

Text #1: Hillenbrand, Laura. *Unbroken*

Part 1:

"The men had been adrift for twenty-seven days. Borne by an equatorial current, they had floated at least one thousand miles, deep into Japanese-controlled waters. The rafts were beginning to deteriorate into jelly, and gave off a sour, burning odor. The men's bodies were pocked with salt sores, and their lips were so swollen that they pressed into their nostrils and chins. They spent their days with their eyes fixed on the sky, singing "White Christmas," muttering about food. No one was even looking for them any more. They were alone on sixty-four million square miles of ocean. A month earlier, twenty-six-year-old [Louie] Zamperini had been one of the greatest runners in the world, expected by many to be the first to break the four-minute mile, one of the most celebrated barriers in sport. Now his Olympian's body had wasted to less than one hundred pounds and his famous legs could no longer lift him. Almost everyone outside his family had given him up for dead."

Part 2:

"Every man in camp was thin, many emaciated, but Louie and Phil were thinner than anyone else. The rations weren't nearly enough and Louie was plagued by dysentery. He couldn't get warm and he was racked by a cough. He teetered through the exercise sessions, trying to keep his legs from buckling. At night, he folded his paper blankets to create loft, but it barely helped; the unheated, drafty rooms were only a few degrees warmer than the frigid outside air."

"The guards were fascinated to learn that the sick, emaciated man in the first barracks had been an Olympic runner. They quickly found a Japanese runner and brought him in for a match race against the American. Hauled out and forced to run, Louie was trounced, and the guards made a tittering mockery out of him. Louie was angry and shaken, and his growing weakness scared him. POWs were dying by the thousands in camps all over Japan and its captured territories, and winter was coming."

Part 3:

"Invasion seemed inevitable and imminent, both to the POWs and to the Japanese. Having been warned of the kill-all order, the POWs were terrified. At Borneo's Batu Lintang POW camp, which held two thousand POWs and civilian captives, Allied fighters circled the camp every day. A civilian warned POW G. W. Pringle that "the Japanese have orders no prisoners are to be recaptured by Allied forces. All must be killed." Villagers told of having seen hundreds of bodies of POWs in the jungle. "This then is a forerunner of a fate which must be ours," wrote Pringle in his diary. A notoriously sadistic camp official began speaking of his empathy for the POWs, and how a new camp was being prepared where there was ample food, medical care,

and no more forced labor. The POWs knew it was a lie, surely designed to lure them into obeying an order to march that would, as Pringle wrote, "afford the Japs a wonderful opportunity to carry out the Japanese Government order to 'Kill them All.'"

Part 4:

"As bad as were the physical consequences of captivity, the emotional injuries were much more insidious, widespread, and enduring. In the first six postwar years, one of the most common diagnoses given to hospitalized former Pacific POWs was psychoneurosis. Nearly forty years after the war, more than 85 percent of former Pacific POWs in one study."

Part 4 (cont'd):

"Most suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), characterized by flashbacks, anxiety and nightmares. Flashbacks, in which men re-experienced their traumas and were unable to distinguish the illusion from reality, were common. Intense nightmares were almost ubiquitous. Men walked in their sleep, acting out prison camp ordeals, and woke screaming, sobbing, or lashing out. Some slept on their floors because they couldn't sleep on mattresses, ducked in terror when airliners flew over, or hoarded food. One man had a recurrent hallucination of seeing his dead POW friends walking past. Another was unable to remember the war. Milton McMullen couldn't stop using Japanese terms, a habit that had been pounded into him. Dr. Alfred Weinstien . . . was dogged by urges to scavenge in garbage cans. Huge numbers of men escaped by drinking. In one study of former Pacific POWs, more than a quarter had been diagnosed with alcoholism. "For these men, the central struggle of post-war life was to restore their dignity and find a way to see the world as something other than menacing blackness. There was no right way to peace; every man had to find his own path, according to his own history. Some succeeded, for others, the war would never really end."