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inconsequential roles. The bomb entered Truman's life when he was barely taken the oath of office.

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David Cavanah

His swearing-in ceremony, at 7:00 p.m., lasted only a little more than one minute. The first cabinet meeting followed immediately. Shortly after 8:00 p.m., all fled out of the room except for the aged Secretary of War, Henry L. Stimson. Stimson asked to speak to Truman about "a most urgent matter" and briefly sketched the "atomic project" that would give the country "a new explosive of almost unbelievable power."

"It was my responsibility as President to force the Japanese warlords to come to terms as quickly as possible with the minimum loss of lives. I then made my final decision. And that final decision was mine alone to make." On August 6, 1945, on Truman's orders, an army plane flew over Hiroshima and dropped an atom bomb which killed 74,000 Japanese in one blast. On August 9, a second bomb was dropped over Nagasaki, killing 74,000. "Almost immediately after dropping the second bomb, the Japanese surrendered," wrote Truman.

“Last night the whole weight of the moon and the stars fell on me. I’ve got the most awful responsibility a man ever had. If you fellows ever pray, pray for me,” President Harry Truman told reporters on April 13, 1945. In 1945, Truman had to make one of the most agonizing decisions ever made by a President.

On entering office, he understood that he needed to appear decisive, but his self-confidence was as low as his ignorance was great. His experience in foreign affairs had remained nearly nil over the years, and President Roosevelt had assigned only inconsequential errands to Vice President Truman and had told him not a thing about the bomb. The bomb entered Truman’s life swiftly; he had barely taken the oath of office. His swearing-in ceremony, at 7:09 p.m. on April 12, had lasted only a trifle more than one minute. The first cabinet meeting followed immediately. Silently, all filed out of the room except for the aged Secretary of War, Henry L. Stinson. Stinson asked to speak to Truman about “a most urgent matter: and briefly sketched the “immense project” that would give the country “a new explosive of almost unbelievable power.”

“It was my responsibility as President to force the Japanese warlords to come to terms as quickly as possible with the minimum loss of lives. I then made my final decision. And that final decision was mine alone to make.” On August 6, 1945, on Truman’s orders, an army plane flew over Hiroshima and dropped an atom bomb which killed 78,000 Japanese in one blast. On August 9, a second bomb was dropped over Nagasaki, killing 74,000. “Almost immediately after dropping the second bomb, the Japanese surrendered,” wrote Truman.

The question might well be asked, “What happened to this man, not so many years removed from his chosen occupation of farmer, to enable him to make this most agonizing decision? How was he able to develop the abilities to oversee completion and deployment of this weapon? Many would answer strength of character, determination, or the ability to follow a course that had already been charted. But I would argue that his ability to resolve this issue lay in no small part with the quality of advice that he received, and it is indeed fortunate that I feel that way because this paper is not about Truman or the atomic bomb. It is about advice. Truman leaned heavily on men who were already familiar with and had worked within the Manhattan Project. He was advised by men like Admiral William D. Leahy (chief White House Military Adviser), Secretary of War Stinson, Secretary of State James F. Byrnes, and General Leslie R. Groves. Each of these men was on the Ad Hoc Interim Committee that was formed to advise on the handling of the bomb. Without these men and the others on that committee, it is doubtful that Truman could have made the decision that he called “mine alone to make.”

President Truman knew he needed help. He sought out the very best advisers available. He listened to their advice and made his decisions based on what he was told. That’s not always how it works. Some people don’t want advice. Some want help, but can’t find it. The pros sell advice and some of us can’t give it away. A suggestion might look bad, but be good, or look good, but really stink. Advice might be sought after and cherished or resented when it is received. It’s you bossing me around or me taking the time to help you out.

I'm not the only one interested in this. Shakespeare also wrote about advice. Remember the soothsayer warning Caesar to beware the Ides of March and remember how Calphurnia advised Caesar to stay home?

Calphurnia: "What mean you, Caesar? Think you to walk forth? You shall not stir out of your house today."

Caesar: "Caesar shall forth. The things that threatened me Ne'er looked but on my back. When they shall see the face of Caesar, they are vanished.

Calphurnia: "Caesar, I never stood on ceremonies, yet now they fright me. There is one within. Besides the things that, we have heard and seen. Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch. A lioness whelped in the streets And graves have yawn'd and yielded up their dead. Fierce fiery warriors fight upon the clouds In ranks and squadrons hath and right form of war, which drizzled blood upon the capitol. The noise of battle hurtled in the air, Horses did neigh and dying men did groan, And ghosts did shriek and squeal about the streets. O Caesar, these things are beyond all use, And I do fear them!

Caesar: What can be avoided. Whose end is propos'd by the mighty gods? Yet Caesar shall go forth, for these predictions are to the world in general as to Caesar."

Calphurnia: "Alas, my lord! Your wisdom is consumed in confidence. Do not go forth today. Call it my fear that keeps you in the house and not your own. We'll send Mark Anthony to the Senate House, and he shall say you are not well today. Let me upon my knee prevail in this."

Caesar: What say the augurers?

Calphurnia: They would not have you stir forth today. Plucking the entrails of an offering forth. They could not find a heart within the beast.

Well, the bottom line is Caesar didn't harken to Calphurnia's avail even though she saw blood on the Capitol and the entrails of the beast revealed no heart. Caesar went to the Senate and had a terrible day – didn't get the crown Brutus promised and got stabbed in the back.

Advice is sometimes followed, but just doesn't turn out well. In 1876, Major-General George A. Custer was in charge of 12 U.S. Cavalry Companies near the Little Bighorn River in southern Montana. His orders were to approach a Sioux encampment and wait to be joined by additional troops. Because the Indians discovered his presence, staying where he was appeared impossible. He leaned on advice from previous meetings, reconnaissance scouts, and Captain Frederick William Benteen and major Marcus A. Reno that his 655 men could easily defeat the Sioux. Custer charged directly into the encampment and, to his surprise, his men were surrounded by 4000 Indians and the troops were wiped out.

Today advice has turned into big business, and the things people ask are amazing. It is also amazing that adult human beings would be willing to place a phone call, ask a question that is highly personal, and take a tongue lashing of gigantic proportions, all in front of a national audience, and do all of this without someone holding a gun to their heads. But people continue to call Dr. Laura and she continues to advise the mothers and fathers and in-laws, cheating spouses, and sons and daughters of the world. The callers may not get exactly what they hope for, but the audience usually does.

For instance, we listen as one mother is told that showing love to her son is wrong. She is told to tell him that he should not expect his mother to show love to him. She should say, "After we loved and took care of you, you selfishly hurt your brother. I don't feel very loving toward you. I don't know if I ever will again. I guess we will have to see. I will never trust you again. Never! Never! You could be 84 and I still wouldn't trust you."

We also listen as a 52 year old man asks for Dr. Laura's permission to marry the lady that he has known for only three months. Each has been married twice before, and Dr. Laura has reservations and expresses them in her usual mild manner. "That's just pathetic. You can't possibly know you are in love after three months. Are you sleeping with this woman?" He was not. Apparently that was the right answer because she stopped yelling at him for a few minutes.

Ann Landers is still a major player. Her column features advice about family relations, college friends, dealing with pets, class reunions, and, of course, sex. For instance, a lady from Georgia (who calls herself Sexless in Atlanta) wrote to Ann Landers, complaining that she had lost her sex drive. Her husband was unhappy, and the marriage was threatened. Ms. Landers responded by suggesting the lady see a therapist and a gynecologist and to be aware that a great many women have sex with their husbands even when they "don't feel like it." I have no intention of trying to determine the validity of this last statement. But if it is true, I would like to offer a hearty Athenaeum thank you to some of our guests this evening.

If you want to find out about decorations, colors, table settings, cookware, holidays or making your home beautiful while totally ignoring a budget, Martha Stewart is your lady. Want to know how to add color to your garden? Tulips are the answer, and Martha can tell you how to plant, maintain and cut them. She can tell you the difference in singles, doubles, fringed, lily, and parrot tulips all for the price of an e-mail or a newspaper.

Now soil compaction is a real problem, and I don't have to tell you that aerating a couple of times a year is not very practical. Jerry Baker can help. The secret is his Grass Clipping Dissolving Tonic. Where can I purchase this marvelous tonic, you are asking yourself. Well, friends, the answer is you don't buy it—you make it. Simply mix one can of beer, one can of regular cola (not diet), one cup of ammonia, and one cup of liquid dish soap in a bucket and pour them into your 20 gallon hose-end sprayer. You can find these tips and many more in Jerry's new book: *Jerry Baker's Green Grass Magic*.

About to finish school, moving to a new area, looking for a job with more pay or better benefits? Write to Joyce Lain Kennedy. Job seekers can find part-time jobs, full-time jobs, corporate jobs, technical jobs, jobs requiring little or no experience. They can work on the land, on the sea, or in the air. Just write to Joyce.

Only one adviser who is truly known nationally has local ties. Ruby Mae Watkins, whose advice column is featured in over 200 publications and who helped found the North Christian County Publishing Company, is unquestionably the star of the local advice stage. Ruby Mae (who, despite her status as well known columnist, publisher, author, radio personality, and soon-to-be playwright, and despite the fact that she has a

lot of money, told me I could call her Ruby Mae) was born in 1936 in Overland, a small town just north of Dallas, Texas. She lived in Texas for 15 years and completed the first eight years of her formal education there. The last two years of instruction were provided at the Kenton County Home for Troubled Girls. Ruby Mae said that she was not truly troubled, but that her principal was after she stabbed him with a pencil and some judge was after Ruby Mae suggested that she might cut his heart out. “The judge, bless his heart, overreacted,” explained Ruby Mae. “That so often happens when we feel threatened. I wouldn’t have hurt him. He should have taken the time to get to know me before deciding I was an enemy.”

After two years in the home, Ruby Mae moved to Kentucky to live with an aunt and finished high school at Lacy. It was during those years that she realized she had a gift. “I could always tell a friend what to do if her boyfriend was seeing another girl or if somebody was bullying you or what to serve the preacher at Sunday dinner. I think it was because of living in Texas all those years and then in Kentucky. It was like I could see things like both a southerner and a Yankee. Then I lived near Dallas and in the country, so that gave me a lot of insight and then there was the home. I learned a lot there.”

After high school came the dark days -- 25 years spent wandering around the country, working as a waitress or barmaid, or collecting tickets at movie theaters. Money was always scarce, and she married three times. Each marriage ended badly and physical abuse was the common thread.

Fortunately, Ruby Mae was acquitted following the first incident and received only a probated sentence after the second because her husband regained consciousness before the trial. She did serve a few months in a county jail following the third beating.

“I was an angry young woman during those years and kept looking for someone to take my anger out on. Of course, that was just a symptom of my real trouble, and I was really trying to hurt myself.”

“There were always police and counselors and psychologists and psychiatrists, and hearings and trials, and it was all very embarrassing and there was no one to turn to. I really needed help and there just wasn’t any.”

When she got out of jail, Ruby Mae was almost 45 years old. “That was the worst. I was somewhere in Arkansas, didn’t have any money, couldn’t get a job, and every man I had ever had ever had anything to do with was scared to death of me. Then it hit me. This was just like when I got out of the home. Going to Kentucky was the right thing for me then, and it might work again.

And it did. She was initially published in a four pager sales sheet. “Just used cars for sale, apartments for rent, and me giving whatever pearls of wisdom I could come up with.” The pearls worked. During the next twenty years, Ruby Mae carved out an empire for herself.

Although she has diversified and gives time and energy to every aspect of her business, most of her time and satisfactions are tied up in her advice columns. “That started it all,” said Ruby Mae. “I always had the desire and the ability to help people. The columns are my vehicle.”

The columns also tell a lot about the writer. Each displays a picture of Ruby Mae, identified only as Dolly. All letters carry the greeting, "Hello Dolly."

Two samples:

Hello Dolly. I am a 28 year old mother of two wonderful children. Because I had trouble carrying my second child, I had to quit my job at the Tuna canning factory two weeks before she was due. Things got worse, and I had to see a doctor and even spent one night in the hospital. After the baby was born, I still felt bad for a few weeks. My husband, Lou, started spending less and less time at home. Most nights he didn't come home before 10:00. I became so mad that I had a brief affair with Carl, who owns the carpet store where Lou works. Later I found that Lou was working nights, trying to pay my hospital bills. When I told him what happened, he left me. It's all my fault. How do I get him back? -- Lonely for Lou.

Hello Lonely for Lou. Why do you want Lou back? He left you at night when you felt bad and needed him to be home with you. At the very least, he should have explained where he was going and what he was doing. Are you sure he was working all the time? He might not be telling the truth. You are better off without him. Is Carl married? My thoughts are with you always, Dolly.

And the second:

Hello Dolly. I am writing you out of desperation. My wife and I have been married 16 years. I farmed up until two years ago when I finally gave up and moved to Kansas City and got a job in a plant. I make better money now and after the first year, all of our debts were paid off, and we actually started saving some money. It was then that

my wife started spending. She is currently max'ed out on three credit cards, planning a vacation for her and a friend, and trying to buy a new car. I am working all the overtime I can, and next week, I start working nights at a convenient store. I just can't keep up. When I talk to my wife about the situation, she says that the problem is what I make, not what she spends. I love my wife and I want her to have a good life, but this can't go on forever. What can I do? -- Broke in Kansas City.

Hello Broke in Kansas City: Isn't this typical? For 14 years, you stick your wife on some miserable farm and starve her, and then you want to keep her under your thumb by giving her barely enough money to live on after you finally do start producing an income. When you find that you are not better at managing your money than you were at farming or making money, you blame her. How can one person do so many things wrong? Now you want to know if I can help. Sure, I can help. Give the checkbook to her and stay out of her way. Hopefully you have enough sense to do that. My thoughts are with you always, Dolly.

Ruby Mae is a giant in her industry and her impact in our area is almost too great to measure. I do, however, have some concerns about her work. I have read every one of her columns for the last year and listened to tapes of most of her radio shows. I consider Ruby Mae Watkins a dear friend, and I am proud to be a fan. However, I have to be objective. There are some weak areas. For one thing, I don't see a lot of value placed in the sanctity of marriage. I think it is often portrayed as a battleground where only the strong survive. It seems that she would rather dissolve a marriage than try to improve it.

I am also troubled by an apparent resentment of men. The fact that she was married to three different men and beat up all three of them ...

Sandy: Hello David! You two-faced nit! I thought this was what you were up to. You hang around my office acting like a friend and talking about how much you admire my work and how much you can learn from me and then you start bringing up ancient history. You are not a friend of mine, and you never have been, and what's more, you may not call me Ruby Mae. I will never set foot in your dinky little drugstore again, and if you come near my property, I will sick the dogs on you. If you continue your slanderous attack, I will have you beaten. My thoughts are with you always, Dolly.

... Speaking of my pharmacy, one of my jobs is to advise patients about their medications. One day last week, I was telling a mother not to give milk to her young son along with his antibiotic. Unintentionally, I had given proof to Shuttle Parker concerning an argument he had with Beers Pickering. Shuttle and Beers are two of the most regular members of the morning loafing crew, and, if the hardware store closes early, are members of the afternoon crew as well. Shuttle decided to supplement my advice. "Ma'am, you shouldn't give milk to your little boy at all. Did you hear that Beers? Did you hear David telling that little lady how dangerous milk is? Now you will listen to me when I tell you it's not good for you. Made my brother sick once. He drank some and was out of his head for six months, and he's not getting around too well now." "Your brother is 85 years old," argued Beers. He could have saved his breath. "No ma'am, no mother who gives a hoot about her children should give them milk."

The young mother looked to me for help. I had none to give. I had been through this before. You had to pick your spots with Shuttle. “First thing that happens is you start turning blue, and then your tongue swells, and your eyes cross. You see things that aren’t there, and have conversations with the devil. Then you have trouble breathing and rock back and forth and develop a twitch.” Most of these symptoms were now being exhibited by the young mother who was still waiting for her son’s medicine. I knew I could get Shuttle stopped if she could just hold out another minute.

“Generally if you get that far, you’re a goner. Not many live once you start twitching.” Then he paused, I knew only for a second, to reflect on the devastation caused by milk. Beers was thinking the same thing I was. We both shouted, “Milk doesn’t kill you!” Shuttle’s eyes were closed as he contemplated the miserable plight of mankind, but he did hear us. After 30 seconds or so, he opened his eyes, looked at both of us and said, as patiently as possible, “Of course not -- not if you don’t drink it with fish!”

“Could I have my son’s medicine now?”

“Yes, ma’am. You know, he doesn’t work here.”

“Does he live here?”

“Pretty much.”

The mother passed Shuttle as she approached the door. “He looked up at her. Don’t give your little boy asparagus either; it will make him sterile.”

She left without hearing the happy news that it is safe to give asparagus during any month that doesn’t have an “r” in its name.

Sometimes it is hard to judge the quality of the advice you receive. In the spring of 1968, I was about to graduate from Kentucky Wesleyan College. Dutch Cline, Garth Docherty, George Skiadas, and I decided that the last thing we wanted to do the next forty years was work for a living. We needed to get very wealthy between then and finals. George was dating a girl who worked for a stockbroker. She was our closest connection to high finance. During an interview at our fraternity house, Miss Dow Jones asked us if we wanted to invest conservatively or be more aggressive. Garth said that we needed to be filthy rich by the middle of July. She indicated that would qualify as somewhat aggressive.

The next week, I was the proud owner of 17 shares of North Star Uranium. Each share was a \$7.50 gold, er.. uranium mine ready to provide me with more money than I could ever spend. Each evening after supper, the other stockholders and I met at the Sigma Nu house and waited while George called his girl. Spirits were high. Each evening the news got worse. North Star Uranium was floundering. Spirits were low. First they lost the Geiger counter and then both mules died. We never knew what happened, but by the time finals were over, my stock had dropped \$5.00 a share. I had lost \$85.00. Give me a lunch pail and send me to work. I checked again last week on North Star Uranium. What I found proves my point about being hard to judge advice. My stock is now worth seventy cents a share. That means that during the last 33 years, it has lost 91% of its original value. That is an average loss of 2.75% per year. That doesn't sound great, but during the last year North Star Uranium was my best performing stock. Thanks, Paine-Webber.

Do you know people who typically greet you with advice? Burleigh Weaver does that. You might greet Burleigh by saying, "Good morning," but his response might be, "Time to get potatoes ready. Need to plant potatoes and onions by the 15th of April." When you say, "Afternoon, Burleigh," he might say, "Snakes are out. Better be careful if you are looking for mushrooms. It's a little early, but they are out all right. It's the warm weather. Fellow got bit up on McBride Hill yesterday." The third time you see Burleigh, it might go something like, "Evening, Burleigh. Had a nice day?" "Revival this Sunday at my church in Nortonville. Going to have three gospel groups, a song leader, and two preachers. You ought to go. Do you good."

You can see, I think, what givers advisers are. All I have done is greet Burleigh three times, and he has tended to my food production, personal safety, and spiritual life all without ever saying hello.

Parents are the biggest optimists in the world. How else could we imagine that our children would respond positively to advice that we rejected from our parents 30 years earlier. When I was 13, the thought of taking advice from my mom or dad was unthinkable. How could those people possibly know enough to help me? By the time Grey was 13, I decided that I was cool enough and so well-regarded by teenagers that she would cherish any bit of wisdom that I shared with her. I clung to that belief for about one minute. That's how long it took me to figure out that the look on her face was telling me that I was a little farther out of the loop than I suspected. Being a slow learner, once was not enough. For years now I have experienced that same rejection after that 60 seconds of illogical optimism. It's bad enough that I have been totally incapable of

keeping my opinions to myself with Grey, but I have followed the same scenario with Duncan. Things haven't changed much now that I'm 54 years old. My dad still has bits of advice for me nearly every week. I still reject it because he is my father, and that is what I am supposed to do. The big difference is that instead of waiting thirty years to pass the same advice on to Grey and Duncan, I excitedly call them that night. By that time, I have decided that my dad was probably right and that my daughter and son would love the information. But after that same 60 seconds that they still give me to revel in my accomplishment, they politely ask how their grandfather is doing and go on with their lives.

Sometimes advice is much easier to take from grandparents than parents. Some of you may remember my grandfather, D.A. (Alec) Cavanah. A short while after Sandy and I married, I decided that I would raise a vegetable garden. My grandfather was advising me about raising tomatoes. The first step was to dig a hole. How big a hole, I wondered. The hole should be about as big as the footstool Grandfather indicated, pointing to the rather elegant naugahyde footstool in front of his easy chair. The dirt should then be mixed with an equal volume of manure and put back in the hole, resulting in a mound about the size of the naugahyde stool.

“Excuse me. Did you say the dirt had to be mixed with manure?”

“Yes, that's right. You use just as much manure as dirt.”

“I might just buy my tomatoes.”

“Now Charles David, if you are going to have a garden, you need to raise tomatoes. You can do this.”

He was right. I could do that. It was a good day. I learned a lot, and he felt good about giving me the advice. Finally his grandson was going to amount to something. His enthusiasm was dampened a bit when I asked to borrow his naugahyde footstool for a few days.

Advice can be mistimed. One night after I closed, I drove to Crofton Manor Senior Citizens' Apartments to deliver some new medicine to Sara Bridges. Taking it by myself would give me a chance to talk to her about side effects and what to expect from the therapy. Miss Bridges is one of the spiritual leaders of the community. She still teaches a Sunday School class and is well known for her knowledge of the Bible. She is also well known as the object of Roughcut Holmes' affection. At least, she would be if Roughcut had his way. Roughcut loves two things: women (he is the local senior citizen Romeo) and country music. For weeks, he had tried to make Miss Bridges his new girlfriend. He asked her to dinner and the square dance. He called persistently. He took her Gold Bond Powder. She refused it all. She told everyone that she had no intention of seeing Roughcut. He was uneducated and unchurched and had no appeal to her.

On other occasions when I have gone to Miss Bridges' apartment, I have been invited in, and we have discussed her health over home-made cookies with choir music or a sermon playing softly on the radio. On this particular evening, I heard Hank Williams, Sr., before I even knocked on the door. When Miss Bridges came to the door, she opened it only enough to reach for her package and made it very clear that any discussion would take place with me on the porch. I couldn't resist asking what I heard in the apartment. Miss Bridges hesitated for a moment, stood as straight as possible, looked me in the eye

and said, “Billy Graham.” I knew that unless Billy Graham had recorded “Your Cheating Heart,” that Roughcut had made it into the apartment with his stack of 78 Rpm’s and that this advice session was over.

I would like for you to know that through the years and especially while writing this paper, I have learned a few things. Some of these bits of information have come through diligent research. Others are the result of a lifetime of mistakes, and still others from listening to people wiser than I. I would like to conclude by sharing some of them with you.

If you are the 43rd best player on your high school football team and the 44th player is blind, your future might not lie in the NFL.

Prepaid funerals may not be the great buy you think they are. Contact Funeral Consumers Alliance at www.funerals.org, for advice.

Never give up – this isn’t a quote from Jim Valvano. It’s Shuttle Parker repeating what he told Beers Pickering twenty years ago when Beers told him to move his checker piece or give up. To this day, Shuttle greets Beers daily by telling him to never give up. Beers responds with, “Shut up, Shuttle.”

A man might be called Ox because he is big, ugly, dumb, and strong, but he is rarely proud of the fact and doesn’t like being reminded by strangers. (Contribution by Shuttle Parker relating an evening spent in Mannington bar).

The last person living in Crofton gets all the gold – Slick Bradley (my good friend and subject of previous paper). Slick wasn’t the last one living, but I suspect he still might have taken some of the gold with him.

And, finally, it is much harder than you might think to get manure stains out of
naugahyde.

David Cavanah