

Fleming's Diary

XX/XX/2177, during his early college years

Entry #1

I bumped into a former colleague yesterday, from my time as a squad leader. I was just reminiscing about my past operations... Jesus Christ. I was a bit dumb. Still am, really. I thought they had forgotten about it, but they haven't.

...

"Jakob, remember when you read the map wrong and sent us east?"

"That was the ambush, right? With the guerillas."

"And it was your fault."

"Shut up. We killed them all anyway. Easy victory, I say."

"Of course, you're right. Our fumbler, now grown up and in college."

"I wasn't even that young."

"I'll stop embarrassing you and leave you alone."

"Wait, no, don't leave! C'mon. It's been awhile."

...

Fortunately, they stayed. I greatly enjoyed seeing them again - it's been awhile since I've seen anyone from my old squad. I feel like I've done nothing since then. I want to show them how far I've gotten, but I have nothing. I've barely started my classes.

...

"How are things? Are you still moping around?"

"Moping? I'd never mope."

"You do. Whenever I wasn't there, you did."

"Fuck you."

"Love you too, Fleming."

...

I should have spent more time with them when I was still enlisted. A true friend.

Entry #2

Classes are so fucking hard. I'm not built for this. I need to drop out. Why am I here? I should be getting medals and kicking ass. I remember when I was being shot at, and gunning people down. That was my peak, that was my glory. I did so much. And what am I doing now?

...

I suppose that's why I'm here. I need to get rid of this attitude. I want to become better. I want to help others become better. I can't just charge in blindly. I've gotten lucky countless times, and even still, others have suffered for my mistakes. Let this be water upon my back. Just keep going. Compose myself. Ask around, and try to improve.

I can't be a failure. So many have died for me, and because of me.

...

Is this unhealthy? I feel wrong. I believe there may be something here, too, I need to improve upon. These are dark feelings, and I can not let myself go down this road. I just can not.

Entry #3

Another colleague came by to visit me. Why am I so popular?

"Sarge!"

"Wh- what? I'm not your sarge anymore."

"Maybe not. But you're onto bigger things now, aren'tcha?"

"I guess I am. I'm here, I mean."

“Stick with it, alright?”

“Trust me. I will. Thank you.”

...

A lot of old memories are coming back. Lots of conversations. Many happy ones. A few sad ones as well. Sometimes I wish I were back, but that usually ends with me thinking about all the blood and the deaths. I don't like it. My time there has ended, and that chapter closed.

It was fun, in a fucked up way. It was like I was proving myself to the world, and it was awesome. But I don't think I ever needed to do any of that, or go that far. I need to keep that in mind. I need to regulate myself. Stay steady. Don't be silly, don't be overzealous.

Entry #4

I think I have settled down here at the college. I have seen a lot of progress lately, after thinking through my emotions. I want to be better, but I also can't let the pressure get to me. I have some issues that I think I must work with and grapple here.

Even though I make plenty of mistakes, everyone does to a certain extent. It's a fact of life. Some mistakes simply have greater consequences than others, and although they may weigh on you greatly, you must continue moving forward. Always keep what you have sacrificed in mind, but never let it become a burden.

Although it's been hard, I've loved what I've been learning here. It's a whole different experience, trying to learn about indirect leadership and from an operational standpoint. Morale, cohesion, all that. It's fascinating to me, and explains a lot of what I've seen down on the ground. It is a great thing to learn.

I may be going forward still with some uncertainty and many problems left unsolved, but I have the tools now to solve them. I refuse to let me sabotage myself. It is okay to fail.

Entry #5

Some time later

I'm done! I'm out! I've been commissioned! I want to use what I've learned here, and what I've learned elsewhere, going forward.

I need to.