

Assignment:

Write a plausible story, dialogue or scenario where ONE of your philosophers is faced with a situation or ethical dilemma where he/she is faced with such a question and must see a problem through to a conclusion based on their own strength of conviction in their personal philosophy.

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It wasn't the earthquake that caused all the damage. It did cause damage, mind; many buildings that were unfortified against such things lay in rubble in the streets, their walls and contents now indecipherable from the other debris that littered the ground.

Disasters like this usually warrant some warning; a request for people to evacuate vulnerable areas, warnings on the severity of the earthquake, or even simply being told that it is going to happen. Despite this, none were issued. The earthquake took everyone by surprise, which means there were many more people hurt than there would be otherwise, and many more people killed.

Alec, a young man working as a Paramedic, saw his fair share of destruction. Car crashes, house fires, assaults - he saw it all. Earthquakes, though, were the worst.

Some people would get off lucky (using the term loosely) with a quick death, maybe having a head or chest crushed. These people, while tragic, were only a matter of removing from the rubble and placing the bodies on the black tarp to be taken for autopsy and burial.

The living ones were the hardest.

Alec dug around through the rubble for hours, then days, trying to find every last survivor. All had broken bones, most had major bleeding, and some would die as he carried them off for triage. He heard the voice of the woman who had trained him every time he let someone die saying: "Alexander, if you get attached to the victims, you're only going to hurt them more."

He understood what she meant, and yet, he couldn't help himself.

From a young age, Alec loved helping people. While not always ethical in his endeavours, his goal was always to aid those around him to the best of his ability. Through school, he would help teach difficult concepts to his classmates, give them lunch if they didn't have any, or even let them cheat off of his answers on tests.

This altruism carried over into his jobs, working first as a lifeguard, then as a search and rescue volunteer, and finally as a paramedic.

Looking back to the earthquake, he didn't remember a whole lot. He remembered the initial scramble to get to center of the disaster, and he remembered crying people and screaming children.

One of his more vivid memories is of one house that only partially collapsed, trapping a mother inside with her young child.

"Alec, you can't go inside! Are you insane!? Wait for the disaster crew!" Anita exclaimed, fastening the belt she carries with a first-aid kit attached. "The building could collapse with you inside!"

Alec shook his head, conflicted. "But what if the crew doesn't get here in time? Those people..."

"He has a point, Anita." Eric said, eyes darting around the surrounding area, scanning for anyone in need. "There is a young child in there. If we can at least get them out..."

"And what, leave the mother!?" Exclaims Alec, whirling to the other paramedic. "Who are we to rob that kid of their mother?"

Eric stayed silent, but squints at the house. Bodies littered the ground around them, some waiting to go to a hospital, some waiting to go to a morgue.

"I'm going in." Alec said suddenly, adjusting his gear. "We can't just leave them in there to die."

"Whatever. Your funeral," Alina muttered, waving her hand at the boys dismissively.

"Eric, are you coming?"

After a moment's pause, Eric nodded, and the two ran off to the building together.

In the end, Eric and Alec managed to save the pair, pulling the mother out from beneath the rubble, and finding the child, who had luckily been under mostly unscathed by the collapse, trapped under a piece of ceiling.

Alec was commended for what he did, but really, he never understood why. Those people were in pain, and he could help. What kind of a person wouldn't?

Perhaps this is just who Alec is as a person. He wanted to help. He risked the rest of the house collapsing on him to save those two people, two people he had never met before, because he felt it was the right thing to do.

Wasn't it?