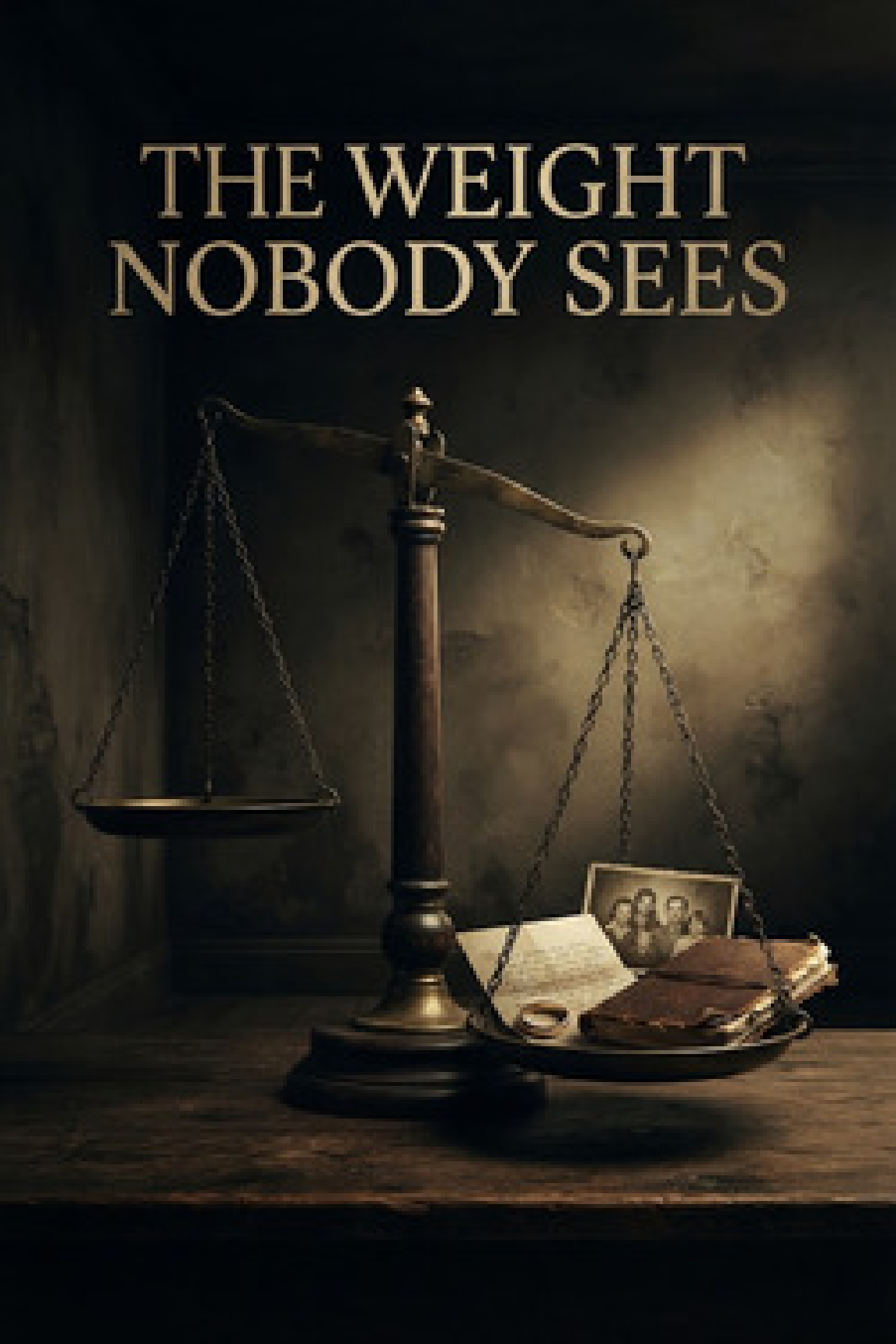
THE WEIGHT NOBODY SEES



THRESHOLD 9

The Weight Nobody Sees

When we are young, duty appears to us like a severe word.

It has the sound of rules.

Of sacrifices.

Of obligations.

It does not have the charm of adventure.

It does not have the color of success.

It does not even have the language of happiness.

For this reason almost no one dreams of duty.

People dream of results.

The goals.

The conquests.

The recognitions.

Duty comes afterward.

Silently.

And it stays longer than all the rest.

For many years I too believed that the most important part of life was the visible one.

The promotions.

The changes.

The important decisions.

The victories.

Then time taught me something that no manual could have explained.

A person's life is not measured in the extraordinary days.

It is measured in the normal days.

In the days when no one is watching.

In the days when you simply have to do what must be done.

Even when we do not feel like it.

Even when we are tired.

Even when the world seems not to notice.

Duty lives there.

It dwells in continuity.

Not in enthusiasm.

I remember many moments in which desire and duty walked in opposite directions.

They are situations everyone knows.

You would like to stop.

But you have to continue.

You would like to move away.

But someone is counting on you.

You would like to think of yourself.

But responsibility calls from another side.

In those moments life poses a simple and merciless question.

Who are you when no one forces you to do the right thing?

The answer does not come from words.

It comes from actions.

I learned early that duty has a cost.

Much higher than most people imagine.

It costs time.

It costs energy.

It costs opportunities.

Sometimes it even costs a part of our dreams.

Because every choice in favor of something inevitably entails the renunciation of something else.

There is no life without a price.

There are only people who choose which price to pay.

I have seen men sacrifice family for career.

And others sacrifice career for family.

I have seen people give up security in the name of freedom.

And others give up freedom in the name of security.

Life does not distribute free prizes.

It always exchanges something for something else.

This awareness changes the way of observing the world.

Above all when you stop judging.

Because behind every choice there is an invisible battle that others do not see.

Behind every responsibility there is a private cost.

Behind every apparent success there are often unknown renunciations.

With the passing of the years I began to respect less those who talked about their sacrifices and much more those who lived them in silence.

Truly responsible people do not like to talk about themselves.

They are too busy keeping standing what depends on them.

A family.

An organization.

A community.

A project.

A promise.

There are people who become pillars without having asked for it.

One day they turn around and discover that others lean on them.

Children.

Parents.

Collaborators.

Friends.

Fragile people.

Lost people.

People seeking stability.

At that point duty stops being a theory.

It becomes a daily presence.

A presence that is not always comfortable.

But that gives meaning to things.

I remember a lesson that took me years to understand.

Duty is not born from obedience.

It is born from love.

This difference changes everything.

When you love something, you take care of it.

When you take care of it, you become responsible.

When you become responsible, you accept a weight.

And that weight, slowly, becomes part of you.

This is why the most important duties of life cannot be imposed.

They can only be accepted.

No law can force you to love.

No rule can force you to be present.

No authority can force you to stay when it would be easier to leave.

These are inner decisions.

And they are worth more than any external imposition.

Many times I have asked myself whether duty makes us happy.

Today I believe the question is wrong.

Duty was not created to make us happy.

It was created to make us reliable.

Happiness comes and goes.

Reliability stays.

And it is what allows people to trust us.

In the end, what we build in life depends largely on this trust.

No family holds together without trust.

No friendship lasts without trust.

No organization grows without trust.

No relationship survives without trust.

And trust almost always is born from the same question.

"Will this person be there when needed?"

Not when it is convenient.

Not when it is easy.

When it is needed.

With time I understood that the true worth of a man or a woman emerges above all there.

In the answer to that question.

Not in the successes.

Not in the speeches.

Not in the intentions.

In the presence.

In the reliability.

In the continuity.

In the quiet courage of those who keep being

there.

Even on the worst days.

What does duty cost?

It costs a lot.

Sometimes more than we would like.

But it costs infinitely less than abandonment.

Because the price of accepted responsibilities is high.

But the price of betrayed responsibilities is even higher.

And when time passes, as sooner or later happens for everyone, we do not remember the comforts we defended.

We remember the people we protected.

The promises we kept.

The weights we chose to carry.

And we discover that right there, in the place where only sacrifice seemed to exist, was hidden the deepest meaning of our life.