

## Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*: Annotations of Chapter 2 "Stand"<sup>1</sup>

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### A

**absence of probable cause (p. 43)** – no reason (here: for a crime) given

**accountability (p. 44)** – quality or state of being and acting accountable/ to accept responsibility, the fact of being responsible for what you do and able to give a satisfactory reason for it

**annual salary (p. 35)** – fixed compensation paid in a whole year for services

**(to) approach (p. 38)** – to come very near; to draw nearer; to come near or nearer to sth. in space, time, quality, or amount

**asthma inhaler (p. 37)** – a small device containing medicine that you breathe in through your mouth, used by people who have problems with breathing

**Atlanta Legal Aid Society (p. 35)** – an organization which helps people who cannot afford a lawyer with free civil legal services

**Atlanta SWAT (p. 39)** – military-like unit (SWAT = Special Weapons and Tactics) within the U.S. police force of Atlanta; trained to deal with dangerous situations, such as hostage-taking and riots

**(to be) attached to (p. 39)** – to be connected or joined to sth.

**Attica (p. 36)** – a town in the state of New York

### B

**baffled (p. 46)** – very confused/ puzzled, being completely unable to understand or explain sth.

**bewildered (p. 40)** – deeply confused or perplexed; confused and uncertain

### C

**case files (p. 39)** – a collection of documents and evidence relating to a particular legal case

**caseload (p. 36)** – number/amount of cases

**casket-sized (p. 36)** – size of a small chest or box (especially one used to keep jewelry in)

**conditions of confinement (p. 36)** – by law given conditions while being in prison

**(to) conduct an illegal search (p. 41)** – to do an illegal search

**credentials (p. 42)** – sth. that gives a title to credit or confidence

**cruel (p. 36)** – causing (very bad) injury, grief, or pain

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<sup>1</sup> The annotations (page numbers) are based on the following edition of the book: Stevenson, Bryan. 2020. *Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption*. London: Scribe Publications.



## D

**declared unconstitutional (p. 36)** – sth. stands against the (state, here: American) Constitution

**dense (p. 39)** – marked by compactness or crowding together of parts, very close together so that it is difficult to go or see through

**deterioration (p. 37)** – the action or process of sth./sb. to get worse

**(to) dissect (p. 35)** – separating, to analyze and interpret

**docket (p. 36)** – a register of cases

**dorm (p. 35)** – synonym to dormitory, a room for sleeping

**(to) draw one's weapon (p. 40)** – to pull a gun

**(driver's) license (p. 37)** – a license issued under governmental authority that permits the holder to operate a motor vehicle

**duplex (p. 35)** – a building divided into two separate homes

## E

**electric cattle prods (p. 36)** – sticks with electrodes on the end which are used to make a cattle move via relatively high-voltage electric shock

**(to) expire (p. 37)** – to exceed its period of validity; if sth., that lasts for a fixed length of time expires, it comes to an end or stops being in use

## F

**facilities (p. 36)** – here: buildings/ institutions (prisons)

**fierceness (p. 46)** – violently hostile/ aggressive in temperament

## G

**glove compartment (p. 41)** – a small storage cabinet in a car

**gurney (p. 37)** - a type of cart which is used for moving patients in a hospital; light bed on wheels

## H

**(to) have a lump in the throat (p. 46)** – constriction of throat through emotions

**hoarsely (p. 46)** – rough/ harsh in sound

**humiliation in stockades (p. 37)** – here: embarrassment of prisoners

**hymnal (p. 45)** – a book of church songs

## I



**ignition (p. 38)** – the device that is used to ignite the fuel mixture in a gasoline engine; the electrical system in an engine that causes the fuel to burn or explode in order to start the engine

**(to) implement (p. 36)** – to carry out, to accomplish

**intimidating (p. 37)** – causing a loss of self-confidence, producing feelings of fear or timidity

**(to) inch cautiously (p. 40)** – to move forward very carefully

**in pursuit of (p. 39)** – in order to achieve sth.

**instant (noun) (p. 40)** – a very short moment (German: 'Augenblick')

## L

**legal career (p. 35)** – the juridical profession for which one trains, and which is undertaken as a permanent calling

**lethal force (p. 43)** – deadly violence

## M

**medication (p. 37)** – medicinal substance, medicament

**(to) menace (p. 38)** – to make a show of intention to harm, to act in a threatening manner

**misconduct cases (p. 42)** – intentional wrongdoing

## O

**ominously (p. 39)** – being or exhibiting an omen, foreshadowing evil

**ordinary (p. 39)** – of common quality, rank, or ability

**outrage (p. 42)** – anger/ resentment aroused by an injury or insult

## P

**(to) peer (here: peering) (p. 41)** – to look curiously

**(to) persuade (p. 38)** – to move by argument to a belief, position, or course of action

**pothole (p. 38)** – a pot-shaped hole in a road surface

**presumption of guilt (p. 44)** – to believe someone is guilty even if the person is not

**prison abuse (p. 36)** – corrupt practice or custom in prison

**probable (p. 41)** – likely to be or become true/ real

## R

**(to) rattle (p. 39)** – to cause or make a rattling (extraordinarily loud) sound

**(to) rein (p. 45)** – to control

**rent increase (p. 36)** – money that is paid for living in a flat is becoming more expensive



**reputation (p. 38)** – recognition by other people of some characteristic or ability, the opinion that people have about so. or sth., or how much respect or admiration so. or sth. receives, based on past behavior or character

**(to) retrieve (p. 38)** – to get back again

**(to) run a red light (p. 38)** – crossing a red traffic light

## S

**scattered (p. 42)** – separated widely; covering a wide area

**scrambling (p. 35)** – to struggle eagerly

**(to) sensitize (p. 44)** – to become or make sensitive

**shaky (p. 45)** – lack of stability (here: in the voice)

**“Stand Your Ground” laws (p. 43)** – laws allowing Americans to use lethal force when it’s believed to be necessary

**(to) stave off hunger (p. 41)** – to “fight” being hungry

**(to) swerve (p. 37)** – to turn aside abruptly from a straight line or course

## T

**(to be) taken into custody** – to get arrested, immediate charge and control exercised by a person or an authority

**(to be) terrified** – to be filled with terror

**(to be) thrown into litigation (p. 35)** – the process of taking a case to a court of law so that a judgment can be made

**traffic violations (p. 37)** – violating/ breaking the traffic rules

## U

**unruly tufts (p. 45)** – not controlled pieces of hair

## V

**vindicated (p. 44)** – here: to feel supported, confirmed

**violation (p. 36)** – the act of violating, infringement/ breaking of the rules

## W

**(to be) weathered (p. 38)** – altered in color, texture, composition, or form by such exposure or by artificial means producing a similar effect

**(to) wave somebody closer (p. 46)** – to ask somebody to come closer (German: ‘heranwinken’)



The annotations were designed with the Merriam-Webster Dictionary (<https://www.merriam-webster.com>), the Oxford Advanced American Dictionary ([https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american\\_english/](https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/american_english/)), and the Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>) and adapted by the authors.



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