

## Bryan Stevenson's *Just Mercy*: Annotations of Chapter 8 "All God's Children"<sup>1</sup>

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### A

(to) **abandon** – leave/stop supporting somebody or something (p. 151)

**absence** (n.) – the non-existence or lack of something (p. 150)

**abusive** (adj.) – using cruel language or physical violence (p. 148)

**accident** (n.) – a situation in which somebody is injured or something is damaged without anyone intending them to be (p. 149)

(to) **acculturate** – to change so that you become more like people from a different culture (p. 161)

**accused** (adj.) – when someone claims someone else did something wrong (p. 149)

**adjudication** (n.) – to make a formal judgment (p. 155)

**adversarial** (adj.) – an adversarial system is one in which two sides oppose and attack each other (p. 150)

(to) **appeal** – apply to a higher court for a reversal of the decision of a lower court (p. 157)

**appointed** (adj.) – to be chosen for a job or position (p. 152)

(to) **arrest** – being picked up by the police because they think this somebody has broken the law (p. 152)

**arson** (n.) – the crime of setting fire to something (p. 156)

**asphyxiation** (n.) – preventing somebody from breathing normally, usually so that they die or stop breathing (p. 149)

(to) **attempt** – to try (p. 151)

### B

**bondage** (n.) – the state of having your freedom limited, or being prevented from doing what you want (p. 147)

### C

**cane** (n.) – a stick to support walking (p. 151)

(to) **charge** sb. (with sth.) – formally accuse somebody of something before a court of law (p. 152)

(to) **cherish** – to hold something dear (p. 162)

**circulated** (adj.) – pass from person to person (p. 157)

(to) **comply** – to do as told (p. 152)

(to) **compound** – to make something bad worse (p. 154)

(to) **conceive** – to become pregnant (p. 148)

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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.



(to) **condemn** – to give somebody a severe punishment (p. 150)  
(to) **confess** – formally admit to committing a crime (p. 159)  
**confinement** (n.) – the state of being kept within certain limits (p. 152)  
**conscience** (n.) – the part of you mind that tells you what is wrong or right (p. 147)  
**constantly** (adv.): continuously over a period of time (p. 160)  
**correctional officer** (n.) – an official working in a correctional facility/prison in charge of directly handling the inmates (p. 151)  
**court-appointed attorney** (n.) – a lawyer who provides legal counsel for those who cannot pay for or obtain an attorney (p. 158)  
**criminologist** (n.) – an expert in the scientific study of crime and criminals (p. 159)

## D

(to) **decline** – lessen in quality or quantity (p. 160)  
**defendant** (n.) – someone accused in a court of law (p. 150)  
**delivery** (n.) – euphemism for childbirth (p. 151)  
(to) **derail** – bring sth. or sb. off the way or direction they went (p. 153)  
(to) **deteriorate** – sth. or a situation becoming worse (p. 151)  
**determined** /dɪ'tɜːmɪnd/ (adj.) – having made a firm decision and being resolved not to change it (p. 161)  
(to) **disbar** – to make a lawyer leave the legal profession (p. 150)  
(to) **disclaim** – to deny being part of or responsible for something (p. 160)  
**discretion** (n.) – (here) the ability to decide (p. 159)  
(to) **disrupt** – to prevent sth. from going on the usual way by causing problems (p. 149)  
**distraught** (adj.) – so upset and worried that you cannot think clearly (p. 149)  
**distressed** (adj.) – very upset (p. 148)  
**district** (n.) – an area of a city or country etc. that have official borders (p. 148)  
**ditch** (n.) – a narrow channel dug at the side of a road or field (p.157)  
**domestic abuse** (n.) – abuse happening in the family (p. 154)  
(to) **drop charges** – take away legal charges against a person one had brought against them in the court of law (p. 150)

## E

**eager** (adj.) – strongly wanting to do something (p. 161)  
**elation** (n.) – a state of great happiness or excitement (p. 162)  
(to) **encourage** – speak words that lighten their mood, tell sb. to do sth. they are unsure about (p. 152)



**evidence** (n.) – information that is given in a court of law in order to prove that sb. is or is not guilty (p. 160)

**exacerbated** (adj.) – very annoyed or upset (p. 149)

**exchange** (n.) – the act of giving sb. sth. and receiving sth. else from them (p. 150)

(to) **exonerate** – to show or state that someone or something is not to be blamed for something bad that happened (p. 159)

**exposure** (n.) – having no protection from something harmful (p. 159)

(to) **extend** – to make a time longer (p. 152)

**extended** (adj.) – for a longer period of time (p. 161)

**extraordinary** (adj.) – very unusual or surprising (p. 148)

## F

(to) **face trial** – be about to be judged in a court of law (p. 150)

(to) **file a motion** – a proposal that is made formally at a meeting, and then is usually decided on by voting (p. 150)

**flashback** (n.) – a sudden memory of an event in the past (p. 155)

**foster care** (n.) – an organized system where children or minors are raised by other people than their parents because of their situation (p. 151)

**frantically** (adv.) – in a hurried, excited, or disorganized manner (p. 158)

## G

(to) **gain** – get sth. that you want or need (p. 147)

## H

**handcuffs** (n.) – metal rings you can lock around someone's wrists (p. 151)

**harsh** (adj.) – very cruel, overly rough (p. 153)

**homicide** (n.) – formal word for murder (p. 153)

**hospitalized** (adj.) – admitted to a hospital (p. 154)

## I

**impending** (adj.) – something about to happen (p. 159)

(to) **impose** – to force sth. on sb. (p. 150)

**impunity** – without punishment (p. 155)

**inappropriate** (adj.) – not fit for the job (p. 152)

**incarceration** (n.) – the state of being imprisoned (p. 159)

**incompetency determination** – a professional psychological evaluation of mental health that shows that a person is not able to do sth. (p. 150)



**incompetent** (adj.) – not very good at doing/unable to do something (p. 150)

(to) **ingest** – swallow (p. 149)

**inhumane** (adj.) – cruelly not fit for humans (p. 153)

(to) **insist** – to say firmly and often that sth. is true, especially when other people think it may not be true (p. 149)

**insubordinate** (adj.) – not following orders (p. 152)

**insulated** (adj.) – protected from unpleasant experiences (p. 160)

**intellectual disabilities** – a disability that limits the sb. can think, read, speak or do anything to do with the mind (p. 151)

**intent** (n.) – the intention to do sth. illegal (p. 150)

**internal injuries** (n.) – injuries not visible from the outside of the body (p. 154)

**interrogation** (n.) – ask questions of someone closely, aggressively, or formally (p. 157)

(to) **intersect** – two lines, roads, or other things meet or go across each other (p. 148)

(to) **intervene** – to interfere with something to stop or settle it (p. 158)

## J

**invisible** (adj.) – sth. invisible cannot be seen (p. 148)

**juvenile** (n.) – sb. who is not legally an adult yet (p. 152)

**juvenile detention facility** (n.) – a prison for juvenile offenders or delinquents, often under the supervision of a juvenile court (p. 157)

## L

**law enforcement** (n.) – the police or other officials who stop crime or catch criminals (p. 155)

**lighter fluid** (n.) – fuel of a lighter (p. 149)

**limp** (adj.) – not firm or strong, not moving (p. 148)

**listless** (adj.) – feeling tired and not interested in things (p. 149)

(to) **lynch** – to kill someone for an alleged crime without a trial (p. 158)

## M

**mandatory** (adv.) – something that must be done or is demanded by law (p. 150)

**maze** (n.) – a network of paths and hedges designed as a puzzle through which one has to find a way (p. 160)

**mind's eye** (n.) – the part of your mind that allows you to visualize things (p. 162)

**misconduct** (n.) – unacceptable behavior (p. 150)

**misgivings** (n.) – a feeling of doubt and fear about what might happen or about whether sth. is right (p. 150)



**multiple sclerosis** – sickness of the nervous system (p. 151)

**municipality** (n.) – a town, city, or other small area, that has its own government to make decisions about local affairs (p. 148)

(to) **mutilate** – hurt sb. or sth. so that they remain scarred (p. 152)

## N

**NAACP** – National Association for the Advancement of Colored People – a prominent civil rights organization (p. 158)

**neglected** (adj.) – not being given attention (p. 154)

**norm** (n.) – an accepted standard or a way of being or doing things (p. 159)

## O

**obedient** (adj.) – willing to obey orders or requests (p. 155)

## P

**parole** (n.) – release of a prisoner on the promise of good behavior (p. 152)

(to) **permit** sth. – to officially allow sth. (p. 151)

**personnel** /pəːsə'neɪ/ (n.) – people employed in an organization (p. 158)

**petty crime** (n.) – a type of crime that is not considered serious when compared with some other crimes (p. 155)

**plea** (n.) – a statement by sb. in a court of law saying whether they are guilty or not (p. 152)

**plight** (n.) – a dangerous, difficult, or otherwise unfortunate situation (p. 153)

**poverty** (n.) – the state of being poor (p. 148)

**practice** (n.) – a habit or way of doing sth. (p. 151)

**predator** (n.) – someone that exploits, victimizes, or preys on others (p. 159)

**prediction** (n.) – statement about what you think will happen in the future (p. 160)

**preoccupied** (adj.) – thinking or worrying about something else (p. 160)

(to) **presume** – to think that something is the case (p. 155)

**pretend victim** (n.) – a fake victim (p. 155)

**prison processing center** (n.) – place in a prison where new arrivals are searched, cleaned, and dressed before being placed in their cell (p. 152)

**probation** (n.) – being allowed to stay out of prison after committing a crime if one behaves well (p. 155)

**procedural rule** (n.) – law that establishes the rules of the court and the methods used to ensure the rights of individuals in the court system (p. 160)

**proceeding** (n.) – when sb. uses a court of law to deal with a legal case (p. 150)



**property** (n.) – sth. owned by sb. (p. 152)

**prosecution** (n.): the process of officially accusing someone in a court of law of committing a crime (p. 157)

(to) **prowl** – an animal slowly walking around an area looking for prey/sth. to kill (used metaphorically here) (p. 148)

**punishable** (adj.) – sth. will lead to a punishment (p. 152)

**pursuit** (n.) – a chase after something or someone (p. 156)

## R

**rage** (n.) – intense anger (p. 148)

**ransom** (n.) – money demanded to release a victim of a kidnapping (p. 155)

**reckless** (adj.) – not caring or worrying about the possible bad or dangerous results of your actions (p. 153)

(to) **recover** – to get better after an illness, accident, shock etc. (p. 149)

(to) **refuse** – to actively decide not do sth. that sb. else demands (p. 158)

(to) **rehabilitate** – to return someone to a usual way of living (p. 156)

**regularity** (n.) – sth. happening repeatedly (p. 154)

(to) **relinquish** – to let sb. else have your position, power, or rights, specially unwillingly (p. 147)

**remorse** (n.) – feeling bad for one's actions (p. 153)

**remorseless** (adj.) – without feeling regret or guilt (p. 159)

(to) **require** – demand sth. in order to do sth. (p. 151)

(to) **resist** – try to refuse to do sth. (p. 151)

(to) **revive** – bring back to life (p. 148)

(to) **roam** – to walk or travel for a long time without a clear goal (p. 149)

**robust** (adj.) – strong and unlikely to break or fail (p. 161)

## S

**score** (of something) (n.) – a group of twenty (p. 157)

**secluded** (adj.) – separated (p. 150)

**second-degree murder** (n.) – second-degree murder is murder that is not premeditated or caused by an obvious lack of concern for human life, punishment is usually lower than for first-degree murder (p. 150)

**sensitive** (adj.) – having or showing awareness and understanding, esp. of other people's feelings and needs (p. 161)

**sensory deprived** (adj.) – the deliberate reduction or removal of normal external stimuli such as sight and sound for an extended period (p. 162)

**sentence** (n.) – punishment set by a court (p. 150)



**shackling** (n.) – putting chains or handcuffs on sb. to keep them from going away (p. 151)  
(to) **shatter** – break sth. hard into many small pieces (p. 152)  
**shoplifting** (n.) – stealing from a shop (p. 152)  
**skin graft** (n.) – piece of healthy skin taken from one part of the and put in another that has been damaged (p. 149)  
(to) **spare** – to not give sb. sth. bad or unpleasant (p. 150)  
(to) **spasm** – strong muscular contractions that keep sb. from moving in a normal way (p. 151)  
**sobering** (adj.) – creating a more serious, sensible, or solemn mood (p. 161)  
**solitary confinement** (n.) – the isolation of a prisoner in a separate cell (usually as a punishment) (p. 162)  
**staff** (n.) – people who work at a certain place (p. 152)  
(to) **stand trial** – to be judged in a court of law (p. 150)  
**statute of limitations** (n.) – a statute assigning a certain time after which rights cannot be enforced by legal action (p. 160)  
(to) **strangle** – to kill or hurt sb. by pressing their throat with your hands (p. 148)  
(to) **subject** sb./sth. to sth. – cause or force someone or something to undergo an experience (p. 157)  
**subsequently** (adv.) – after an event in the past (p. 150)  
**suicide** (n.) – killing oneself (p. 153)  
**supervision** (n.) – sb. more experienced or in charge checking after sb. who is not (p. 152)  
(to) **support** – if results, facts, studies etc. support an idea or statement, they show or prove that it is correct (p. 150)  
**summarily** (adv.) – in a direct manner; without notice or delay (p. 158)  
(to) **surface** – to come into public view (p. 159)  
**surgeon general** (n.) – the head of the public health service in the US (p. 159)

## T

(to) **take sth. into account** – to consider, to think about sth. (p. 150)  
(to) **testify** – to make a formal statement of what is true, especially in the court of law (p. 150)  
**throat** (n.) – the passage from the back of your mouth to the top of the tubes that go down to your lungs and stomach (p. 148)  
**treatment** (n.) – a particular way of behavior towards sb. or of dealing with them (p. 150)

## U

**unattended** (adj.) – left alone without anyone in charge (p. 149)  
**uncertainty** (n.) – not being sure of sth. (p. 150)  
(to) **unravel** – here: to become much worse (p. 153)



## V

**violence** (n.) – behavior that is intended to hurt other people physically (p. 149)

**vulnerable** (adj.) – able to be easily physically or mentally hurt, influenced, or attacked (p. 156)

## W

**ward of the court** (n.) – a person, especially a minor or one legally incapable of managing his or her own affairs (p. 154)

(to) **writhe** – to twist your body from side to side while in pain (p. 148)

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.

