

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

Atticus said to Jem one day, "I'd rather you shot at tin cans in the backyard, but I know you'll go after birds. Shoot all the blue jays you want, if you can hit 'em, but remember it's a sin to kill a mockingbird." That was the only time I ever heard Atticus say it was a sin to do something, and I asked Miss Maudie about it. "Your father's right," she said. "Mockingbirds don't do one thing except make music for us to enjoy. They don't eat up people's gardens, don't nest in corn cribs, they don't do one thing but sing their hearts out for us. That's why it's a sin to kill a mockingbird."

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens

End of Stave IV and Beginning of Stave V

Holding up his hands in one last prayer to have his fate reversed, he saw an alteration in the Phantom's hood and dress. It shrunk, collapsed, and dwindled down into a bedpost.

Yes! And the bedpost was his own. The bed was his own, the room was his own. Best and happiest of all, the Time before him was his own, to make amends in!

"I will live in the Past, the Present, and the Future!" Scrooge repeated, as he scrambled out of bed. "The Spirits of all Three shall strive within me. Oh Jacob Marley! Heaven, and Christmas Time be praised for this! I say it on my knees, old Jacob; on my knees!

He was so fluttered and so glowing with his good intentions, that his broken voice would scarcely answer to his call. He had been sobbing violently in his conflict with the Spirit, and his face was wet with tears....

"I don't know what to do!" cried Scrooge, laughing and crying in the same breath; and making a perfect Laocoon of himself with his stockings. "I am as light as a feather, I am as happy as an angel. I am as merry as a school-boy. I am as giddy as a drunken man. A merry Christmas to everybody! A happy New Year to all the world. Hallo here! Whoop! Hallo!"....

Really, for a man who had been out of practice for so many years, it was a splendid laugh, a most illustrious laugh. The father of a long, long, line of brilliant laughs!

# Anne of Green Gables

*Matthew Cuthbert is Surprised*

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Dreams don't often come true, do they? Wouldn't it be nice if they did? But just now I feel pretty nearly perfectly happy. I can't feel exactly perfectly happy because—well, what color would you call this?"

She twitched one of her long glossy braids over her thin shoulder and held it up before Matthew's eyes. Matthew was not used to deciding on the tints of ladies' tresses, but in this case there couldn't be much doubt.

"It's red, ain't it?" he said.

The girl let the braid drop back with a sigh that seemed to come from her very toes and to exhale forth all the sorrows of the ages.

"Yes, it's red," she said resignedly. "Now you see why I can't be perfectly happy. Nobody could who has red hair. I don't mind the other things so much—the freckles and the green eyes and my skinniness. I can imagine them away. I can imagine that I have a beautiful rose-leaf complexion and lovely starry violet eyes. But I *cannot* imagine that red hair away. I do my best. I think to myself, 'Now my hair is a glorious black, black as the raven's wing.' But all the time I *know* it is just plain red and it breaks my heart. It will be my lifelong sorrow. I read of a girl once in a novel who had a lifelong sorrow but it wasn't red hair. Her hair was pure gold rippling back from her alabaster brow. What is an alabaster brow? I never could find out. Can you tell me?"

In the Lord of the Rings, after the Dark Lord's ring of power is finally destroyed, Sam asks Gandalf:

"Is everything sad going to come untrue? What's happened to the world?"

"A great Shadow has departed," said Gandalf, and then he laughed, and the sound was like music, or like water in a parched land; and as he listened the thought came to [Sam] that he had not heard laughter, the pure sound of merriment for days upon days without count...it fell up on his ears like the echo of all the joys he had ever know. But he himself burst into tears. Then, as a sweet rain will pass down a wind of spring and the sun will shine out the clearer, his tears ceased, and his laughter welled up, and laughing he sprang from his bed.

"How do I feel?" he cried. "Well, I don't know how to say it, I feel, I feel" ----he waved his arms in the air ----"I feel like spring after winter, and sun on the leaves; and like trumpets and harps and all the songs I have ever heard!"

"It's no good, Son of Adam," said Mr. Beaver, "no good *your* trying, of all people. But now that Aslan is on the move—"

"Oh, yes! Tell us about Aslan!" said several voices at once; for once again that strange feeling—like the first signs of spring, like good news, had come over them.

"Who is Aslan?" asked Susan.

"Aslan?" said Mr. Beaver. "Why, don't you know? He's the King. He's the Lord of the whole wood, but not often here, you understand. Never in my time or my father's time. But the word has reached us that he has come back. He is in Narnia at this moment. He'll settle the White Queen all right. It is he, not you, that will save Mr. Tumnus."

"She won't turn him into stone too?" said Edmund.

"Lord love you, Son of Adam, what a simple thing to say!" answered Mr. Beaver with a great laugh. "Turn *him* into stone? If she can stand on her two feet and look him in the face it'll be the most she can do and more than I expect of her. No, no. He'll put all to rights as it says in an old rhyme in these parts:

Wrong will be right, when Aslan comes in sight,  
At the sound of his roar, sorrows will be no more,  
When he bares his teeth, winter meets its death,  
And when he shakes his mane, we shall have spring  
again.

You'll understand when you see him."

*The Lion Witch  
and Wardrobe*

*The Hobbit* by J. R. R. Tolkien

In a hole in the ground there lived a hobbit. Not a nasty, dirty, wet hole, filled with the ends of worms and an oozy smell, nor yet a dry, bare, sandy hole with nothing in it to sit down on or to eat: it was a hobbit-hole, and that means comfort.

It had a perfectly round door like a porthole, painted green, with a shiny yellow brass knob in the exact middle. The door opened on to a tube-shaped hall like a tunnel: a very comfortable tunnel without smoke, with paneled walls, and floors tiled and carpeted, provided with polished chairs, and lots and lots of pegs for hats and coats—the hobbit was fond of visitors. The tunnel wound on and on, going fairly but not quite straight into the side of the hill—The Hill, as all the people for many miles round called it—and many little round doors opened out of it, first on one side and then on another. No going upstairs for the hobbit: bedrooms, bathrooms, cellars, pantries (lots of these), wardrobes (he had whole rooms devoted to clothes), kitchens, dining-rooms, all were on the same floor, and indeed on the same passage. The best rooms were all on the left-hand side (going in), for these were the only ones to have windows, deep-set round windows for looking over his garden, and meadows beyond, sloping down to the river.

They got up and withdrew quietly into the shadows, and made for the doors. Sam they left behind, fast asleep still with a smile on his face. In spite of his delight in Bilbo's company Frodo felt a tug of regret as they passed out of the Hall of Fire. Even as they stepped over the threshold a single clear voice rose in song.

*AElberethGilthoniel,  
silivrenpennamíriel  
omenelaglarelénath!  
Na-chaeredpalan-díriel  
ogaladhremminennorath,  
Fanuilos,lelinnathon  
nefaear, sí nefaearon!*

Frodo halted for a moment, looking back. Elrond was in his chair and the fire was on his face like summer-light upon the trees. Near him sat the Lady Arwen. To his surprise Frodo saw that Aragorn stood beside her; his dark cloak was thrown back, and he seemed to be clad in elven-mail, and a star shone on his breast. They spoke together, and then suddenly it seemed to Frodo that Arwen turned towards him, and the light of her eyes fell on him from afar and pierced his heart.

He stood still enchanted, while the sweet syllables of the elvish song fell like clear jewels of blended word and melody. 'It is a song to Elbereth,' said Bilbo. 'They will sing that, and other songs of the Blessed Realm, many times tonight. Come on!'

—J.R.R. TOLKIEN, *THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING*, "MANY MEETINGS"



But this is terrible!' cried Frodo. 'Far worse than the worst that I imagined from your hints and warnings. O Gandalf, best of friends, what am I to do? For now I am really afraid. What am I to do? What a pity that Bilbo did not stab that vile creature, when he had a chance!' 'Pity? It was Pity that stayed his hand. Pity, and Mercy: not to strike without need. And he has been well rewarded, Frodo. Be sure that he took so little hurt from the evil, and escaped in the end, because he began his ownership of the Ring so. With Pity.' 'I am sorry,' said Frodo. 'But I am frightened; and I do not feel any pity for Gollum.' 'You have not seen him,' Gandalf broke in. 'No, and I don't want to,' said Frodo. 'I can't understand you. Do you mean to say that you, and the Elves, have let him live on after all those horrible deeds? Now at any rate he is as bad as an Orc, and just an enemy. He deserves death.'

'Deserves it! I daresay he does. Many that live deserve death. And some that die deserve life. Can you give it to them? Then do not be too eager to deal out death in judgement. For even the very wise cannot see all ends. I have not much hope that Gollum can be cured before he dies, but there is a chance of it. And he is bound up with the fate of the Ring. My heart tells me that he has some part to play yet, for good or ill, before the end; and when that comes, the pity of Bilbo may rule the fate of many – yours not least. In any case we did not kill him: he is very old and very wretched. The Wood-elves have him in prison, but they treat him with such kindness as they can find in their wise hearts.'

"In rode the Lord of the Nazgûl. A great black shape against the fires beyond he loomed up, grown to a vast menace of despair. In rode the Lord of the Nazgûl, under the archway that no enemy ever yet had passed, and all fled before his face.

All save one. There waiting, silent and still in the space before the Gate, sat Gandalf upon Shadowfax: Shadowfax who alone among the free horses of the earth endured the terror, unmoving, steadfast as a graven image in Rath Dínen. "You cannot enter here," said Gandalf, and the huge shadow halted. "Go back to the abyss prepared for you! Go back! Fall into the nothingness that awaits you and your Master. Go!" The Black Rider flung back his hood, and behold! he had a kingly crown; and yet upon no head visible was it set. The red fires shone between it and the mantled shoulders vast and dark. From a mouth unseen there came a deadly laughter. "Old fool!" he said. "Old fool! This is my hour. Do you not know Death when you see it? Die now and curse in vain!" And with that he lifted high his sword and flames ran down the blade.

And in that very moment, away behind in some courtyard of the city, a cock crowed. Shrill and clear he crowed, recking nothing of war nor of wizardry, welcoming only the morning that in the sky far above the shadows of death was coming with the dawn.

And as if in answer there came from far away another note. Horns, horns, horns, in dark Mindolluin's sides they dimly echoed. Great horns of the north wildly blowing.

Rohan had come at last."

"The Ride of the Rohirrim"  
from *The Return of the King*  
by J.R.R. Tolkien

The bent shape of the king sprang suddenly erect. Tall and proud [Theoden] seemed again; and rising in his stirrups he cried in a loud voice, more clear than any there had ever heard a mortal man achieve before:

*Arise, arise, Riders of Theoden!  
Fell deeds awake; fire and slaughter!  
spear shall be shaken, shield be splintered,  
a sword-day, a red day, ere the sun rises!  
Ride now, ride now! Ride to Gondor!*

With that [Theoden] seized a great horn from Guthlaf his banner-bearer, and he blew such a blast upon it that it burst asunder. And straightway all the horns in the host were lifted up in music, and the blowing of the horns of Rohan in that hour was like a storm upon the plain and a thunder in the mountains.

*Ride now, ride now! Ride to Gondor!*

Suddenly the king cried to Snowmane and the horse sprang away. Behind him his banner blew in the wind, white horse upon a field of green, but he outpaced it. After him thundered the knights of his house, but he was ever before them.... Fey he seemed, or the battle-fury of his fathers ran like new fire in his veins.... His golden shield was uncovered, and lo! it shone like an image of the Sun, and the grass flamed into green about the white feet of his steed, and the hosts of Mordor wailed, and terror took them, and they fled, and died, and the hoofs of wrath rode over them.



*Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes

Chapter VIII Section 5

“Sammy,” he said to Sam Adams, “my coming interrupted something you were saying...‘We will fight,’ you had got that far.”

“Why, yes. That’s no secret.”

“For what will we fight?”

“To free Boston from these infernal redcoats and ...”

“No,” said Otis. “Boy, give me more punch. That’s not enough reason for going into war. Did any occupied city ever have better treatment than we’ve had from the British? Has one rebellious newspaper been stopped—one treasonable speech? Where are the firing squads, the jails jammed with political prisoners? What about the gallows for you, Sam Adams, and you, John Hancock? It has never been set up. I hate those infernal British troops spread all over my town as much as you do. Can’t move these days without stepping on a soldier. But we are not going off into a civil war merely to get them out of Boston. Why are we going to fight? Why, why?...For something more important than the pocketbooks of our American citizens.”

Rab said, “For the rights of Englishmen—everywhere.”

“Why stop with English?...For men and women and children all over the world...You were right, you tall, dark boy, for even as we shoot down the British soldiers we are fighting for rights such as they will be enjoying a hundred years from now....There shall be no more tyranny. A handful of men cannot seize power over thousands. A man shall choose who it is shall rule over him....The peasants of France, the serfs of Russia. Hardly more than animals now. But because we fight, they shall see freedom like a new sun rising in the west. Those natural rights God has given to every man, no matter how humble....The battle we win over the worst in England shall benefit the best in England. How well are they over there represented when it comes to taxes? Not very well. It will be better for them when we have won this war....Some of us will give our wits...some of us all our

property...Each shall give according to his own abilities, and some ...some will give their lives. All the years of their maturity. All the children they never live to have. The serenity of old age. To die so young is more than merely dying; it is to lose so large a part of life.....We give all we have, lives, property, safety, skills...we fight, we die, for a simple thing. Only that a man can stand up.”

“Odysseus tells how he defeated the Cyclops with  
his wits and not his strength.”  
An excerpt from Homer’s *Odyssey*

“I came near to Old Google-eye, holding in my hand an ivory cup full of wine, and I said:  
‘Cyclops, here, I have a drink for you!’”

“He took it and he swallowed it down. The good stuff delighted him terribly, and he asked  
for another.”

“Oh, please give me more,” he said, “And tell me your name this very instant!”

“Then I gave him a second drink, and a third! At last, when the wine had gotten into his  
head, I said to him in the gentlest of tones, ‘Cyclops, do you want to know my name? Well, I  
will tell you. ‘Noman’ is my name, and that’s what my father and mother call me, and all my  
friends.”

“Then the cruel monster said, ‘Noman shall be last eaten of all his friends. That will be his  
reward for telling me his name!’” But as he said this, down he slipped on to his back, and he  
belched in his drunken sleep.”

“God breathed great courage into me then, and I stuck a big stick right in his one eye!”

“He gave a horrible bellow and the rocks rang. He roared aloud to the Cyclopians who lived  
in caves nearby. They heard his cries and came to help from all directions, and stood  
outside his cave asking what his trouble was.”

“What on earth is the matter with you Polyphemous?” they called out.

“Out of the cave came the mighty voice of Polyphemous: ‘O my friends, Noman is killing me  
by tricks!’”

“They answered him in plain words, “Well, if no man can kill you by tricks, and you are  
alone, there’s no help you need from us! With these words, they turned and went away! My  
heart laughed within me to think how a mere no man had fooled them all with my trick!”

## **Mutiny on the Bounty (1935)**

*Screenwriter(s): Talbot Jennings, Jules Furthman, Carey Wilson*

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*Closing Court Statement Before Death—Midshipman/Ensign Roger Byam made a closing court statement to defend his men, after he had been sentenced to hang:*

My lord, much as I desire to live, I'm not afraid to die. Since I first sailed on the *Bounty* over four years ago, I've known how men can be made to suffer worse things than death, cruelly, beyond duty, beyond necessity. Captain Bligh, you've told your story of mutiny on the *Bounty*, how men plotted against you, seized your ship, cast you adrift in an open boat, a great venture in science brought to nothing, two British ships lost. But there's another story, Captain Bligh, of ten cocoanuts and two cheeses. A story of a man who robbed his seamen, cursed them, flogged them, not to punish but to break their spirit. A story of greed and tyranny, and of anger against it, of what it cost.

One man, my lord, would not endure such tyranny. That's why you hounded him. That's why you hate him, hate his friends. And that's why you're beaten. Fletcher Christian's still free. Christian lost, too, my lord. God knows he's judged himself more harshly than you could judge him. I say to his father, 'He was my friend. No finer man ever lived.' I don't try to justify his crime, his mutiny, but I condemn the tyranny that drove him to it. I don't speak here for myself alone or for these men you condemn. I speak in their names, in Fletcher Christian's name, for all men at sea. These men don't ask for comfort. They don't ask for safety. If they could speak to you they'd say, 'Let us choose to do our duty willingly, not the choice of a slave, but the choice of free Englishmen.' They ask only (for) the freedom that England expects for every man. If one man among you believe that - *one man* - he could command the fleets of England. He could sweep the seas for England. If he called his men to their duty not by flaying their backs, but by lifting their hearts, their... That's all.

## **Mr. Smith Goes to Washington, Jefferson Smith**

*Sidney Buchman*

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We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights – that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness; that to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, that whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the People to alter or to abolish. I always get a great kick outta that part of the Declaration of Independence. Now, you're not gonna have a country that can make these kind of rules work, if you haven't got men that have learned to tell human rights from a punch in the nose. It's a funny thing about men, you know. They all start life being boys. I wouldn't be a bit surprised if some of these Senators were boys once. And that's why it seemed like a pretty good idea to me to get boys out of crowded cities and stuffy basements for a couple of months out of the year and build their bodies and minds for a man-sized job, because those boys are gonna be behind these desks some of these days. And it seemed like a pretty good idea, getting boys from all over the country, boys of all nationalities and ways of living — getting them together. Let them find out what makes different people tick the way they do. Because I wouldn't give you two cents for all your fancy rules if, behind them, they didn't have a little bit of plain, ordinary, everyday kindness and a little lookin' out for the other fella, too. That's pretty important, all that. It's just the blood and bone and sinew of this democracy that some great men handed down to the human race, that's all! But of course, if you've got to build a dam where that boys' camp oughta be, to get some graft to pay off some political army or something, well that's a different thing. Aw no! If you think I'm going back there and tell those boys in my state and say: 'Look, now fellas, forget about it. Forget all this stuff I've been tellin' you about this land you live in — it's a lot of hooey. This isn't your country. It belongs to a lot of James Taylors.' Aw no! Not me! And anybody here that thinks I'm gonna do that, they've got another thing comin'. That's all right. I just wanted to find out whether you still had faces. I'm sorry, gentlemen. I-I know I'm being disrespectful to this honorable body, I know that. I- A guy like me should never be allowed to get in here in the first place. I know that! And I hate to stand here and try your patience like this, but either I'm dead right or I'm crazy.



## The Story of My Life

*Helen Keller*

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Excerpt from Chapter IV

The most important day I remember in all my life is the one on which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. I am filled with wonder when I consider the immeasurable contrasts between the two lives which it connects. It was the third of March, 1887, three months before I was seven years old.

On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, dumb, expectant. I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so I went to the door and waited on the steps. The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch, and fell on my upturned face. My fingers lingered almost unconsciously on the familiar leaves and blossoms which had just come forth to greet the sweet southern spring. I did not know what the future held of marvel or surprise for me. Anger and bitterness had preyed upon me continually for weeks and a deep languor had succeeded this passionate struggle.

Have you ever been at sea in a dense fog, when it seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut you in, and the great ship, tense and anxious, groped her way toward the shore with plummet and sounding-line, and you waited with beating heart for something to happen? I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding-line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbor was. "Light! Give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul, and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

I felt approaching footsteps. I stretched out my hand as I supposed to my mother. Some one took it, and I was caught up and held close in the arms of her who had come to reveal all things to me, and, more than all things else, to love me.

The morning after my teacher came she led me into her room and gave me a doll. The little blind children at the Perkins Institution had sent it and Laura Bridgman had dressed it; but I did not know this until afterward. When I had played with it a little while, Miss Sullivan slowly spelled into my hand the word "d-o-l-l." I was at once interested in this finger play and tried to imitate it. When I finally succeeded in making the letters correctly I was flushed with childish pleasure and pride. Running downstairs to my mother I held up my hand and made the letters for doll. I did not know that I was spelling a word or even that words existed; I was simply making my fingers go in monkey-like imitation. In the days that followed I learned to spell in this uncomprehending way a great many words, among them pin, hat, cup and a few verb like sit, stand, and walk. But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

One day, while I was playing with my new doll, Miss Sullivan put my big rag doll into my lap also, spelled "d-o-l-l" and tried to make me understand that "d-o-l-l" applied to both. Earlier in the day we had a tussle over the words "m-u-g" and "w-a-t-e-r." Miss Sullivan had tried to

impress it upon me that "m-u-g" is mug and that "w-a-t-e-r" is water, but I persisted in confounding the two.

In despair she had dropped the subject for the time, only to renew it the first opportunity. I came impatient at her repeated attempts and, seizing the new doll, I dashed it upon the floor. I was keenly delighted when I felt the fragments of the broken doll at my feet. Neither sorrow nor regret followed my passionate outburst. I had not loved the doll. In the still, dark world in which I lived there was no strong sentiment or tenderness. I felt my teacher sweep the fragments to one side of the hearth, and I had a sense of satisfaction that the cause of my discomfort was removed. She brought me my hat, and I knew I was going out into the warm sunshine. This thought, if a wordless sensation may be called a thought, made me hop and skip with pleasure.

We walked down the path to the well-house, attracted by the fragrance of the honeysuckle with which it was covered. Someone was drawing water and my teacher placed my hand under the spout. As the cool stream gushed over one hand she spelled into the other the word water, first slowly, then rapidly. I stood still, my whole attention fixed upon the motions of her fingers. Suddenly I felt a misty consciousness as of something forgotten—a thrill of returning thought; and somehow the mystery of language was revealed to me. I know then that "w-a-t-e-r" meant the wonderful cool something that was flowing over my hand. That living words awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free! There were barriers still, true, but barriers that could in time be swept away.

I left the well-house eager to learn. Everything had a name, and each name gave birth to a new thought. As we returned to the house every object which I touched seemed to quiver with life. That was because I saw everything with the strange, new sight that had come to me. On entering the door I remembered the doll I had broken. I felt my way to the hearth and picked up the pieces. I tried vainly to put them together. Then my eyes filled with tears; for I realized what I had done, and for the first time I felt repentance and sorrow.

I learned a great many new words that day. I do not remember what they all were; but I do know that mother, father, sister, teacher were among them—words that were to make the world blossom for me "like Aaron's rod, with flowers." It would have been difficult to find a happier child than I was as I lay in my crib at the close of that eventful day and lived over the joys it had brought me, and for the first time longed for a new day to come.