

Handling Rejection
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Pick yourself up. They didn't reject you. They don't know you! They met your resume, your photo, your face, your attempt. They didn't meet you. They may have glimpsed you, but 10 minutes, 1 hour, a two-hour interview can't show anyone the real you, the full-you, what makes you – you and nobody else. Only God and you can see your soul.

Get up! Now! Off your knees. It you must - cry standing up. Then wipe the tears away. Too soon to get up? Okay. You get ten minutes to have a pity party. Go into the kitchen and get the timer, use the second hand on your watch, calibrate your cell phone but time yourself. Then let it go for today. You can have another ten-minute woe-is-me fest tomorrow, but today, you're done. You've got to get up.

They didn't know you. They just saw your façade. They can reject your face, your voice, your resume. They can't reject *you*. You can be too tall for a part – but not too tall to be you. You may not have articulated to them why you would be the best candidate for the job – but they can never say that you couldn't have done the job. The essence of you is so deep and so vast and so untouchable. Think about it, even you don't know you yet...at least not completely.

You could have done better you say? You're probably right. When you look back on anything, you could have done it, if not differently, at least a little bit better. But you can't change the past. Not even God can change the past. It is the future that can be changed and influenced. It is this moment that you have. So do it better next time but remember – everyone who reads your resume would have at least one way that they'd

change it. I interviewed Toni Morrison once and she said that every time she read an excerpt from one of her novels, she engaged in rewriting it mentally. And she has a Nobel Prize for Literature!

You showed up – congratulate yourself. At the very least – you showed up. That’s half of it. You kept your appointment. You put that manuscript in the mail. It’s out of your hands now. You answered the interview questions as best you could. You described the reason that you, of all applicants, were the perfect candidate in your cover letter. It’s their turn now. You just have to...continue. You thought I was going to say wait didn’t you? You thought I was going to say, “You just have to wait.” But I wasn’t. I don’t believe in waiting when there’s something out there you want or need.

What you have to do is continue. Continue to audition if you’re trying to be an actor. Continue to send out manuscripts if you’re trying to get published. Continue to write and rewrite if you’re a writer. Continue to send your resume and cover letter out if you’re looking for a job. Don’t leave home without your resume, business card, and head shot because you just never know when you’re going to run into somebody who will have a connection for you. Carry around some post-it notes and some self-addressed, stamped envelopes while you’re at it. That way, when someone says, I’ll send you my card or such-and-so’s contact information, you’ll be ready to help them do it by giving them a SASE so that your need doesn’t go to the bottom of their list...at least not directly to the bottom.

Your development, your achievement, your dreams are yours and more important to you than to anyone else. Go ahead and dream. “Dream big” as Oprah always intones.

Then, put the dreams on hold for a minute or two and dare to act! Make the calls, write the query letters, read, ask, network, research, follow up, send, go...

Say yes to yourself. Put it out there. Don't you dare sit on the couch, in the chair, lay on the bed, feeling rejected. A stranger cannot reject you 'cause they don't know you. And as for the people who do know you – a friend, a lover, an acquaintance, remember that man's rejection is God's protection – and move happily on to the next possibility, grateful to dodge the bullets and near misses as you avoid the not-quite-right-ones, for the opportunity that was meant for you!