## Rejected First

## Rejection protects us from getting involved with people who do not believe in us, and opens the way to attracting the people who do. Rejection builds character and helps us to realize how important our goal really is to us. Rejection helps us to grow spiritually so that when we reach greatness we appreciate and use it in the highest way possible.

## The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. (St. Mark 12:10 )

**And we know that all things work together for good**

**to them that love God.**

***(Romans 8:28)***

## Affirmation: “Great Spirit of this universe, how glorious are Your ways. My human heart can’t fully grasp the magnitude of all Your good, yet I know I am Yours. I know that there is nowhere I can go nor nothing I could be when I would not be in Your loving care. Thank you, God.” *(Richard & Mary-Alice Jafolla, in The Quest, p. 400)*

**The best selling writer of westerns in the world has seen both sides of chance. Louis L’Amour was destitute at age 12 in North Dakota when his father was forced out of business. He left home at 15 and once earned $500 by fighting a 230-pound Irishman and knocking him out in the sixth round. That tough early life prepared him for the 26 consecutive rejections of his first novel. He finally sold it and has gone on to sell more than 100 million books, 80 titles and 32 movies.  
*(Ripley’s Believe It Or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 34)***

## Poet T. S. Eliot, while working for a publishing house, rejected George Orwell’s Animal Farm. So did twenty-two other book publishers. When finally published, Animal Farm became a classic satire still taught widely in schools. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 199)* After having been rejected by both Hewlett-Packard and Atari, ****Apple**** microcomputers had first-year sales of $2.5 million. (Glenn Van Ekeren)

**Son: "I asked a girl out yesterday." Mom: "And?" Son: "I got rejected again." Dad: "Well, Son, look on the bright side. Now you know how your credit card feels." *(Steve Kelley & Jeff Parker, in Dustin comic strip)***

## John James Audubon, the noted bird illustrator, was once so deeply in debt that his creditors took everything he owned -- except his bird pictures, which they considered worthless. (Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Strange Coincidences, p. 27)

**When Burt Bacharach was trying to break into song-writing, he went through a solid year of rejections. “They’d stop you after eight bars,” he recalled. “Connie Francis lifted the needle off the demo.” *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 12)***

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**It is said that there is not a moment of the day when reruns of the madcap television series I Love Lucy are not playing somewhere in the world. Lucille Ball’s career didn’t start off so well, however. She was once dismissed from drama school for being too quiet and shy. *(Paul Stirling Hagerman, in It’s a Weird World, p. 50)***

**Lucille Ball was thrown out of the New York Robert Minton-John Murray Anderson School of Drama at the age of fifteen because her instructor thought she was “too quiet and shy.” *(Noel Botham, in The Ultimate Book of Useless Information, p. 7)***

**Teachers at John Murray Anderson’s Dramatic School in New York sent a young student home because she was “too shy” to make an actress out of her. The girl’s name? Lucille Ball. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 13)***

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**Denver native Ruth Handler (1916-2002) created the Barbie doll in 1959 as an alternative to the two-dimensional paper dolls of the day. Despite initial rejections from Mattel executives who believed the doll was too expensive ($3 each) and lacked potential, the company has sold more than 1 billion Barbies worldwide. *(Paul Niemann, in Invention Mysteries)***

**In 1962 the Decca Recording Company turned down the opportunity to work with the Beatles. Their rationale? “We don't like their sound. Groups of guitars are on their way out.” Of course, the Beatles turned that imminent failure into prominent success. (Glenn Van Ekeren, in The Speaker's Sourcebook)**  
   
**Best-selling books rejected by six or more publishers:**

**And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street, Theodor Geisel (Dr. Seuss)**

**MASH, Richard Hooker**

**Kon-Tiki, Thor Heyerdahl**

**Jonathan Livingston Seagull, Richard Bach**

**Auntie Mame, Patrick Dennis. *(Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists , #2)***

**What businesses first rejected:**

**AT&T – first rejected dial phones**

**IBM – rejected Liquid Paper**

**Brunswick – rejected automatic bowling Pinspotters**

**Clothing makers – rejected miniskirts and Velcro**

**Toy stores – rejected selling G.I. Joes**

**Banks – rejected Automatic Teller Machines (for four years)**

**ABC network – rejected Monday Night Football. *(World Features Syndicate)***

**In 1983, Martha Coolidge, director of a film called Valley Girl, was angry with the casting director, who kept auditioning “pretty boys” for the lead role. So Coolidge went to the reject pile, pulled the first photo off the top, held it up and said, “Bring me someone like this.” The picture was of Nicolas Cage, and he got the part. It was his first lead role. *(Uncle John’s All-Purpose Bathroom Reader, p. 34)***

**A month before World War II ended, a relatively unknown writer named Rachel Carson proposed an article for Reader’s Digest about the effects of the pesticide DDT on what she called “the delicate balance of nature.” The shy woman assured the editors that “it’s something that really does affect everybody.” They turned her down. Perhaps they felt a story about pesticides would be too depressing. Or maybe it was that DDT, then widely used in the United States, had likely saved thousands of American Marines and soldiers by killing disease-carrying insects on far-off beachheads. Carson filed the subject away and went on to write best-selling books on the wonders of the sea. A dozen years later, she decided to take up the topic again. This time would be different. *(Bruce Watson, in Smithsonian magazine)***

**ABC rejected The Cosby Show before it was picked up by NBC. *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 104)***

**Leonardo Dicaprio was rejected by a talent agent when he was 10 years old for having a bad haircut. First memory is of wearing red-and-yellow tap shoes and being lifted onto a stage by his father to entertain people waiting for a concert. First acting experience was in a Matchbox car commercial. *(2002 People Almanac, p. 367)***

**As a boy, he dreamed of drawing comic strips. As a young man, he was advised by an editor in Kansas City to give up drawing. He kept knocking on doors, only to be rejected. He persevered until finally a church hired him to draw publicity material. Working out of an old garage, he befriended a little mouse who ultimately became famous. The man was Walt Disney, and his friend became Mickey Mouse. A 1931 nervous breakdown, rejections, and setbacks could not steal Disney’s dreams. *(Glenn Van Ekeren, in The Speaker’s Sourcebook)***

**Dr. Seuss's first children's book was rejected by twenty-three publishers. The twenty-fourth publisher sold six million copies and Dr. Seuss died having known his perseverance resulted in entertaining, challenging, and educating millions of children. (Glenn Van Ekeren, in Speaker's Sourcebook II, p. 279)**

**Dune by Frank Herbert: Herbert's massive science-fiction tale was rejected by 13 publishers with comments like “too slow,” “confusing and irritating,” “too long,” and "issues too clear-cut and old fashioned." But the persistence of Herbert and his agent, Lurton Blassingame, finally paid off. Dune won the two highest awards in the science-fiction writing and has sold over 10 million copies. (Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists, #2)**

**When the Everly Brothers tried to break into the music biz, they were turned down by a dozen record labels over two years. When someone finally took a chance on them, they sold millions. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 15)***

**In 1979, feminist Sonia Johnson was formally excommunicated by the Mormon Church because of her outspoken support for the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. (Associated Press)**

**Malcolm Forbes, the late editor-in-chief of Forbes magazine, one of the largest business publications in the world, did not make the staff of The Princetonian, the school newspaper at Princeton University. *(The Best of Bits & Pieces, p. 60)***

**Who was dismissed from the psychiatric society in Vienna, Austria, only to become a world respected, prominent psychiatrist? Victor Frankl. *(Glenn Van Ekeren, in The Speaker’s Sourcebook, p. 355)***

**The Jimi Hendrix Experience once opened for the Monkees. They were booed by fans and thrown off the tour, Jimi and the Experience that is. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 14)***

**When rejection was high praise: I Love Lucy – sponsor tried to cancel after one show; Cagney & Lacey – all three major networks first rejected; All in the Family – ABC rejected pilot; Cheers – almost canceled after first season; Muppet Show – CBS rejected; Law & Order – CBS rejected pilot. *(World Features Syndicate)***

**All great innovation is built on rejection. *(Louis-Ferdinand Celine, author)***

**Eighteen publishers turned down Richard Bach's 10,000-word story about a “soaring" seagull, Jonathan Livingston Seagull, before Macmillan finally published it in 1970. By 1975, it had sold more than 7 million copies in the United States alone. (Joe Griffith, in Speaker's Library of Business, p. 250)**

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**Dubliners by James Joyce: Joyce would not allow any changes to be made in his book of 15-short stories which depict Dublin in the most sordid light. Consequently, it was rejected by 22 publishers. In a letter to Bennett Cerf, Joyce described what happened after this book was finally published by Grant Richards in 1914: “. . . when at last it was printed some very kind person bought out the entire edition and had it burnt in Dublin – a new and private auto-da-fe (burning of a heretic).” Those stories have since been hailed as the work of a genius. (Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists - #2, p. 209)**

**Nobody had worse luck with publishers than James Joyce. He threw his first autobiographical novel, Stephen Hero, into the fire when they rejected it, but went on to write Ulysses. It was considered a dirty book, however, and was banned in America until 1933, more than 10 years after its publication. *(Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 37)***

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**A 63-year-old man named Harlan had every excuse in the world to play the role of a victim -- but chose to become a victor instead! At one time Harlan owned a restaurant-motel-service station business he'd built up over the years. He was offered nearly $200,000 cash for the business, but turned down the offer because he wasn't quite ready to retire yet. Two years later the state built a new superhighway bypassing his business. Within a year Harlan lost everything. Here he was, 65 years old, flat broke, and no income other than a small monthly Social Security check to live on. The only thing he knew how to do well was cook chicken. Maybe he could sell that knowledge to someone else. So he kissed his wife goodbye, loaded up his battered old car with a pressure cooker and his special recipe, and set out to sell his idea to the world. It was tough going, and he often slept in his car because there wasn't enough money for a hotel room. Restaurant after restaurant turned him down. Harlan suffered 100, 200, 300 rejections before he found someone to believe in his dream. A few years later he opened the first of what would become thousands of successful restaurants located around the world. The man was Harlan Sanders. Most likely you know him better by his more recognizable name -- Colonel Sanders, the legend behind Kentucky Fried Chicken. (Burke Hedges, in You Can't Steal Second ... )**

**Kon Tiki by Thor Heyerdahl: Twenty publishers decided Heyerdahl’s story of his Pacific crossing on a raft wasn’t worth publishing before Rand McNally accepted it. The book made the country’s top-10 nonfiction list in 1950 and again in 1951, when Heyerdahl’s Oscar-winning documentary film of his trip was released. Total sales have since reached the multimillion mark. (Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists - #2, p. 210)**

**Louis L’Amour, successful author of over 100 western novels with over 200 million copies in print, received 350 rejections before he made his first sale. He later became the first American novelist to receive a special congressional gold medal in recognition of his distinguished career as an author and contributor to the nation through his historically based works. (Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen, Patty Hansen, and Irene Dunlap, in Chicken Soup for the Soul - #2, p. 255)**

**Have you not learned great lessons from those who reject you, and brace themselves against you? Or who treat you with contempt, or dispute the passage with you? (Walt Whitman)**

**It’s an historical fact that Carl Linder, the 1919 winner of the Boston Marathon, was rejected for military service because of flat feet. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Am told small loan companies routinely turn down about half the applicants. *(L. M. Boyd)***

**Lorna Doone, the novel by R. D. Blackmore, received 18 rejections before it was finally published in 1869. It has remained in print ever since. *(Geoff Tibballs, in The Giant Bathroom Book of Dumbology, p. 230)***

**The beginning of the change that was necessary for the Church occurred on October 31, 1517 when Martin Luther, a young priest and scholar, nailed his 95 Thesis, or questions, on the door of the church in Wittenburg, Germany. It was never Luther’s intention to begin a reformation. In fact, he was totally opposed to the Reformation. He was a good Catholic who would gladly have remained one were it not for the way in which the Church responded to him. The 95 Thesis were questions which Luther hoped to have discussed -- nothing more. Rather than responding by answering some of Luther’s questions or actually engaging in some needed reforms, the Church excommunicated Luther. The intellectual Luther, now outside of the Church and unable to help in its reform, had no choice but to continue to pursue his ideas outside the Church. The consequence was the Protestant Reformation. *(Jon Mundy, in On Course)***

**General Douglas MacArthur – the man who, perhaps more than any other, helped us win World War II – might never have gained power and fame. When he applied for admission to West Point, he was turned down, not once but twice. But he tried a third time, was accepted, and marched into the history books. *(Bits & Pieces)***

**Auntie Mame by Patrick Dennis: Some 17 publishers rejected this novel about a free-spirited older woman before Vanguard accepted it. An immediate hit, the book was soon made into a popular film starring Rosalind Russell. Ten years later a musical version of the play, now called Mame , started a long Broadway run. The film Mame was released in 1974. Total book sales have been around 2 million copies. (Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists, #2)**

**Richard Hooker worked for seven years on his humorous war novel, M\*A\*S\*H, only to have it rejected by 21 publishers before Morrow decided to publish it. It became a runaway best-seller, spawning a blockbusting movie and a highly successful television series. *(Joe Griffith, in Speaker’s Library of Business, p. 250)***

**Novelist James Michener was turned down a number of times before he got his first work,Tales of the South Pacific, published. *(Roger Van Oech, in A Kick in the Seat of the Pants)***

**Monopoly, the popular board game that is still selling briskly decades after being introduced in 1935, was actually first turned down unanimously by executives at the Parker Company. Although the manufacturer of board games eventually did market Monopoly, the initial Parker reaction – and the one that almost doomed America’s most popular board game – was that it contained “52 fundamental errors” which would prevent Monopoly from ever being successful. *(M. Hirsh Goldberg, in The Blunder Book, p. 155)*  
In the early 1970s, physicist Paul C. Lauterbur submitted a blurry image of a clam to the science journal Nature. The picture, he argued, was proof that the magnetic resonance of hydrogen atoms could produce internal images of a living organism. The accompanying article was rejected. But Lauterbur soon convinced the editors that he had discovered a significant new technology. Today, that technology, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), is used for more than 60 million technical examinations a year, and has saved countless patients from death or unnecessary surgery. *(The Week magazine, April 13, 2007)***

**By the age of twenty-five, he had been expelled from the army and was disgraced, despondent, without funds, apparently without a future, and suicidal. The man was Napoleon (1769-1821). One year later, he was the youngest general in the French army and began winning victories with ragged troops that were at the point of starvation. *(Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 259)***

**The novel Ironweed has been a phenomenal bestseller and Pulitzer Award winner. The author, William Kennedy, had written several manuscripts, all of them rejected by publishers, before his sudden success. Ironweed was rejected by thirteen publishers before finally being accepted for publication. (Glenn Van Ekeren)**

**The Peter Principle by Laurence Peter: Sixteen publishers rejected Peter’s now famous book about the rise of individuals to their levels of incompetence. However, after Peter wrote a newspaper article on the subject, these same publishers flocked to his door, contracts in hand, and Morrow bought the much rejected manuscript. The book has sold almost 6 million copies, paving the way for The Peter Plan, Peter’s Quotations, and Peter’s People. (Wallace/Wallechinsky, in The Book of Lists, #2, p. 210)**

**When Percy Bysshe Shelley’s early poetry was rejected by England’s publishers, he paid to have the poems printed, then sealed them inside bottles and cast them out to sea. His subsequent poems had better distribution, as he became one of the greatest romantic poets ever. *(Bob Fenster, in They Did What!?, p. 14)***

**Nine publishers, including HarperCollins, Penguin and Transworld, turned down J. K. Rowling’s first Harry Potter book. *(Geoff Tibballs, in The Giant Bathroom Book of Dumbology, p. 229)***

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**Devotees of Elvis Presley will tell you their hero tried to join his high school glee club but was turned down. (L. M. Boyd)**

**Elvis Presley was turned down by Arthur Godfrey’s talent scouts. (Speak UP! N.S.A.)**

**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*For 11 years, John Ratzenberger played America's favorite letter carrier, Cliff Clavin, on the TV show Cheers. But few people know that Ratzenberger had originally auditioned for the part of Norm, only to be rejected in favor of barfly extraordinaire George Wendt. “To save my dignity, I asked the producers if they had a bar know-it-all,” Ratzenberger says. He then quickly improvised a character he had performed in a stage act, a guy who spouts useless facts whether or not anyone else is interested. Ratzenberger got a guest spot as Cliff and wound up as a regular. The rest is television history. (Bill Carter, in New York Times)**

**Every month, Reader's Digest publishes 28 million copies in over 170 countries and seventeen languages, reaching about 100 million readers all over the globe. A quarter of all American homes subscribe, and not just small town folks: More people in New York read the Digest than the Times; more Bostonians read it than the Boston Globe; and more San Franciscans read it than the San Francisco Chronicle. Picking up a copy, with its mix of reprints and original stories about health, politics, religion, positive thinking, inspiration, heroic true life dramas, and humor, gives only a small clue to its wide and diverse appeal. A casual reader could imagine that it might do moderately well in the marketplace. But 28 million copies? Unfathomable. So maybe it's not surprising that the idea of Reader's Digest was originally rejected by every major publisher in the country. *(Jack Mingo, in How The Cadillac Got Its Fins, p. 104)***

**As playwright Gore Vidal tells it, when his play The Best Man was being cast back in 1959, Ronald Reagan was proposed for the lead role of the distinguished front-running Presidential candidate. He was rejected. It was decided that he lacked the “Presidential look." (Fifty Plus)**

**Daniel Dafoe took Robinson Crusoe to 20 publishers before he finally got it printed. It has been a best-seller for over 250 years and has been translated into 10 languages. (Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance)**

**Franz Schubert’s masterpiece, his Sixth Symphony, was turned down by the Paris Symphony Orchestra. The London Philharmonic laughed at it, and its conductor withdrew it from rehearsal. The piece was not played publicly until thirty years after it was written. *(David Louis, in Fascinating Facts, p. 112)***

**After serving in the Army in World War II, Charles Schulz, creator of the Peanuts comic strip, got his first break in 1947 when he sold a cartoon feature called Li'l Folks to the St. Paul Pioneer Press. In 1950, after many rejections, he signed on with United Feature Syndicate. Until he became ill with cancer in the fall of 1999, Schulz drew Peanuts 365 days a year for over fifty years at his studio in Santa Rosa, Calif. (John Lang, in Denver Rocky Mountain News)**

**Dr. Suess’ first book, And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street, was rejected 27 times before he stepped into an office elevator and bumped into an old friend who happened to be working at a publishing house. (David Hoffman, in Little-Known Facts about Well-Known Stuff, p. 196)**

**Taxi was canceled by ABC in 1982 and picked up by NBC, where it ran until July 1983, *(Don Voorhees, in The Perfectly Useless Book of Useless Information, p. 99)***

**Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone, an invention without which the business world of today could not even begin to function, was hard pressed to find a major backer. In 1876, the year he patented the telephone, Bell approached Western Union, then the largest communications company in America, and offered it exclusive rights to the invention for $100,000. William Orton, Western Union's president, turned down the offer, posing one of the most shortsighted questions in business history: “What use could this company make of an electrical toy?” (M. Hirsh Goldberg, in The Blunder Book, p. 151)One of America's most beloved writers was rejected 20 times by the magazine that eventually bought most of his work. James Thurber started writing sketches for the New Yorker in 1926, but they kept turning him down before finally accepting a short piece on a man caught in a revolving door. Thurber never looked back. He published more than 20 books of collected prose and delightful pictures he drew himself. (Ripley's Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance)**

**Classic TV game shows:**

**Hollywood Squares – first rejected by all networks**

**I’ve Got a Secret – cancelled by CBS after 13 weeks (later changed mind and aired 15 years). (*World Features Syndicate)***

**At that time we had the pleasure of visiting with Mary Oliff Ward, whose husband, William Arthur Ward, is one of America's most quoted writers of inspirational maxims. Mary told how Bill kept a rolling pin around which he wrapped all rejection slips received. When one of his students complained about rejected work, yet one more time, Bill would unwind the rolling pin to reveal yards of rejection slips! (Dr. Delia Sellers, in Abundant Living magazine)**

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**Colonel George Washington of the Virginia Militia was denied a commission in the regular British army in 1754. He resigned his militia commission and became a Virginia planter at Mount Vernon. His resentment of the British over this rejection helped lose George III his colonies. (Isaac Asimov’s Book of Facts, p. 259)**

**Eleven aristocratic women declined marriage proposals by the young George Washington, according to historical footnotes. (L. M. Boyd)**

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**Xerography, invented by patent attorney and amateur physicist Chester Carlson in his New York City kitchen, was patented in 1937, but IBM, RCA, Remington Rand, and General Electric, among others, rejected it. *(Mark Green & John F. Berry, in The Challenge of Hidden Profits)***

**Chester Carlson’s patent was turned down by more than 20 companies between 1939 and 1944. And though he got help developing his idea later on, it would be years before the first practical automatic office copier was invented. In 1959, the 914 copier was introduced. Through the process called xenography, from the Greek for “dry” and “writing,” copies were made on plain paper at the press of a button. The invention was a phenomenal success; the Xerox copier revolutionized the workplace and the flow of information. *(Reader’s Digest)***

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