

Alaina English  
July 30, 2024  
Rhetoric  
Essay

There was once a thriving family. They were unified, happy, and reliant on each other for joy and fulfillment. As time went by, the daughter grew distant. She found the pressure placed upon her shoulders only seemed to grow with time. Day by day, motivation became an increasingly difficult commodity for her to come by. She saw less of her family. They all saw less of each other. Driven apart, surely by more than the isolation of the daughter, but impacted by it nonetheless. She was too proud to ask for help. One person can affect the unity and success of a party. Pride is the ultimate root of dissension in a community.

Achilles was a mighty warrior, born of the gods, blessed by the gods, with a destiny wracked in war. However, for a time, Achilles refused to pick up the sword and do battle with the Trojans. His leader and ruler, King Agamemnon, took his prize, a woman named Briseis. From then on, Achilles would not allow himself to fight for his people, allowing his pride to prevent him from engaging in the fight. To summarize the words of his friend, Patroclus, Greek soldiers were dying needlessly. Achilles had to lose Patroclus, a brother and a friend, before he would rejoin the community, but not before an irreplaceable aspect of it had been ripped from life permanently. A voice causing disharmony, or the lack of a voice that ought to be present, can easily cause loss and discomfort among people that need to rely on each other. Putting aside the feeling that one has been wronged can be very difficult and is another form of pride. This sort of pride can easily cause people to get hurt or take risks that should've belonged to someone else, as shown with Patroclus.

One cannot truly blame Achilles for his failure without also leaving some of the fault for the leader of the Greeks, Agamemnon. He was the first to stray from the priorities of the

community by putting his wants before those of his men. Even as he saw the effects of his irreverent actions both at the camp and on the battlefield, he could not bring himself to put aside his pride for the benefit of his community and the people he was supposed to be leading and guiding. Putting one's own desires first can be selfish and a poor example to those looking on. Pride of this kind causes those that should be able to rely on these leaders to pull away and not want to contribute and stand behind someone that doesn't put their all into their cause.

Every strand of the intricately woven tapestry that is a community is important to the larger picture. Without even one string, the whole identity of the art can easily unravel. Pride is what most easily destroys the beautiful unity of this work of art. Sometimes it is hard to tell exactly where it came undone first, but that is not nearly so important as fixing the tear in the first place. One of the hardest actions a person can take is taking that first step to right the wrongs made in the presence of pride, but it is one of the most important. People are not born into humility. They are born into pride, self righteousness, and the urge to resist humility. Humility, however, can be learned. So, all should go out and practice humility, practice swallowing the pride when it wells up. Learn to fix the art of community, not break it down.