Man in the Chevy Silverado

Step Four on the road-rage incident · from four handwritten pages · read aloud to Kris, October 2026

> *This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done.*
>
> — BB p. 67

Columns 1 & 2

who, and what for

Man in the Chevy Silverado. A stranger.

- **A)** Road-raged at me. Yelled, intimidated me, then grabbed my mirror and twisted it back. Punked me, with Grace in the car.
- **B)** He got away with it. He felt free to do it because of how I look, nice and passive, and because of my skin color. He read me as safe to do it to, and he was right.
- **C)** I didn't get a chance to stand up for myself. I froze. I engaged and escalated but never fought back. Everyone punks me.

The ones I wasn't naming

D through G

- **D) Myself.** *"I'm passive-aggressive so people can just be aggressive with me."* My own line, page 1. The posture that invites it, the freeze, pulling in front of him in the first place, escalating with my daughter in the back seat.
- **E) "Just like my wife raging at me and getting away with it."** Page 2. He isn't the first rager who walked. The size of the anger was the size of the stack, not the size of a mirror.
- **F) "He should take it like I have to take it."** A principle: the world is a ledger where the ragers collect and the nice pay. I wrote the demand twice, once as pride and once as the thing I wanted to scream.
- **G) The anger, then the guilt and shame.** *"I don't have that much anger,"* then three lines later *"I hope he has a heart attack."* I spent the morning on it instead of on my work, then took the second drug on top.

What the pages say twice, in my own hand: *I'm not a coward* and *I'm a coward. I'm better than that man* and *I'm worse than that man. He should take it like I have to take it* and *take it like I've had to swallow it.* The inventory starts from those pairs.

Column 3

where it hit me, and the fear bracketed beside each line

A) Raged at, mirror twisted, punked with Grace in the car

- **Self-esteem.** I am not a coward. I am a man who protects his daughter. *(a coward, weak, a father who froze)*
- **Pride.** Others shouldn't see me punked and humiliated. No one puts hands on my truck. He should take it like I have to take it. *(humiliated, small in front of my daughter, the one who always pays)*
- **Ambition.** I want to get even. I want to prove I'm not a coward. I want to go and humiliate him. *(unavenged, impotent, that the fantasy is all I have)*
- **Security.** I need to stand up for myself to be OK. I need to not be rattled, not freeze, to be OK. I need him to get his, preferably from me. *(weak, the freeze, that there is no justice)*
- **Personal relations.** People who yell get their way; people who don't get walked on. My daughter should see a father who handles it. *(walked on, that she saw me freeze)*
- **Sex relations.** A real man doesn't get punked. He punks. A real man could take him. *(not a man, that I couldn't)*

B) He got away with it, because of how I look

- **Self-esteem.** I am not the kind of man you do this to. I am more than what he saw. *(exactly that kind; that what he saw is what I am)*
- **Pride.** Others shouldn't get to read me and act on it. He shouldn't get to do that for free. *(marked, targeted, unfair)*
- **Ambition.** I want to be unpunkable. I want him to have picked the wrong guy. *(that he picked exactly the right guy)*
- **Security.** I need people to not see passive on me. I need to know it wasn't about what I am. *(seen through, that it was, and I can't change it)*
- **Personal relations.** Everyone punks me. Just like my wife. *(a permanent victim, that home is the same road)*
- **Sex relations.** A real man isn't read as passive. *(weak, not a man)*

C) I didn't get a chance to stand up for myself. I froze.

- **Self-esteem.** I would have stood up if I'd had the chance. I am not a man who takes it. *(that I had the chance and froze; cowed)* · **Pride.** I shouldn't have to swallow it again. I should have yelled back. *(swallowing it forever, silent)* · **Ambition.** I want to not be pushed around. I want to tell him to take it like I've had to swallow it. *(pushed around for good, that nobody will ever take it for me)* · **Security.** I need to not freeze. I need to know I'd fight if it came to it. *(going under, that I wouldn't)* · **Personal relations.** The nice one pays and the loud one collects. *(in debt everywhere)* · **Sex relations.** A real man doesn't freeze. *(frozen, a boy)*

Column 4

"God please help me see the truth." · the Realization, then the four questions

> *Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes. Where had we been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking and frightened? Though a situation had not been entirely our fault, we tried to disregard the other person involved entirely. Where were we to blame? The inventory was ours, not the other man's.*
>
> — BB p. 67 ¶2

The Realization

how have I done the things in Column 2 to him, or to others?

Raged at, intimidated, hands on what's mine, A. I wrote it in the margin before anything else: *"I get as angry as that man on inside when I'm in pain."* And not only inside. I have yelled at Jazmin. I have hit walls, thrown things, screamed in my own house. I rage at the people who live with me and am polite to strangers, and then call myself better than the man who does it the other way round. He yelled at a stranger for thirty seconds. I have yelled at my wife for years, and my nonverbal daughter has heard every bit of it. I twisted his mirror back, too: every time I punish Jazmin with silence and mood, I am reaching into her car and turning something of hers so she can't see.

Got away with it, because he could, B. *"I would do that if I could get away with it. Maybe I would?"* I was honest on page 2 and then walked it back. I already do, where I can get away with it. Who in my house can't fight back? Grace cannot speak. Jazmin, when I go cold, adjusts and tiptoes. I collect from the people who can't collect from me, exactly the way I say he did. And on the road: I pulled in front of him. I didn't wait in the line. I was in a hurry and decided the rules didn't apply to me. He punked me. I cut him off first.

Didn't get a chance to stand up for himself, C. He gets to be a sick man for one morning. How many times has Jazmin tried to say something and gotten the wall? How many times has she not gotten a chance because I'd already left the room, or gone dead-eyed, or decided the conversation before it started? The freeze I hate in myself is the same freeze I hand her: present, and gone.

> *we invariably find that at some time in the past we have made decisions based on self which later placed us in a position to be hurt.* — BB p. 62 ¶1

The Four Questions

Self-seeking is what a camera could have caught. The other three happen inside.

A) Raged at, mirror twisted, punked with Grace in the car

Self-seeking *my selfish actions were…*	I pulled in front of him; I didn't wait in the line. When he came at me I engaged and escalated; I did not put the window up and drive. I spent the morning replaying it instead of working. I called no one.
Selfish *my selfish attitudes were…*	I was in a hurry, so the line didn't apply to me. My standing in front of my daughter mattered more than her safety. Getting even mattered more than getting her home.
Dishonest *I was in the delusion that…*	That I don't have that much anger. That I'm better than that man because I don't lash out at strangers; I lash out at my wife, which is not better, only safer. That I'm worse than that man, which is the same delusion facing the other way. That I "didn't get a chance": I had the chance, and it was to protect Grace by leaving.
Afraid *I was afraid…*	That I'm a coward. Of the freeze, that I'll go still and not come back. That my daughter saw her father fail to protect her.

B) He got away with it, because of how I look

Self-seeking	I told myself the story of why he chose me and built a case on it all morning. I made his read of me into my verdict on me. I used the story to excuse the escalation.
Selfish	The world should not get to read me. He should have picked the wrong guy. If I can't be unpunkable, nothing else I am counts.
Dishonest	That his rage is information about me. It is information about him; the Book says disregard him entirely, because I cannot inventory, fix, or confirm his motive. That "nice and passive" is what I am instead of a habit I can set down. That my skin is the reason for anything I did.
Afraid	That what he saw is what I am. Of being marked. That there is no justice, the loud ones just win. That home is the same road.

C) I didn't get a chance to stand up for myself. I froze.

Self-seeking	I engaged him verbally. What I was after was standing: not to be seen as a coward, by him or by Grace. When it got close I stayed in it, and it was both: locked into a course that began as not being pushed around, then backed down instead of rising to calm speech. What was missing was one plain sentence, *that wasn't right, I was wrong*, while still taking none of his rage. I turned the anger on myself when I couldn't land it on him.
Selfish	I shouldn't have to swallow it *again*. Standing up means yelling back; nothing else counts. Everyone punks me: one man, one mirror, and the verdict covers my whole life.
Dishonest	That there are two settings, rage it or swallow it. There is a third: a calm man who drives away with his daughter and has nothing to prove to a stranger. That freezing proves I'm a coward; freezing is what a body does when something comes at it fast. That the man who gets punked is the one who pays. He was gone in a minute. I was still paying at noon.
Afraid	That I'll always be pushed around. That nobody will ever stand up for me, so I have to, and I can't. That the only way out of paying is to become the one who collects.

Harm

who got hurt by what I did

Grace rode in a car where two grown men were yelling, and one of them was her father deciding his standing mattered more than getting her home. My employer paid for a morning I spent on a stranger. Jazmin would have met whatever was left of it that night. I harmed myself with a second drug after the first wore off: guilt and shame, taken to keep the day about me. And a sick man got a wish for his death from a man in recovery.

The Fear, and the Way Out

the trail, the ideal, the prayer, and what I'm doing about it

The trail

the fears drilled down until they stop

Punked → a coward → weak → no one stood up for me, so I have to, and I can't → the only two settings are rage it or swallow it → **self-reliance fails: "If I can't make myself unpunkable, I'm nothing, and I can't."**

The root is not the man. It is the belief that my safety and my worth depend on making myself unpushable by my own strength, and a lifetime of evidence that I can't. No amount of size or volume delivers *never again.* The Book's answer is the one I keep walking past: the role He assigns. The role in that car was *father driving his daughter home.* Not avenger. Not coward. Driver.

> *We trust infinite God rather than our finite selves. We are in the world to play the role He assigns. Just to the extent that we do as we think He would have us, and humbly rely on Him, does He enable us to match calamity with serenity.*
>
> — BB p. 68 ¶2

The ideal

the man behind the wheel

- **Protective.** Her safety first, my standing nowhere. A man who gets his daughter home has already stood up for himself.
- **Calm.** The third setting. Not rage, not swallow. Window up, drive.
- **Courageous.** The Book's kind: *"All men of faith have courage. They trust their God."* Courage here was leaving, and later it is telling the whole thing, including the cut-off.
- **Considerate.** Wait in the line. The man who doesn't cut people off is not in the position to be hurt.
- **Free.** From the ledger. He owes me nothing. I owe him nothing. I'm the one who drove away.

What I'm doing

the short list

1. Tell the whole thing to one man, including that I cut him off first. That's this.
2. Give the hours back to my employer. Quietly. The guilt is not the amends.
3. Pray for the man in the truck for fourteen days: his health, his prosperity, his happiness, whether I mean it or not.
4. In the next car: window up, eyes forward, drive. Standing up is on that list. Winning is not.
5. Keep the Silverado the Silverado. Jazmin wasn't there.
6. One plain sentence a day, calm, firm, kind, clear, brief, where nothing is at stake. That's how the third setting gets built.

> *God, help me to be **protective**: let my daughter's safety be the whole job when something starts, and let my standing with a stranger weigh nothing. Help me to be **calm**: show me the third setting, not rage and not swallow. Help me to be **courageous**, the courage of faith, not of fists. Help me to be **considerate**: to wait in the line and let the hurry go. Help me to be **free**: close the ledger. He doesn't owe me. I don't owe him. Take from me the need to make anyone pay, and take the guilt and shame I've been using as a second drug since. This is a sick man. How can I be helpful to him? God save me from being angry. Thy will be done. Amen.*

> *It is a spiritual axiom that every time we are disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with us. If somebody hurts us and we are sore, we are in the wrong also.* — 12&12 p. 90 ¶2

John M · BBA Step Four on the road-rage incident, October 2026 · Big Book only, from the four handwritten pages · every quotation verified against Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th ed. and Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions