

Pyrrhus

'Our fate, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars - but in our selves'. Shakespeare.

I love this quote. Of course, I'm not quite so fond of it when I have screwed up and am busily seeking someone to blame. And, failing that, shaking my fists and railing at the ill-tempered, cantankerous fates that find such obvious joy in toying with my little corner of the world. There is little energy or desire, then, to consider what my contribution to the problem was. Often, in fact, I'm driven to exhaustion proving my case against that irascible wheel of fortune. Sometimes I succeed. I convince not only those around me, but - true victor me - I convince myself as well - that I was but a victim.

Hm.

Is that really success? 'Oh, Pyyyyrrhus.....'

Remember King Pyrrhus? He was an ancient Greek king who put all he had into fighting each of his battles - and the costs of doing this were so great that, in spite of all his victories, he lost the war. Oh. And his life.

It seems to me that finding a scapegoat - be it another person, the fates, or martyring yourself - so that you don't need to look within, to sit with the discomfort of your real feelings, is a Pyrrhic victory. The cost far outweighs any gain.

I think that true victory, in life, suggests victory over our selves. It is not measured, in the final analysis, by coin, or trophy, or even by how much you were loved, tho that is of great importance as well. I think it is measured by courage. The courage to live by your convictions, and live with who you really are. To turn your soul head-on into the tempest of your flaws, and withstand it's full impact. Reeling, yes. But still standing. The courage to be, until your last breath, a work in progress. The courage to accept the mantle of authorship for the book of your life and to choose, every moment of every day, what story the lines therein burned will tell, to the rest of eternity.