

# Almost Regrettably Useless Advice

*by strannikov*

Yes, I remain new at this: still, as useless a piece of advice as it is, the only proper time to ask a man where his integrity lies is just after he has been torn in two. (I almost wrote “regrettably useless” of the advice I’m commending, because so few men survive the ordeal of being sundered: but some men do survive at least long enough to deliver their assessments.)

Of those who do survive the experience of sundering (even briefly), the man’s integrity almost always lies with the part still able to speak. It remains true, though, that few men come out and testify about this one way or the other, because along with the men themselves, their integrity also dies with them, often with their own degrees of distress or discomfort. (Any sundered man who survives with his integrity intact likely will have to adjust or reconfigure his integrity a bit, sometimes to the point of replacement, it does not go without being said, although some few do connive to live without integrity altogether or to live with whatever remains no matter how much impaired.)

A man’s integrity, wherever it can be said to reside in any man’s interior (heart or soul are usually cited), thus appears about as difficult to split as an atom: and just as with the atom, once it has been split, you have a mess of sub-atomic mass and matter on your hands not easy to contain or control. Thus, as with the atom, just where and when the splitting occurs is important: providing direction or location for the splitting and sundering is the only service anyone can render, but precious few practitioners of merit and integrity have been identified, much less located.

It is the case also that few men possess enough innate integrity to even risk its sundering when facing the prospect of being torn in two: in fact, it is almost perversely the case that men who have no or

next to no integrity are almost never threatened with sundering, on propitious or unpropitious days.

This world is always at least as strange as it seems, but usually far more strange, so many non-repeatable phenomena . . . .

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