

****Ronald Reagan and the Marine Corps****

Ronald Reagan was exactly right.

Very few people are forged the way United States Marine Corps Marines are. They are individuals who sacrificially gave themselves. They become something greater than they were when they first stood on those yellow footprints.

They understand something that very few people comprehend.

This story you are about to read is a reflection of that.

****“Some people spend their entire lives wondering if they made a difference in the world. The Marines don’t have that problem.”** – Ronald Reagan**

When God created the Marine, it was into the sixth day of overtime.

An angel appeared and said, “You’re having a lot of trouble with this one. What’s wrong with the standard model?”

And the Lord replied, “Have you seen the specs on this order?”

It has to be able to think independently, yet still take orders.
It must have the qualities of both a military mind and a compassionate heart.

It must be a leader of junior Marines and a student of its seniors.

It must run on black coffee.

It must handle critical operations without a procedure manual.

It must manage difficult subordinate situations and inspire and supervise demanding officers.

It must have the patience of a saint and six pairs of hands—not to mention the strength of three its size.”

The angel slowly shook her head and said, “Six pairs of hands? No way.”

And the Lord answered, “Don’t worry. We will make other Marines to help. Besides, it’s not the hands which are causing the problem. It’s the heart.

It must swell with pride when other Marines do well, sustain the incredible hardships of combat, beat soundly when it is too tired to do so, and be strong enough to carry on when it has already given all it has.”

"Lord," said the angel, touching the Lord's sleeve gently, "come to bed."

"I can't," said the Lord. "I'm so close to creating something unique. Already I have one who can complete a 26-mile forced march with a full pack, carry a 9mm and fire an M16 with astounding accuracy, conduct land navigation in the dark, and overcome field communications."

The angel circled the Marine very slowly.

"It's too serious," she sighed.

"But tough," said the Lord excitedly. "You cannot imagine what this Marine can do, or endure, or overcome."

"Can it feel?" asked the angel.

"Can it feel?" replied the Lord. "It loves the Corps and the country like no other."

Finally the angel bent over and ran her finger across the Marine's cheek.

"There's something wrong," she said. "There's a leak."

"I told you," she said, "you're trying to put too much into this model."

"That's not a leak," said the Lord. "That's a tear."

"What's it for?" asked the angel.

"It's for joy and sadness, disappointment, frustration, pain, loneliness, and pride."

"You're a genius," said the angel.

The Lord looked at her and then soberly replied,

"I did not put it there."

Many times in my life—underline ****many****—people have said to me, "You need to change. You don't have to be a Marine any longer."

But I took an oath.

I have been trained since I was a small boy, as this book will show,

how my life was being shaped. When I stood on those yellow footprints, I became something I had always desired to be.

How I walk through life now is the way I choose to walk.

As we begin to understand each other's personalities and each other's operating systems, it becomes clear that it isn't necessary to change the system. If you care for someone, you simply need to understand how to nurture and feed the system they already have.

That is what I hope this book can inspire us all to do for one another.

We all have unique operating systems.

Mine is simple.

It comes with an operator's manual.