

The Relentless Forge

Choose your iron carefully. Not every ore belongs in the fire. Work only with what has grain, weight, and promise—ideas that resist just enough to be worth shaping.

Honor the fire. Heat reveals truth. Too little and the metal fractures; too much and it forgets itself. Stand close, but never careless.

Strike patiently. No single blow matters. Form arrives through thousands of deliberate strikes, each placed with purpose, each trusting the work that came before it.

Accept the water. Cooling is not failure; it is how strength survives. Some imperfections are not flaws—they are proof the blade endured.

Let the work demand your sweat. Clean hands make brittle things. Weight teaches respect. Fatigue teaches restraint.

Listen to the metal. Resistance is instruction. Failure is feedback.

Do not force becoming—guide it. Allow the blade to bend before it hardens; rigidity too early is how things snap.

Perfection is not the goal. Reliability is. A blade earns its name not by polish, but by holding when it matters.

When the blade is finished, do not admire it. Test it. Use it. Let it serve. Then return to the fire. There is always another blade to forge.

— *Dominic Ndong*