible price.

But real.

The price of the missed possibility.

Of the life not lived.

Of the question without an answer.

At times I have asked myself what would have happened if I had chosen prudence more often.

I would probably have made fewer mistakes.

I would have suffered less.

I would have run fewer risks.

But I would have become a different person.

Perhaps more protected.

Certainly less complete.

Because every time we cross an edge, a part of reality is finally shown to us.

Not before.

Not after.

Only during the crossing.

It is the reason why no book can replace an experience.

No advice can replace a choice.

No theory can replace a life lived.

We can prepare.

We can study.

We can listen.

But the passage always falls to us.

And it is a solitary passage.

People can accompany you to the margin.

They can encourage you.

They can support you.

They can love you.

But the last step always belongs to the one who takes it.

In time I began to see the edge not as an obstacle but as an invitation.

An invitation to step out of what I already knew.

To stop defining myself through what I had done.

To leave room for what I could still become.

This awareness changed my relationship with the future.

I stopped considering it a destination.

I began to consider it a territory of exploration.

I did not have to control it.

I had to cross it.

It is an enormous difference.

Because control generates tension.

Exploration generates curiosity.

And curiosity is one of the most elegant forms of courage.

Looking back today, I do not remember all the results.

I do not remember all the numbers.

I do not remember all the victories.

What I remember instead are the edges.

The moments in which I could have turned back and did not.

The moments in which I could have closed the door and I opened it.

The moments in which I could have chosen safety and I chose possibility.

It did not always go well.

Some times I was wrong.

Some times I paid a high price.

But every time I learned something I could not have learned by staying still.

And this is what counts.

At the end of life we are not defined only by what we have built.

We are also defined by the boundaries we had the courage to cross.

Because every human being possesses an edge.

An invisible line beyond which the next version of oneself begins.

Most people observe it from afar.

Some draw near.

Few cross it.

I do not know whether I was brave.

I only know that every time life brought me before an edge, I tried not to draw back.

Because that is where the world becomes

larger.

That is where the human being becomes more true.

That is where the story continues.

Beyond the edge.