

Humility



With courage you
will dare to take risks,
have the strength
to be compassionate,
and the wisdom to be
humble. Courage is the
foundation of integrity.

—KESHAVAN NAIR

Humility

The Quiet Virtue

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*To Rena Canipe, hero of humility, and to all of her family,
who hold her identity together in love.*



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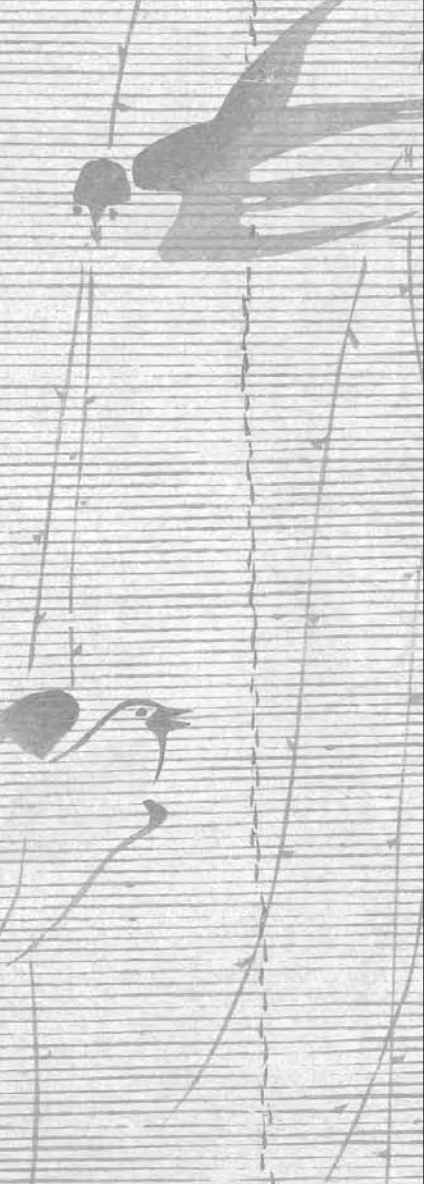
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We rise in glory
as we sink in pride.

—ANDREW YOUNG



Introduction

WRITING A BOOK ON HUMILITY is fraught with difficulties. I certainly do not want to write a book with the invisible subtitle “My Humility and How I Achieved It Perfectly.” I am not even inviting you to dwell on your own humble traits. I cannot tell you a definitive description of humility revealed by science. A scientific understanding of humility simply does not exist at this point, and it is hampered by the paradox of measuring humility. Asking a respondent to rate how humble he or she is is an exercise in futility.

To help you understand humility, I can only invite you to consider people you know. Who are your heroes of humility? Write down your nominations for your Hall of Humility. Then, consider each one. What characteristics made you choose each

person as a hero? Perhaps in reflecting on your heroes of humility, you will understand what makes up humility.

This is the tack I use in this book. I will describe people like Rena Canipe—just folks—who embody world-class humility, and I'll follow Rena's story as to whether she can win the battle against the humiliation of dementia. I will examine people of great achievement who exude humility, look to historical figures whose humility has stood the test of time, and describe a few fictional stories whose protagonists inspire us to humility. I will peek at what science has found in studying humility. I have scoured sources of wise quotes about humility and selected some that I hope will inspire you.

If together we examine these exemplars of humility, perhaps we might forge a common understanding of, at a minimum, how humility shows up. Humility doesn't shout its characteristics. It is the quiet virtue. We must approach it in reverence. Because it is quiet, we must listen, look, and feel to discern its character.

Why are you reading this book about humility? Probably not to hone your humility skills so you can win an award for humility. You are probably not looking for the praise and

adoration of thousands. In fact, I would bet that you already are humbly serving others, and you are seeking inspiration that will fortify your life choices.

Typically, a book's introduction or first chapter tries to motivate the reader to learn more. In a way, this book cannot be traditional because I believe that, if you are reading this little text, you already have the motivation and the experience that you will uncover in these pages. But I believe there is strength in like-motivated communities. I hope to strengthen you through quotes about humility from wise people. I hope you will apply what you read to your own life, find your own heroes of humility, and be inspired by those heroes to greater acts of love and virtue than you may ever have dreamed about doing already. 