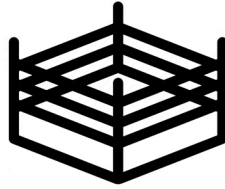


CORNER



III

MONSTER CANVAS

It was a cold Italian morning; I was zipping up my Air Force wind-breaker as I beelined to my car after squadron PT (physical training). In the parking lot, I noticed a spray-painted Fiat with spray paint caps hanging from the rearview mirror. Sure enough, the Airman driving that tiny car parked next to me as we got back to the squadron dorms. Observing the caps, I asked him if he wrote graffiti. He did. He was an artist with a few months of experience in the region and he offered to show me the local art store after work to buy supplies.

I looked like a kid in a candy shop when we walked into the art store. My new friend bought a large canvas to paint on, but upon returning to the car, we realized it was too big. The canvas was larger than the car itself. Thinking the same thing, he said, "Throw it on the roof and we'll just hold it down as we drive." An excellent idea, at first. We started driving and the drag started pulling the canvas like a kite, so we had to slow WAY down the entire way back to base, pissing off all the cars on the single lane road behind us. Our hands were freezing and we took a scolding from the American security forces as we passed through the base gate. Victoriously, we got that monster canvas back to his dorm room.

Weeks went by and the canvas sat empty in the corner of his room. Weeks turned to months, months to years. Pretty soon it was time for him to leave Italy and the canvas was still empty. I visited my friend years later in Spokane, Washington and he still had the canvas. We joked about all the trouble we went through to get that thing, and yet it still wasn't complete.

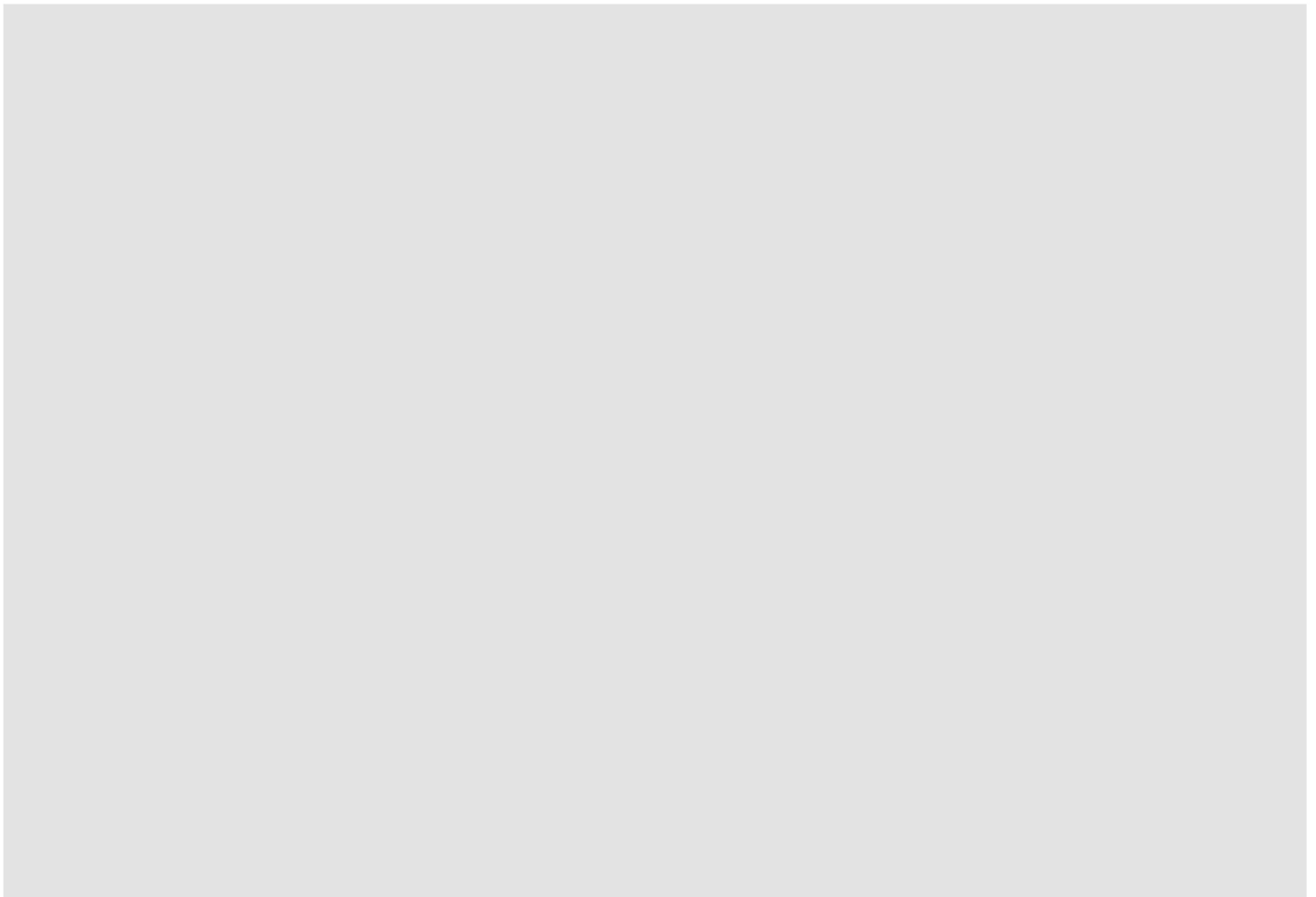
This is a good friend of mine and a successful artist so I don't feel too bad using this story as a metaphor. Often times we go through so much trouble preparing for our dreams that years pass by and we lose sight of what we initially set out to complete.



REFLECTION

1. Take a minute to scribble down five long or short-term goals you'd like to accomplish. Reference these throughout your day. Join me in challenging yourself to make sure your daily decisions are attributing to the success of these goals.
2. Metaphorically, what blank canvas' do you have in your life? For example, this could be a degree you started, maybe it's a guitar sitting in the corner or even words that need to be shared with someone.
3. Some may have given up on the canvas and thought it too big. Are you willing to look crazy, inconvenience people and sacrifice comfort for your dreams? What's holding you back from initiating your first steps towards your goals?

NOTES



SHARE

This series was inspired by the ring. Like a fighter, we depend on the people in our corner. We can only fight for so long before we need rest, healing and feedback. This series was simply written to help you fight the good fight. Whether you're lacing combat boots, sneakers or oxfords, let's favor a plan to crush the trials ahead. If you've felt empowered or inspired through these short stories, like iron sharpens iron, I encourage you to share this with your team.

Thank you for subscribing to my newsletter. I appreciate you sticking around for my storytelling. If you envision ways for me to improve, your feedback would be much appreciated. Please keep in touch, reach out or send a shoebox of money.



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