

Adventure May Never Find You

There's an old part of many adventure stories in fantasy and history: the arrival of the guide and the call to adventure.

It's young dweeby Steve Rogers being picked to be Captain America. It's Gandalf rapping on Bilbo Baggins' door. It's Aslan transporting the Pevensie children into Narnia.

Adventure seems to find people in these stories and more or less push them into an adventure.

That happened for a lot of young men of my grandfather's generation. They had a depression and a world war that brought danger and risk and adventure to them. Many of them responded admirably.

But many of us now live in the richest societies that have ever existed. We have shopping malls and iPhones and advanced medical care and food delivery apps competing for our business.

We have bubbles into which we can go and never come out.

Maybe like me you happen to have been born or happen to have ended up in one of these bubbles (and I'd argue that most of the United States is a bubble). While there are multiple calls to adventure even for us, it's possible to never hear those calls, or at least to not recognize them. Adventure may never find us where we are. If it does, we might find ourselves waiting for a long time.

The psychologist Nathaniel Branden was fond of saying "No one is coming to save you." I would paraphrase to say that (probably) no one is coming to call you on an adventure, at least not when you're inside a bubble of security and comfort. So there's no point in sitting around and waiting. Adventure is outside the bubble. It won't find you in there, but you may find it out there.