

Robinson Crusoe

Daniel Defoe

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I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called - nay we call ourselves and write our name - Crusoe; and so my companions always called me.

I had two elder brothers, one of whom was lieutenant-colonel to an English regiment of foot in Flanders, formerly commanded by the famous Colonel Lockhart, and was killed at the battle near Dunkirk against the Spaniards. What became of my second brother I never knew, any more than my father or mother knew what became of me.

Being the third son of the family and not bred to any trade, my head began to be filled very early with rambling thoughts. My father, who was very ancient, had given me a competent share of learning, as far as house-education and a country free school generally go, and designed me for the law; but I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea; and my inclination to this led me so strongly against the will, nay, the commands of my father, and against all the entreaties and persuasions of my mother and other friends, that there seemed to be something fatal in that propensity of nature, tending directly to the life of misery which was to befall me.

My father, a wise and grave man, gave me serious and excellent counsel against what he foresaw was my design. He called me one morning into his chamber, [...] He told me it was men of desperate fortunes on one hand, or of aspiring, superior fortunes on the other, who went abroad upon adventures, to rise by en-

terprise, and make themselves famous in undertakings of a nature out of the common road; that these things were all either too far above me or too far below me; that mine was the middle state, or what might be called the upper station of low life, which he had found, by long experience, was the best state in the world, the most suited to human happiness, not exposed to the miseries and hardships, the labour and sufferings of the mechanic part of mankind, and not embarrassed with the pride, luxury, ambition, and envy of the upper part of mankind. He told me I might judge of the happiness of this state by this one thing - viz. that this was the state of life which all other people envied; that kings have frequently lamented the miserable consequence of being born to great things, and wished they had been placed in the middle of the two extremes, between the mean and the great; that the wise man gave his testimony to this, as the standard of felicity, when he prayed to have neither poverty nor riches.

[...]

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Difficult words with definitions:

	Difficult word/phrase	Easier replacement
1	afterwards	later/after that
2	from whence	from where
3	corruption	(dishonest actions that ruin your trust)
4	nay	no
5	elder brother	older brother
6	regiment	military unit
7	formerly	before now
8	battle	fight
9	spaniards	people from Spain
10	bred	raised/trained
11	rambling	incoerente
12	competent	(able to do something well/very good)
13	satisfied	made happy (by meeting a need or reaching a goal)

14	inclination	desire
15	entreaties	begging
16	fatal	deadly
17	propensity	natural tendency
18	misery	extreme unhappiness/extreme pain
19	befall	happen to
20	grave man	very serious man
21	counsel	advice
22	foresaw	predicted
23	chamber	room
24	desperate	(without hope/very upset)
25	aspiring	(wanting something great)
26	abroad	in other countries
27	adventures	fun trips
28	enterprise	business/project
29	undertakings	difficult projects
30	miseries	terrible troubles
31	hardships	difficult situations
32	mankind	people
33	luxury	(expensive and desirable)

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34	ambition	desire to do great things
35	envy	jealousy
36	viz	that is
37	envied	was jealous of
38	frequently	often
39	lamented the	sadly complained about the
40	miserable	terrible (and very unhappy)
41	consequence	result
42	testimony	statements (in court)
43	felicity	happiness
44	poverty	poorness
	pronunciation of lieutenant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cerca con Google - https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/lieutenant - https://dictionary.cambridge.org/pronunciation/english/lieutenant-governor