
THE LAST
LIGHT ON

THRESHOLD 11

The Last Light On

There is a profound difference between surviving and remaining standing.

Surviving is an instinct.

Remaining standing is a choice.

Many think the two things coincide.

It is not true.

A man can survive a storm and spend the rest of his life lying on his rubble.

Another can cross the same storm, gather what has remained, and decide to continue.

The difference is not in the wound.

The difference is in the position.

For a long time I believed that life was a matter of results.

Then the trials came.

And I discovered that life was above all a matter of endurance.

Moral endurance.

Emotional endurance.

Human endurance.

There are years in which everything seems to cooperate.

People arrive.

Opportunities grow.

Projects develop.

Even the future seems to have a friendly face.

Then other years arrive.

Different years.

Years that do not ask what you desire.

Years that ask what you can bear.

They are the years that do not appear in the photographs.

The years that no one celebrates.

The years in which the main occupation becomes simply continuing.

I learned that every person possesses an imaginary breaking point.

A limit they tell themselves.

"If this happened, I would not make it."

"If I lost that, it would be over."

"If that trial came, I would collapse."

I thought so too.

Then life, with its usual irony, decides to check.

And often we discover a surprising thing.

We are more resistant than we imagined.

Not stronger.

More resistant.

Strength belongs to heroes.

Resistance belongs to ordinary people.

To those who wake up in the morning.

To those who keep working.

To those who face medical appointments.

Bills.

Responsibilities.

Absences.

Fears.

And still find the way to go on.

They are the true specialists of survival.

Over the course of my life I met people who would have had excellent reasons to give up.

They had far more of them than I ever had.

And yet they continued.

Not because they were optimistic.

Not because they were naive.

Not because they ignored the pain.

They continued because someone depended on them.

A daughter.

A son.

A mother.

A husband.

A wife.

A friend.

A community.

Duty, at times, generates a strength that character alone does not possess.

When you do not live only for yourself, you become more resistant.

Not happier.

Not more invulnerable.

More resistant.

There is a point in life where you stop asking yourself:

"Why is this happening to me?"

And you begin to ask yourself:

"What must I do now?"

When this transformation occurs, something changes.

The suffering does not disappear.

But it loses the leading role.

The stage returns to being occupied by action.

By the present.

By the next step.

Observing the path traveled, I realize that the decisive moments were not those of the great triumphs.

They were those of the great endurances.

The days when I was tired.

The days when I was afraid.

The days when no one could have reproached me if I had given up.

And yet, somehow, I continued.

Not always well.

Not always with elegance.

Not always with courage.

But I continued.

Today I distrust perfect narratives.

I distrust men who claim they never had doubts.

I distrust biographies without cracks.

For a simple reason.

They do not exist.

Every human being carries within an archive

of invisible battles.

Some won.

Some lost.

Some still open.

Maturity does not consist in eliminating them.

It consists in learning to live with them.

With time I understood another thing.

Scars are not the opposite of strength.

They are the proof of its existence.

No one gets far without marks.

No one truly crosses time without leaving something along the way.

The question is not whether we will be wounded.

The question is what we will do afterward.

Will we close ourselves off?

Will we become bitter?

Will we turn into judges of the world?

Or will we continue to believe in human beings despite everything?

For me this was the hardest trial.

Not to continue living.

To continue trusting.

To continue hoping.

To continue building.

To continue loving.

It is much simpler to defend oneself than to remain open.

Much simpler to become cynical than to remain available.

Much simpler to retreat than to continue advancing.

And yet the best life I have known has always been on the opposite side of fear.

Perhaps this is the authentic meaning of remaining standing.

Not being invulnerable.

Not being invincible.

Not being perfect.

But refusing to allow the wounds to decide who we will become.

Looking back I do not see a man who avoided the storms.

I see a man who crossed them.

Some well.

Some badly.

Some leaving pieces of himself inside them.

But crossing them.

In the end, I believe that every existence is judged by a single question.

Not how high you climbed.

Not how much you possessed.

Not how much you were celebrated.

But what remained when everything else was taken away.

I know my answer.

It is not a heroic answer.

It is not an extraordinary answer.

It is a human answer.

After the losses.

After the errors.

After the illnesses.

After the separations.

After the fears.

After time.

I am still here.

Still standing.