

Peril and Death

In recent years we have become increasingly familiar with the thought of death. We ourselves are surprised by the composure with which we accept the news of the death of our contemporaries. We can no longer hate Death so much; we have discovered something of kindness in his features and are almost reconciled to him. Deep down we seem to feel that we are his already and that each new day is a miracle. It would not be correct to say that we die gladly—even though no one is unacquainted with that weariness, which ought not to be allowed to arise under any circumstances. We are too inquisitive for that, or, to put it more seriously, we would like to see something more of our scattered life's meaning. But we do not make of Death a hero either; life is too great and too dear for us to do so. Still more do we refuse to look for the meaning of life in danger; we are not desperate enough to do so and know too much of the treasures of life. We also know too well the fear for life and all the other destructive effects of unrelenting imperilment of life. We still love life, but I believe that Death can no longer surprise us. After what we have experienced in the war, we hardly dare acknowledge our wish that Death will find us completely engaged in the fullness of life, rather than by accident, suddenly, away from what really matters. It is not external circumstances but we ourselves who shall make of our death what it can be, a death consented to freely and voluntarily.

Revision #1

Created 2026-03-28 20:38:57 UTC by Dara

Updated 2026-03-28 20:39:13 UTC by Dara