

# HUNDRED ACRE



Fall 2010

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Dear Norton,

I sometimes wonder whether God invented wine as compensation for the flaws in his greatest creation, Mankind, and to help us deal with the flaws that inevitably crop up in everything we create. Think about it. We've built so many things over the millennia. And yet we seem inevitably doomed to designing things that don't work. So many of our tools and playthings are deeply flawed. Take boats, for example. I love boats. Deeply. I spent much of my summer exploring British Columbia's coastline of fiords, rainforest and mountains. It was one of the most memorable summers in recent memory. But it also reinforced something I had always suspected: Boat designers are out of their bloody minds.

I mean, for starters, look at where they place the equipment inside the boat. A few days ago, when my generator stopped working, I pulled out the manual, called the builder and was told that I needed to open a hatch and go check about a dozen things before he could properly assess the situation. Fine. This sounds reasonable—until I remembered that the guy who designed the boat is 5'8" and 140 pounds. That's when I started to worry. I open the hatch, pull a bunch of gear out and look down into the hole. No way my 6'4", 250-pound frame (on a light day) will fit in that hole.

I conjure images of Indian Swamis tied up in knots and Shelley Winters struggling through hatches on the Poseidon Adventure.

Suddenly, I realize there's only one thing to do before these repair shenanigans can ever get started. I head into my trusty storage locker. This used to be where we stored rain gear. But all that's now gone, thrown overboard. Had to be done—to make room for the wine, of course. I lift out a bottle of 2006 Hundred Acre - Ark while my childhood friend Michael stares at me in disbelief.

"What are you doing?" he asks with a supercilious smile.

"I am preparing myself for my first Yoga lesson of course," I reply.

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I open the bottle and pour a large glass. Michael pours his own and settles in to soak up the scenery. Observing me dissect the manual must have been like watching a dog try to make sense of Mad Men.

Yes I can see the manual, it's interesting but it was clearly written for someone German and very handy with advance mechanical matters such as the difference between a crescent wrench and a croissant. I am very good at handling the latter and clueless on the former, after all I am a winemaker not a guy figuring out how to get another year out of the Mars rover.

This is when I started reflecting on my theory of wine creation and that had the good Lord endowed every person with amazing technical prowess and patience far fewer bottles would be consumed. Well, two glasses later I lowered myself into the hot, airless space under the floor of the boat. Then I looked around and realized that all the things that I depend upon to protect our safety at sea were under the floors, stuffed into tiny little spaces that were utterly impossible for a guy my size to ever get at on my thinnest day. I called out to Michael. When he hands down the tool bag I inform him that he is dim-witted at best and to instead pass down a full glass of Hundred Acre forthwith while I contemplate my options. As for the tool bag, it has been put under the floor too.

Now this got me thinking about Scotty in Star Trek. Hell, he was fat and look how easily he got around the engine room. I mean that was a properly planned vessel. I then realized what I needed was a midget mechanic/yoga instructor and naturally I started looking around for a piece of equipment we could remove to create a bed for him and for a spot in the floor to place a dumb waiter to get food down to him and dirty dishes back up. This actually seemed reasonable at the time.

Yesterday, while on the way to our favorite fishing spot, suddenly the boat drops speed and I realize something has happened to my props. Here we are, Northern Canada, ice-cold waters, and somebody needs to go overboard and look at the little beauties. So again I go below, grab yet another life saving bottle, this time of 2007 Hundred Acre - Kayli Morgan and pull out two well protected glasses and again Michael stares at me.

"What are you doing?" he says

I reply, "I am preparing myself"

Then he says "Ah yes that water is deathly cold"

I answer with "Yes it is –and that's why I am bracing myself to watch you go in."

As we all know, the captain must be on board tending to matters of grave importance, such as removing the cork from the corkscrew and determining whether the glassware is properly polished.

Michael sits down, pours a large glass and says, "Where's the wet suit?"  
"In your closet, of course" I reply.

I breathe in the wine and the aromatics make the foibles of the day fly away. One bottle down, props checked; we limp home for a replacement part.

In the morning I hire a diver to change what I think is a bent prop. The diver goes down and immediately comes to the surface.

Dripping with ice-cold water, he pronounces, "I have some bad news."

I stare at him as I do all aquatic creatures and I wait as he explains that the drive shaft is severed.

"Oh so the prop is not bent!!" I say with relief, since they are rather expensive.

Clad in a dry suit and still in the water, the diver looks up and says "No, the prop is not bent...it's not there at all. It sheared off and is lying on the bottom of the ocean somewhere."

I turned to Michael and said "When you went down there yesterday you didn't notice the entire prop was gone?"

He looked at me with a bit of a shocked and slightly self-righteous expression and said, "You asked if the props were bent, they were not and besides it was dark."

At that moment I turned and went below. Michael stopped me and said, "I know where the wine is; I'll get it."

The moral of this story should be obvious. Drinking wine during your most trying moments just makes perfect sense. It's what God intended. This is how I imagine the initial creation of wine happening. The Almighty thought, 'Well I haven't got this creature quite right, and there's gonna be an entire universe of flaws for humans to deal with.' And then he scratched his long white beard, released a guttural "hmmmmnnnnn" (length of God pauses are not exact). And then in all his omniscience, said, "I know. I will give them something to make the world a better place!" And poof, the vine is created, fermentation begins immediately and wine emerges as the great elixir of society—giving us the skills and patience to work through the flaws of life and, frankly, to put up with the French, who also embrace it well enough to put up with each other.

Now the importance of having truly great bottles at your side cannot be overstated. Earlier this summer I accidentally ran over a very large whale with my boat as the silly and much admired creature was lurking beneath the surface and decided to become an ocean going speed bump of the most blubbery kind—again another example of when a great bottle of wine is required to put in perspective a beautiful creature being turned into a boat thrashing sea monster. (The whale went on his merry way; my boat was not so merry.)

My theory on wine's creation and purpose is not just confined to whales. In fact, it's not confined at all.

Anyone that has ever owned a summer house or cottage understands that unless you are endowed with a legion of servants, your entire summer is spent slaving over the cottage and grounds. This is why so much Hundred Acre is consumed in what I call Perspective Realignment Festivals. In other words, getting one's head bolted on during difficult or trying moments. For example, say you're having 30 friends over for a summer dinner and you stupidly turn over your new supercharged barbecue to your brother-in-law (room temperature IQ), who then proceeds to light an Apocalypse Now inspired fire that turns your AAA PRIME RIB EYE steaks into objects resembling meteorites not fit for man nor beast. This leaves the guests with either a new passion for vegetarian cuisine or you can conduct, as I would recommend, a full scale Perspective Realignment Festival after which the guest will be so chilled and happy that you could serve them the meteorite steaks and they wouldn't care less.

You see, great wine is wonderful. However, wine that stands above is truly magical.

Hundred Acre is perspective unto itself. It's an embodiment of time, something that will take you back, that will age with you and can be relied upon to absolutely create Perspective Realignment just when you need it, even if you just know it's in your cellar waiting for you.

This brings me to a friend of mine who dropped dead this summer of a massive heart attack at age 53, it really shook me and got me thinking about how important Perspective really is and why this applies to your wine cellar and drinking in general.

Now, back to dropping dead for a moment, personally I would find this to be annoying especially halfway through a great bottle of wine, I guess that would be somewhat secondary yet it brings me back to People That Have Silly Rules about only enjoying wine at certain times of day and even more shocking, "special occasions", after all, what the hell is a special occasion?

As far as I am concerned Everyday is Saturday Night and Saturday Night is New Years Eve!!!

Facts are I think we all know we don't drink enough; especially enough great wine and we are a little ashamed. I am personally going to try harder to drink more of my wine, raid my cellar in the morning and especially before lunch. Breakfast is so fatty, why not a little wine with eggs and bacon? And what about the middle of the morning? Most people by 10 am have had enough bologna thrown at them for the entire week and that's when you gather a few colleagues (disregard the entire letter if you are a heart surgeon, steamroller driver or liposuction technician) together in the board room and just turn the phones off and start cracking a few bottles open, this is what I call a Perspective Realignment Meeting.

Take my Grandmother for example, she had two heart attacks at 89 so I went and got her from the recovery area where she had been for a month and was convinced she would never leave. I drove her to her house and we talked about the garden and I poured her a giant Manhattan. She looked at it and said "son I can't drink that, it's not good for my heart". I looked at her and said "Grandma you're 89 and you have drank two of

these everyday for the last 60 years!! Who gives a crap what the doctors tell ya, have some fun". She drank two and I took her in great spirits back to the care home where she keeled over dead in the afternoon, just kidding, she lived 5 more years and had lots of fun and her Manhattans.

Now when making decisions about whether to crack open a truly great bottle of wine the only question you need to consider is Why The Heck Not? Who the heck are you saving it for? I buy enough to age and enough to live life.

I mean yes of course if you have to drive or you have some work of grave importance such as destroying the forces of evil single-handedly by sunset or say flying Jumbo Jets or teaching blind people how to use rototillers then you must consider a few glasses later in the day provided the forces of evil were defeated.

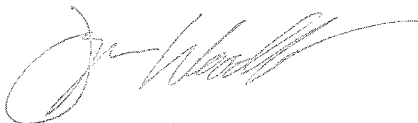
For most everyone else the factors are simpler. No, I may not make it to sensitivity class, but who cares, really? You miss yoga. Who cares? You may get fired and the children impoverished are sold into white slavery somewhere in the dusty Middle East, well perhaps we'll avoid that one but really for most people it's all workable. So just enjoy your life, drink great wine in your most beautiful days.

First of all, thank you for your support of our hand crafted single vineyard wines, it is my great privilege to work in our vineyards and carefully tend to the wine over the years.

THE 2008 HUNDRED ACRE - KAYLI MORGAN HAS BEEN FOR ME THE EQUAL OF OUR 2007 THE GREATEST WINE I HAVE MADE TO DATE...THIS WINE IS TRULY A MINDBLOWER, A WINE THAT WILL PUT EVERYTHING INTO PERSPECTIVE...

Order acceptance closes September 30 or when allocations end.

Very best,



Jayson Woodbridge  
Winemaker / Adventurer  
Hundred Acre  
Layer Cake