

COMPREHENSION **CIRCUIT** TRAINING



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COMPREHENSION CIRCUIT TRAINING

STUDENT TEXT LEVEL 2



Table of Contents

Literary Text: Short Fiction

The Necklace

by Guy de Maupassant Page 6

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

by James Thurber Page 19

Informational Text: Expository

Dogs vs. Terrorists

by Burkhard Bilger Page 26

The AIDS Epidemic

by Lawrence K. Altman, M.D. Page 32



Literary Text: Short Fiction

The Necklace

by Guy de Maupassant

1 The girl was one of those pretty and charming young creatures who sometimes are born, as if by a slip of fate, into a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no way of being known, understood, loved, married by any rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to a little clerk of the Ministry of Public Instruction.

2 She dressed plainly because she could not dress well, but she was unhappy as if she had really fallen from a higher station; since with women there is neither caste nor rank, for beauty, grace and charm take the place of family and birth. Natural ingenuity, instinct for what is elegant, a supple mind are their sole hierarchy, and often make of women of the people the equals of the very greatest ladies.

3 Mathilde suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born to enjoy all delicacies and all luxuries. She was distressed at the poverty of her dwelling, at the bareness of the walls, at the shabby chairs, the ugliness of the curtains. All those things, of which another woman of her rank would never even have been conscious, tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little Breton peasant who did her humble housework aroused in her despairing regrets and bewildering dreams. She thought of silent antechambers hung with Oriental tapestry, illumined by tall bronze candelabra, and of two great footmen in knee breeches who sleep in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the oppressive heat of the stove. She thought of long reception halls hung with ancient silk, of the dainty cabinets containing priceless curiosities and of the little coquettish perfumed reception rooms made for chatting at five o'clock with intimate friends, with men famous and sought after, whom all women envy and whose attention they all desire.

4 When she sat down to dinner, before the round table covered with a tablecloth in use three days, opposite her husband, who uncovered the soup tureen and declared with a delighted air, "Ah, the good soup! I don't know anything better than that," she thought of dainty dinners, of shining silverware, of tapestry that peopled the walls with ancient personages and with strange birds flying in the midst of a fairy forest; and she thought of delicious dishes served on marvellous plates and of the whispered gallantries to which you listen with a sphinxlike smile while you are eating the pink meat of a trout or the wings of a quail.

5 She had no gowns, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing but that. She felt made for that. She would have liked so much to please, to be envied, to be charming, to be sought after.

6 She had a friend, a former schoolmate at the convent, who was rich, and whom she did not like to go to see any more because she felt so sad when she came home.

7 But one evening her husband reached home with a triumphant air and holding a large envelope in his hand.

8 "There," said he, "there is something for you."

9 She tore the paper quickly and drew out a printed card which bore these words:

10 The Minister of Public Instruction and Madame Georges Ramponneau request the honor of M. and Madame Loisel's company at the palace of the Ministry on Monday evening, January 18th.

11 Instead of being delighted, as her husband had hoped, she threw the invitation on the table crossly, muttering:

12 “What do you wish me to do with that?”

13 “Why, my dear, I thought you would be glad. You never go out, and this is such a fine opportunity. I had great trouble to get it. Every one wants to go; it is very select, and they are not giving many invitations to clerks. The whole official world will be there.”

14 She looked at him with an irritated glance and said impatiently:

15 “And what do you wish me to put on my back?”

16 He had not thought of that. He stammered:

17 “Why, the gown you go to the theatre in. It looks very well to me.”

18 He stopped, distracted, seeing that his wife was weeping. Two great tears ran slowly from the corners of her eyes toward the corners of her mouth.

19 “What’s the matter? What’s the matter?” he answered.

20 By a violent effort she conquered her grief and replied in a calm voice, while she wiped her wet cheeks:

21 “Nothing. Only I have no gown, and, therefore, I can’t go to this ball. Give your card to some colleague whose wife is better equipped than I am.”

22 He was in despair. He resumed:

23 “Come, let us see, Mathilde. How much would it cost, a suitable gown, which you could use on other occasions--something very simple?”

24 She reflected several seconds, making her calculations and wondering also what sum she could ask without drawing on herself an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from the economical clerk.

25 Finally she replied hesitating:

26 “I don’t know exactly, but I think I could manage it with four hundred francs.”

27 He grew a little pale, because he was laying aside just that amount to buy a gun and treat himself to a little shooting next summer on the plain of Nanterre, with several friends who went to shoot larks there of a Sunday.

28 But he said:

29 “Very well. I will give you four hundred francs. And try to have a pretty gown.”

30 The day of the ball drew near and Madame Loisel seemed sad, uneasy, anxious. Her frock was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

31 “What is the matter? Come, you have seemed very queer these last three days.”

32 And she answered:

33 “It annoys me not to have a single piece of jewelry, not a single ornament, nothing to put on. I shall look poverty-stricken. I would almost rather not go at all.”

34 “You might wear natural flowers,” said her husband. “They’re very stylish at this time of year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses.”

35 She was not convinced.

36 “No; there’s nothing more humiliating than to look poor among other women who are rich.”

37 “How stupid you are!” her husband cried. “Go look up your friend, Madame Forestier, and ask her to lend you some jewels. You’re intimate enough with her to do that.”

38 She uttered a cry of joy:

39 “True! I never thought of it.”

40 The next day she went to her friend and told her of her distress.

41 Madame Forestier went to a wardrobe with a mirror, took out a large jewel box, brought it back, opened it and said to Madame Loisel:

42 “Choose, my dear.”

43 She saw first some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian gold cross set with precious stones, of admirable workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the mirror, hesitated and could not make up her mind to part with them, to give them back. She kept asking:

44 “Haven’t you any more?”

45 “Why, yes. Look further; I don’t know what you like.”

46 Suddenly she discovered, in a black satin box, a superb diamond necklace, and her heart throbbed with an immoderate desire. Her hands trembled as she took it. She fastened it round her throat, outside her high-necked waist, and was lost in ecstasy at her reflection in the mirror.

47 Then she asked, hesitating, filled with anxious doubt:

48 “Will you lend me this, only this?”

49 “Why, yes, certainly.”

50 She threw her arms round her friend’s neck, kissed her passionately, then fled with her treasure.

51 The night of the ball arrived. Madame Loisel was a great success. She was prettier than any other woman present, elegant, graceful, smiling and wild with joy. All the men looked at her, asked her name, sought to be introduced. All the attaches of the Cabinet wished to waltz with her. She was remarked by the minister himself.



52 She danced with rapture, with passion, intoxicated by pleasure, forgetting all in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness comprised of all this homage, admiration, these awakened desires and of that sense of triumph which is so sweet to woman’s heart.

53 She left the ball about four o’clock in the morning. Her husband had been sleeping since midnight in a little deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen whose wives were enjoying the ball.

54 He threw over her shoulders the wraps he had brought, the modest wraps of common life, the poverty of which contrasted with the elegance of the ball dress. She felt this and wished to escape so as not to be remarked by the other women, who were enveloping themselves in costly furs.

55 Loisel held her back, saying: "Wait a bit. You will catch cold outside. I will call a cab."

56 But she did not listen to him and rapidly descended the stairs. When they reached the street they could not find a carriage and began to look for one, shouting after the cabmen passing at a distance.

57 They went toward the Seine in despair, shivering with cold. At last they found on the quay one of those ancient night cabs which, as though they were ashamed to show their shabbiness during the day, are never seen round Paris until after dark.

58 It took them to their dwelling in the Rue des Martyrs, and sadly they mounted the stairs to their flat. All was ended for her. As to him, he reflected that he must be at the ministry at ten o'clock that morning.

59 She removed her wraps before the glass so as to see herself once more in all her glory. But suddenly she uttered a cry. She no longer had the necklace around her neck!

60 "What is the matter with you?" demanded her husband, already half undressed.

61 She turned distractedly toward him.

62 "I have--I have--I've lost Madame Forestier's necklace," she cried.

63 He stood up, bewildered.

64 “What!--how? Impossible!”

65 They looked among the folds of her skirt, of her cloak, in her pockets, everywhere, but did not find it.

66 “You’re sure you had it on when you left the ball?” he asked.

67 “Yes, I felt it in the vestibule of the minister’s house.”

68 “But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it fall. It must be in the cab.”

69 “Yes, probably. Did you take his number?”

70 “No. And you--didn’t you notice it?”

71 “No.”

72 They looked, thunderstruck, at each other. At last Loisel put on his clothes.

73 “I shall go back on foot,” said he, “over the whole route, to see whether I can find it.”

74 He went out. She sat waiting on a chair in her ball dress, without strength to go to bed, overwhelmed, without any fire, without a thought.

75 Her husband returned about seven o’clock. He had found nothing.

76 He went to police headquarters, to the newspaper offices to offer a reward; he went to the cab companies--everywhere, in fact, whither he was urged by the least spark of hope.

77 She waited all day, in the same condition of mad fear before this terrible calamity.

78 Loisel returned at night with a hollow, pale face. He had discovered nothing.

79 “You must write to your friend,” said he, “that you have broken the clasp of her necklace and that you are having it mended. That will give us time to turn round.”

80 She wrote at his dictation.

81 At the end of a week they had lost all hope. Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

82 “We must consider how to replace that ornament.”

83 The next day they took the box that had contained it and went to the jeweler whose name was found within. He consulted his books.

84 “It was not I, madame, who sold that necklace; I must simply have furnished the case.”

85 Then they went from jeweler to jeweler, searching for a necklace like the other, trying to recall it, both sick with chagrin and grief.

86 They found, in a shop at the Palais Royal, a string of diamonds that seemed to them exactly like the one they had lost. It was worth forty thousand francs. They could have it for thirty-six.

87 So they begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days yet. And they made a bargain that he should buy it back for thirty-four thousand francs, in case they should find the lost necklace before the end of February.

88 Loisel possessed eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He would borrow the rest.

89 He did borrow, asking a thousand francs of one, five hundred of another, five louis here, three louis there. He gave notes, took up ruinous obligations, dealt with usurers and all the race of lenders. He compromised all the rest of his life, risked signing a note without even knowing whether he could meet it; and, frightened by the trouble yet to come, by the black misery that was about to fall upon him, by the prospect of all the physical privations and moral tortures that he was to suffer, he went to get the new necklace, laying upon the jeweler's counter thirty-six thousand francs.

90 When Madame Loisel took back the necklace Madame Forestier said to her with a chilly manner:

91 "You should have returned it sooner; I might have needed it."

92 She did not open the case, as her friend had so much feared. If she had detected the substitution, what would she have thought, what would she have said? Would she not have taken Madame Loisel for a thief?

93 Thereafter Madame Loisel knew the horrible existence of the needy. She bore her part, however, with sudden heroism. That dreadful debt must be paid. She would pay it. They dismissed their servant; they changed their lodgings; they rented a garret under the roof.

94 She came to know what heavy housework meant and the odious cares of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, using her dainty fingers and rosy nails on greasy pots and pans.

She washed the soiled linen, the shirts and the dishcloths, which she dried upon a line; she carried the slops down to the street every morning and carried up the water, stopping for breath at every landing. And dressed like a woman of the people, she went to the fruiterer, the grocer, the butcher, a basket on her arm, bargaining, meeting with impertinence, defending her miserable money, sou by sou.

95 Every month they had to meet some notes, renew others, obtain more time.

96 Her husband worked evenings, making up a tradesman's accounts, and late at night he often copied manuscript for five sous a page.

97 This life lasted ten years.

98 At the end of ten years they had paid everything, everything, with the rates of usury and the accumulations of the compound interest.

99 Madame Loisel looked old now. She had become the woman of impoverished households--strong and hard and rough. With frowsy hair, skirts askew and red hands, she talked loud while washing the floor with great swishes of water. But sometimes, when her husband was at the office, she sat down near the window and she thought of that gay evening of long ago, of that ball where she had been so beautiful and so admired.

100 What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace? Who knows? who knows? How strange and changeable is life! How small a thing is needed to make or ruin us!

101 But one Sunday, having gone to take a walk in the Champs Elysees to refresh herself after the labors of the week, she suddenly perceived a woman who was leading a child. It was Madame Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still charming.

102 Madame Loisel felt moved. Should she speak to her? Yes, certainly. And now that she had paid, she would tell her all about it. Why not?

103 She went up.

104 “Good-day, Jeanne.”

105 The other, astonished to be familiarly addressed by this plain good-wife, did not recognize her at all and stammered:

106 “But--madame!--I do not know--You must have mistaken.”

107 “No. I am Mathilde Loisel.”

108 Her friend uttered a cry.

109 “Oh, my poor Mathilde! How you are changed!”

110 “Yes, I have had a pretty hard life, since I last saw you, and great poverty--and that because of you!”

111 “Of me! How so?”

112 “Do you remember that diamond necklace you lent me to wear at the ministerial ball?”

113 “Yes. Well?”

114 “Well, I lost it.”

115 “What do you mean? You brought it back.”

116 “I brought you back another exactly like it. And it has taken us ten years to pay for it. You can understand that it was not easy for us, for us who had nothing. At last it is ended, and I am very glad.”

117 Madame Forestier had stopped.

118 “You say that you bought a necklace of diamonds to replace mine?”

119 “Yes. You never noticed it, then! They were very similar.”

120 And she smiled with a joy that was at once proud and ingenuous.

121 Madame Forestier, deeply moved, took her hands.

122 “Oh, my poor Mathilde! Why, my necklace was paste! It was worth at most only five hundred francs!”

The Secret Life of Walter Mitty

by James Thurber

1 "WE'RE going through!" The Commander's voice was like thin ice breaking. He wore his full-dress uniform, with the heavily braided white cap pulled down rakishly over one cold gray eye. "We can't make it, sir. It's spoiling for a hurricane, if you ask me." "I'm not asking you, Lieutenant Berg," said the Commander. "Throw on the power lights! Rev her up to 8500! We're going through!" The pounding of the cylinders increased: ta-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa-pocketa. The Commander stared at the ice forming on the pilot window. He walked over and twisted a row of complicated dials. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" he shouted. "Switch on No. 8 auxiliary!" repeated Lieutenant Berg. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" shouted the Commander. "Full strength in No. 3 turret!" The crew, bending to their various tasks in the huge, hurtling eight-engined Navy hydroplane, looked at each other and grinned. "The Old Man'll get us through," they said to one another. "The Old Man ain't afraid of hell!"

..



2 "Not so fast! You're driving too fast!" said Mrs. Mitty. "What are you driving so fast for?"

3 "Hmm?" said Walter Mitty. He looked at his wife, in the seat beside him, with shocked astonishment. She seemed grossly unfamiliar, like a strange woman who had yelled at him in a crowd. "You were up to fifty-five," she said. "You know I don't like to go more than forty. You were up to fifty-five." Walter Mitty drove on toward Waterbury in silence, the roaring of the SN202 through the worst storm in twenty years of Navy flying fading in the remote, intimate airways of his mind. "You're tensed up again," said Mrs. Mitty. "It's one of your days. I wish you'd let Dr. Renshaw look you over."

4 Walter Mitty stopped the car in front of the building where his wife went to have her hair done. "Remember to get those overshoes while I'm having my hair done," she said. "I don't need overshoes," said Mitty. She put her mirror back into her bag. "We've been all through that," she said, getting out of the car. "You're not a young man any longer." He raced the engine a little. "Why don't you wear your gloves? Have you lost your gloves?" Walter Mitty reached in a pocket and brought out the gloves. He put them on, but after she had turned and gone into the building and he had driven on to a red light, he took them off again. "Pick it up, brother!" snapped a cop as the light changed, and Mitty hastily pulled on his gloves and lurched ahead. He drove around the streets aimlessly for a time, and then he drove past the hospital on his way to the parking lot.

5 . . . "It's the millionaire banker, Wellington McMillan," said the pretty nurse. "Yes?" said Walter Mitty, removing his gloves slowly. "Who has the case?" "Dr. Renshaw and Dr. Benbow, but there are two specialists here, Dr. Remington from New York and Dr. Pritchard-Mitford from London. He flew over." A door opened down a long, cool corridor and Dr. Renshaw came out. He looked distraught and haggard. "Hello, Mitty," he said. "We're having the devil's own time with McMillan, the millionaire banker and close personal friend of Roosevelt. Obstrosis of the ductal tract. Tertiary. Wish you'd take a look at him." "Glad to," said Mitty.

6 In the operating room there were whispered introductions: "Dr. Remington, Dr. Mitty. Dr. Pritchard-Mitford, Dr. Mitty." "I've read your book on streptothricosis," said Pritchard-Mitford, shaking hands. "A brilliant performance, sir." "Thank you," said Walter Mitty. "Didn't know you were in the States, Mitty," grumbled Remington. "Coals to Newcastle, bringing Mitford and me up here for a tertiary." "You are very kind," said Mitty. A huge, complicated machine, connected to the operating table, with many tubes and wires, began at this moment to go pocketa-pocketa-pocketa.

"The new anesthetizer is giving away!" shouted an intern. "There is no one in the East who knows how to fix it!" "Quiet, man!" said Mitty, in a low, cool voice. He sprang to the machine, which was now going pocketa-pocketa-queep-pocketa-queep. He began fingering delicately a row of glistening dials. "Give me a fountain pen!" he snapped. Someone handed him a fountain pen. He pulled a faulty piston out of the machine and inserted the pen in its place. "That will hold for ten minutes," he said. "Get on with the operation. A nurse hurried over and whispered to Renshaw, and Mitty saw the man turn pale. "Coreopsis has set in," said Renshaw nervously. "If you would take over, Mitty?" Mitty looked at him and at the craven figure of Benbow, who drank, and at the grave, uncertain faces of the two great specialists. "If you wish," he said. They slipped a white gown on him, he adjusted a mask and drew on thin gloves; nurses handed him shining . . .

7 "Back it up, Mac!! Look out for that Buick!" Walter Mitty jammed on the brakes. "Wrong lane, Mac," said the parking-lot attendant, looking at Mitty closely. "Gee. Yeh," muttered Mitty. He began cautiously to back out of the lane marked "Exit Only." "Leave her sit there," said the attendant. "I'll put her away." Mitty got out of the car. "Hey, better leave the key." "Oh," said Mitty, handing the man the ignition key. The attendant vaulted into the car, backed it up with insolent skill, and put it where it belonged.

8 They're so damn cocky, thought Walter Mitty, walking along Main Street; they think they know everything. Once he had tried to take his chains off, outside New Milford, and he had got them wound around the axles. A man had had to come out in a wrecking car and unwind them, a young, grinning garageman. Since then Mrs. Mitty always made him drive to a garage to have the chains taken off. The next time, he thought, I'll wear my right arm in a sling; they won't grin at me then. I'll have my right arm in a sling and they'll see I couldn't possibly take the chains off myself. He kicked at the slush on the sidewalk. "Overshoes," he said to himself, and he began looking for a shoe store.

9 When he came out into the street again, with the overshoes in a box under his arm, Walter Mitty began to wonder what the other thing was his wife had told him to get. She had told him, twice before they set out from their house for Waterbury. In a way he hated these weekly trips to town--he was always getting something wrong. Kleenex, he thought, Squibb's, razor blades? No. Tooth paste, toothbrush, bicarbonate, Carborundum, initiative and referendum? He gave it up. But she would remember it. "Where's the what's-its-



name?" she would ask. "Don't tell me you forgot the what's-its-name." A newsboy went by shouting something about the Waterbury trial.

10 . . . "Perhaps this will refresh your memory." The District Attorney suddenly thrust a heavy automatic at the quiet figure on the witness stand. "Have you ever seen this before?" Walter Mitty took the gun and examined it expertly. "This is my Webley-Vickers 50.80," he said calmly. An excited buzz ran around the courtroom. The Judge rapped for order. "You are a crack shot with any sort of firearms, I believe?" said the District Attorney, insinuatingly. "Objection!" shouted Mitty's attorney. "We have shown that the defendant could not have fired the shot. We have shown that he wore his right arm in a sling on the night of the fourteenth of July." Walter Mitty raised his hand briefly and the bickering attorneys were stilled. "With any known make of gun," he said evenly, "I could have killed Gregory Fitzhurst at three hundred feet with my left hand." Pandemonium broke loose in the courtroom. A woman's scream rose above the bedlam and suddenly a lovely, dark-haired girl was in Walter Mitty's arms. The District Attorney struck at her savagely. Without rising from his chair, Mitty let the man have it on the point of the chin. "You miserable cur!" . . .

11 "Puppy biscuit," said Walter Mitty. He stopped walking and the buildings of Waterbury rose up out of the misty courtroom and surrounded him again. A woman who was passing laughed. "He said 'Puppy biscuit,'" she said to her companion. That man said, "Puppy biscuit" to himself. Walter Mitty hurried on. He went into an A. P., not the first one he came to but a smaller one farther up the street. "I want some biscuit for small, young dogs," he said to the clerk. "Any special brand, sir?" The greatest pistol shot in the world thought a moment. "It says 'Puppies Bark for It' on the box," said Walter Mitty.

12 His wife would be through at the hairdresser's in fifteen minutes' Mitty saw in looking at his watch, unless they had trouble drying it; sometimes they had trouble drying it. She didn't like to get to the hotel first, she would want him to be there waiting for her as usual. He found a big leather chair in the lobby, facing a window, and he put the overshoes and the puppy biscuit on the floor beside it. He picked up an old copy of *Liberty* and sank down into the chair. "Can Germany Conquer the World Through the Air?" Walter Mitty looked at the pictures of bombing planes and of ruined streets.

13 . . . "The cannonading has got the wind up in young Raleigh, sir," said the sergeant. Captain Mitty looked up at him through tousled hair. "Get him to bed," he said wearily, "with the others. I'll fly alone." "But you can't, sir," said the sergeant anxiously. "It takes two men to handle that bomber and the Archies are pounding hell out of the air. Von Richtman's circus is between here and Saulier." "Somebody's got to get that ammunition dump," said Mitty. "I'm going over. Spot of brandy?" He poured a drink for the sergeant and one for himself. War thundered and whined around the dugout and battered at the door. There was a rending of wood and splinters flew through the room. "A bit of a near thing," said Captain Mitty carelessly. "The box barrage is closing in," said the sergeant. "We only live once, Sergeant," said Mitty, with his faint, fleeting smile. "Or do we?" He poured another brandy and tossed it off. "I never

see a man could hold his brandy like you, sir,” said the sergeant. “Begging your pardon, sir.” Captain Mitty stood up and strapped on his huge Webley-Vickers automatic. “It’s forty kilometers through hell, sir,” said the sergeant. Mitty finished one last brandy. “After all,” he said softly, “what isn’t?” The pounding of the cannon increased; there was the rat-tat-tatting of machine guns, and from somewhere came the menacing pocketa-pocketa-pocketa of the new flame-throwers. Walter Mitty walked to the door of the dugout humming “Aupres de Ma Blonde.” He turned and waved to the sergeant. “Cheerio!” he said. . . .

14 Something struck his shoulder. “I’ve been looking all over this hotel for you,” said Mrs. Mitty. “Why do you have to hide in this old chair? How did you expect me to find you?” “Things close in,” said Walter Mitty vaguely. “What?” Mrs. Mitty said. “Did you get the what’s-its-name? The puppy biscuit? What’s in that box?” “Overshoes,” said Mitty. “Couldn’t you have put them on in the store?”

“I was thinking,” said Walter Mitty. “Does it ever occur to you that I am sometimes thinking?” She looked at him. “I’m going to take your temperature when I get you home,” she said.

15 They went out through the revolving doors that made a faintly derisive whistling sound when you pushed them. It was two blocks to the parking lot. At the drugstore on the corner she said, “Wait here for me. I forgot something. I won’t be a minute.” She was more than a minute. Walter Mitty lighted a cigarette. It began to rain, rain with sleet in it. He stood up against the wall of the drugstore, smoking. . . . He put his shoulders back and his heels together. “To hell with the handkerchief,” said Walter Mitty scornfully. He took one last drag on his cigarette and snapped it away. Then, with that faint, fleeting smile playing about his lips, he faced the firing squad; erect and motionless, proud and disdainful, Walter Mitty the Undefeated, inscrutable to the last.



Informational Text: Expository

Dogs vs. Terrorists

By Burkhard Bilger

1 It's a hectic Wednesday morning at Times Square, the busiest subway station in New York City. Thousands of commuters are rushing to work. A new team from the transit canine unit is just arriving. The team has four police officers, each paired with a dog.

2 Large, pointy-eared, and powerful, these dogs make people nervous. On subway trains, they stare at passengers with unswerving intensity; every time the train doors open, they pivot to scan the crowds on the platforms. Each dog weighs close to 200 pounds. Their jaws can deliver 750 pounds of pressure -- enough to chew through steel. And in preparation for their police work, they have received as much training as a battle-ready U.S. soldier.



3 The team has been at Times Square for only a few moments when one of the dogs, a large German shepherd named Thunder, erupts into ferocious barks. A few feet away, a man crouches next to a pillar. Thunder clearly perceives this man as a threat.

4 "Show your hands!" shouts the officer holding Thunder's leash.

5 But the man ignores the officer's command. Suddenly, he lunges toward the cop, who immediately lets go of the leash.

6 Thunder leaps into the air with lightning speed. His jaws clamp down around the man's arm.

7 "Get this dog off of me!" the man screams. He manages to break away, but within a few steps, Thunder is on him again, jerking him to the ground.

8 The suspect has been subdued.

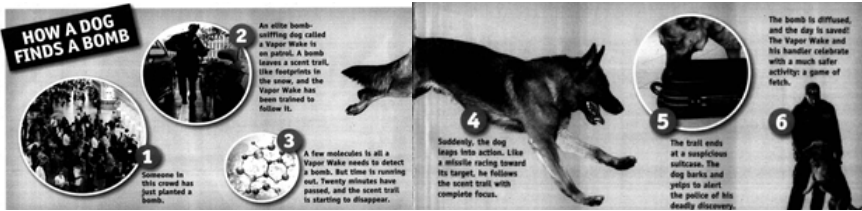
Natural Super Soldier

9 Dogs serve in two roles within the New York City Police Department. Some are "detection dogs," trained to sniff out explosives and drugs. Others, like Thunder, are patrol dogs, which hunt down criminals.

10 Patrol dogs have one of the most dangerous jobs in public life. In the past year, four have been killed or seriously injured in the line of duty. They are also strikingly effective. Sending in "jaws and paws" intimidates even the most hardened criminals. In 2010, one subway station on the Lexington Avenue line was hit by 20 muggings and thefts in a matter of months. Once a canine unit began patrolling the station, the number dropped to zero.

11 As a species, dogs were made for this sort of work. No other animal so diligently aims to please humans. A good dog is a natural super soldier: strong yet acrobatic, fierce yet obedient. It can leap higher than most of us, and run twice as fast. Its eyes are equipped for night vision, its ears for super-sonic hearing, its mouth for subduing prey.

12 But a dog's true glory is its nose. Dogs can detect just a few tiny particles of a substance-like the fleck of a cookie crumb at the bottom of your backpack. Just as astonishing is a dog's acuity; it can identify different substances within a scent, like the spices in a soup.



13 How? A dog sniffs with short, sharp breaths—as many as 10 per second—drawing the scent deep into its nasal cavity. The receptors there are a hundred times denser than in a human and can pick up on a wide array of particles. Drug smugglers often try to mask the smell of their shipments by packaging them with coffee beans, air fresheners, or sheets of fabric softener. But it takes more than that to fool a dog.

14 Paul Waggoner, a behavioral scientist at the Canine Detection Research Institute at Auburn University in Alabama, conducted a test to prove it. He flooded his lab with different scents, then added tiny quantities of different illegal drugs. In one case, "The whole lab smelled like a Starbucks," Waggoner recalls.

15 The dogs had no trouble homing in on the drugs. "They're just incredible at finding the needle in the haystack," Waggoner says.

The Best of the Best

16 Police dogs are heirs to an ancient and fierce bloodline. For thousands of years, dogs marched into battle with their human companions. The great mastiffs and sight hounds of Mesopotamia wreaked havoc on the battlefield. Dogs ran with Attila the Hun's hordes and wore battle armor beside the knights of the Middle Ages. In 1495, when Christopher Columbus sailed to what is now the Dominican Republic, he brought greyhounds that could run down an

enemy and rip out his guts. During World War I, Germany fielded 30,000 dogs and used them for everything from transporting medicine and wounded soldiers to carrying messages between trenches. The German shepherd, first registered as a breed in 1889 by a former German cavalry captain, was favored during the war for its intelligence and steadiness as well as its power.

17 Today, a variety of breeds are used in police work. Labradors, for instance, are superior sniffers, while German shepherds are preferred for patrol. Regardless of their breed, almost all American police dogs are imported from Europe. They come mainly from Germany, where dogs have been carefully bred for centuries. Once in America, they receive a year of intense training at one of several canine training facilities around the country. Those that don't make the cut in training usually become service dogs (such as guide dogs for the blind). Only the most gifted are recruited to work for the NYPD.



18 Once a group of new police dogs arrives in New York City, each dog is carefully matched with a police officer. For the next six weeks, each cop-and-dog team builds its working relationship, learning each other's cues and idiosyncrasies.

19 But the real goal of this training period is to put the dog under the full command of the officer. An officer who loses control of his or her dog in a chaotic environment like a New York City subway station risks disaster. These dogs are inherently aggressive, and if they go too far, someone could be injured – or worse. This is the hard-

est part of canine work – being able to put “the emergency brakes” on a dog that is capable of biting through human bone.

A Unique Bond

20 To understand the raw power and energy of these animals, one needs to spend just a few minutes at the NYPD's canine training facility in Long Island City. There, the dogs are kept in cages when they aren't working with their human partners. They find the confinement hard to bear. When their partners walk into the room, the dogs go crazy. Foam flies from their muzzles. Some chew their cages, reducing steel to bits of twisted scrap metal. They often break their teeth, yet keep chewing.

21 The moment that the cages are opened, however, the noise stops. The dogs trot silently to their partners' sides, then sit back on their haunches—ears erect, eyes focused forward—and wait for instructions. As one trainer puts it, “It’s like you've turned on a switch.” Indeed, canine police tend to talk about their dogs as if the animals are mechanical devices. They say that their dogs need “maintenance” to be “fully operational,” and that a “dual-purpose dog” one that has been taught both to chase down criminals and detect drugs or explosives has “superior functionality.” In the field, a dog is a piece of critical gear. And yet, officer and dog forge a unique bond. Off duty, each dog lives with its partner and its partner's family. Like an enduring marriage, these partnerships tend to last for life.

They Are Ready

22 Back at the bustling Times Square subway station, it quickly becomes clear that the man Thunder has taken down is not a criminal or a terrorist. He is an undercover

transit cop – a decoy disguised as a troublemaker. He was part of a test for the new canine unit.

23 Thunder wasn't supposed to take the decoy down to the ground, but it wasn't Thunder's fault that he did. The decoy shouldn't have tried to run away—that wasn't part of the plan. It was up to Thunder's partner to call the dog back.

24 Thunder is given high marks. Since September 11, the NYPD has doubled the size of its canine force. There are now 100 dogs like Thunder patrolling the city. And they are ready.

Adapted from "Beware of the Dogs" by Burkhard Bilger. From the February 27, 2012, issue of The New Yorker. ©2012 by Burkhard Bilger. Used with permission from the author.

1982 The AIDS Epidemic

“Thirty years after scientists gave a frightening new disease its name, AIDS still afflicts millions of men and women around the world.”

By Lawrence K. Altman, M.D.

1 The patients had baffling problems. Many came in with painful white patches in their mouths. Others had swollen lymph nodes, purplish skin blotches, or uncommon infections of the lung or brain. In the late 1970s and early 1980, doctors like myself began seeing a scattering of such cases in otherwise healthy young men in California and New York. (In addition to being a reporter for the New York Times, I’m a doctor.) We could usually diagnose the individual conditions—for example, the skin blotches were Kaposi’s sarcoma, a rare cancer— but we couldn’t explain why these patients had developed these ailments or even agree on what to call the overall disease.

2 In August 1982—after more than 450 cases involving men and women in 23 states were reported—the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (C.D.C.) decided on acquired immune deficiency syndrome, of AIDS.

3 Thirty years later, AIDS has infected more than 60 million people worldwide and has killed at least half that number in one of the worst epidemics in history. Teenagers today have grown up with little if any knowledge of the dark early days of AIDS. But they’re worth recalling—as a reminder of both what can happen when confusion and fear surrounding a previously unknown disease, and of the changes and breakthroughs that the epidemic has brought about.

4 Looking back 30 years and with the wisdom of hindsight, it seems as if doctors, the public, journalists, and governments were shockingly slow to recognize an epidemic in the making and to take steps to try to contain it.

5 Because infectious diseases were no longer the major killers they had been even a few decades earlier, doctors had become overconfident. Smallpox had just become the first ever disease to be eradicated, and most doctors overlooked a basic fact of biology: that a new infectious disease could appear at any time.

6 Researchers set out to investigate AIDS, but they were puzzled. Why were many of the earliest patients gay men? Could an infectious agent—something transmitted person to person—cause AIDS? If so, what was it?

7 In 1983, the first report that a virus, now known as H.I.V. (human immunodeficiency virus), causes AIDS came from researchers in Paris.

Immune System Attacked

8 With new blood tests, scientists soon found that H.I.V. infects women and heterosexual men too, and that the virus usually lies dormant in the body for about 10 years before developing into AIDS. It thus became clear that AIDS had been silently spreading around the world in the 1970s.

9 Scientists learned that the disease could be transmitted in a number of ways: through sex, blood transfusions, needles and syringes used to inject drugs, and from mother to child in the womb.

10 In the early years, AIDS was an almost certain death sentence. A healthy immune system fights off disease, but what is so terrible about AIDS is that it attacks the immune system itself, making a person vulnerable to all kinds of fatal infections that a healthy immune system could fight off.

H.I.V./ AIDS Today

Region	Number Infected
Sub-Sahara Africa	22.9 million
South/Southeast Asia	4 million
Eastern Europe/Central Asia	1.5 million
Central & South America	1.4 million
North America	1.3 million
Western & Central Europe	840, 000
East Asia	790, 000
North Africa/ Middle East	740, 000
Caribbean	200, 000
Oceania	54, 000
Grand Total	34 million

11 My worst fears about the magnitude of what was clearly a global epidemic came in 1985, when I reported on AIDS in Africa. There the disease had begun to take a devastating toll on both men and women. Only a few African countries would let me in. Wherever I went, officials were in denial about the disease. A health official in Rwanda scoffed at the threat of AIDS in an interview. But later, in private, he questioned me closely about the disease because a member of his family had it.

Public Hysteria

12 Back in the U.S., because AIDS was often sexually transmitted, many people including doctors, patients, and government officials, hesitated to speak frankly about it.

13 Public hysteria took hold of the country in the mid-1980s. Many people feared without reason, that they could catch AIDS from drinking fountains and toilet seats or in restaurants.

14 “The ‘80s was an era of stigmatization,” says Dr. Frank J. Bia of AmeriCares, a disaster relief and humanitarian organization that delivers treatment to H.I.V. patients around the world.

15 At a number of schools around the country, parents protested the presence of students with AIDS. Ryan White, a hemophiliac in Kokomo, Indiana, contracted H.I.V. at age 13 from a blood transfusion. In 1985, parents at his school went to court to keep him out of the classroom, although health authorities said he posed no threat to other students. “All our children have to give up their right to a safe education for him,” Faye Miller, a parent at Ryan’s school, told *The Times*. After a lengthy battle, he won the right to stay in school.

16 Ryan became a spokesman for AIDS issues, trying to educate the public on how incorrect information about AIDS added to the plight of children with the disease. He died in 1990 at age 18, after Congress had passed a law named for him that paid for health care and support services for H.I.V. and AIDS patients.

17 Some critics accused public officials, including President Ronald Reagan, of ignoring the epidemic. Reagan, who took office in 1989, gave his first major speech about AIDS six years later, when he called for wider testing. “Just as most individuals don’t know they carry the virus, no one knows what extent the virus had infected our entire society,” Reagan said.

18 In 1987, a drug known as AZT was introduced. It was the first treatment that seemed to slow the progression of AIDS in those infected with the H.I.V. virus.

19 The most significant breakthrough in drug treatments today are available in a single pill. Perhaps most significant, the cost of the drug has dropped dramatically, from about \$12,000 a year to about \$200 for some programs in poor countries. But no one knows whether the drug will work indefinitely.

The Future of AIDS

20 Despite tremendous strides in the past 30 years in containing and treating AIDS, the outlook for the disease remains uncertain. Today an estimated 34 million people, mostly in poor countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, are infected with H.I.V. and 2.7 million more become infected each year, according to the United Nations.

21 In the U.S., the number of new infections per year has dropped from 130,000 at the peak of the epidemic to 50,000 but has stubbornly remained at that level for the past five years. Though nearly 7 million people worldwide are receiving drug treatments paid for with billions of dollars from government and private sources (more than half of which comes from the U.S.), many more are not getting the treatment they need. Health officials say an effective vaccine is badly needed but that is still years off.

22 Beyond that, there's concern that stories about Magic Johnson and others infected with H.I.V. living more normal lives might make people—especially teenagers, who weren't around when the epidemic began—complacent about how serious a disease AIDS remains. Anyone—white, black, male, female, rich, poor, young and old—can still get it.

23 “Young people have a different perspective because H.I.V. has become a treatable chronic disease,” says Dr. Bia of AmeriCares. “But there's a lot of work to be done, and the epidemic continues.”

AmeriCares Model

24 For 30 years, the success of AmeriCares has been characterized by timely response, meaningful impact, high integrity and intense passion for the work. To deliver medicine, relief supplies and health care to the needy, AmeriCares has developed a platform based on strategic partnerships, high-efficiency and tight auditing procedures.

25 Since its founding, AmeriCares has provided more than \$10 billion of aid to 164 countries. To accomplish these results, AmeriCares assembles product donations from the private sector, determines the most urgent needs and solicits the funding to send the aid via airlift or ocean cargo to health and welfare professionals in the indigent locations.

26 On the ground, AmeriCares works with international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), hospitals, health networks and government ministries of long-standing effectiveness such as the Order of Malta, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) International, HOPE Worldwide, Project Mercy, and Help The Afghan Children. Warehouses in the U.S., Europe, and India serve as assembly centers for inventory.



27 In some instances, where products such as medicines or medical supplies are not available through conventional channels and the need is critical, AmeriCares applies funds for direct purchases.

28 Uncompromising security procedures assure that the assistance is distributed to the designated beneficiaries and not diverted. For example, AmeriCares ensures there is all-inclusive tracking of medicine by lot number and conducts thorough follow-ups.

29 The model is time-tested, cost-effective, and experience-driven. Because we deliver donated medicines, medical supplies and humanitarian aid to an established and trusted network of locally based clinics, hospitals and health care providers around the world and here at home, the impact of the contributions supporters provide is multiplied many, many times over. Historically, for every \$1 donated we are able to deliver \$25 in humanitarian relief to people in need.

AmeriCares Global Medical Assistance and Humanitarian Programs



30 Close to 2 billion people — one-third of the world's population — have inadequate access to medicines; the majority of them live in developing countries. The people living in these areas are not just victims of news-making catastrophes; they also suffer from ongoing “silent disasters” caused by grinding poverty and a lack of access to medicines.

31 Poor health and poverty are inextricably linked. In vulnerable areas, children die from preventable or treatable illnesses, adults with debilitating chronic conditions can no

longer provide for their families and whole communities are threatened by infectious diseases. Resource-constrained health care institutions serving the poor communities often lack sufficient medicines and supplies to diagnose conditions and provide life-saving and life-changing treatment. These shortages originate from economic limitations as well as disruptions in supply chains, logistics challenges and political and administrative obstacles. To provide quality care for indigent patients, the health care institutions and health care professionals have an ongoing need for medicines and other medical assistance.

32 Without medicines, health care institutions lack what the UN Millennium Project calls “the most significant tool that society possesses to prevent, alleviate and cure disease.”

33 On a daily basis AmeriCares Global Medical Assistance program delivers essential tools, which include: prescription and over-the-counter medicines, nutritional supplements, surgical and wound care supplies, hospital supplies, and diagnostics and laboratory supplies.

34 The Global Medical Assistance program reaches a broad range of institutional beneficiaries through a network of in-country partners. These institutions, located in the United States and 38 countries around the world, include more than 2,000 general and specialty hospitals, outpatient clinics, community health programs, hospice residences, rehabilitation centers and homes for children and the elderly.

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