



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS MAGAZINE
JULY/AUGUST 2017

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Classic Favorite Short Stories
Surprising Summer Reading
A New Story by Salman Rushdie

PLUS

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GREETINGS

The

from

SUMMER
Reading Issue



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Sasha Dowdy of the Young Readers Center takes advantage of a sunny afternoon in front of the Thomas Jefferson Building to enjoy some summer reading. *Photo by Shawn Miller*



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS MAGAZINE

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In This Issue

▶▶ JULY/AUGUST 2017

STORIES

In a departure from our standard format, we offer this special issue devoted to short stories and summer reading. The Library's unparalleled collections not only include the great works of literature, but the personal papers of many notable authors, including Walt Whitman, Zane Gray, Ayn Rand, James M. Cain, Bernard Malamud, Truman Capote and Philip Roth. So find a sunny spot on the beach, sink your toes into the sand, and dig into these short gems.

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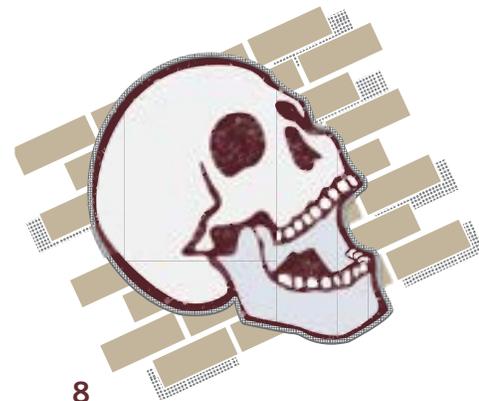
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ON THE COVER: Behind our summer greetings, a quotation from Sir Philip Sidney accompanies Frank W. Benson's painting "Summer" in the Thomas Jefferson Building. Photo illustration by Ashley Jones

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**SHIRLEY JACKSON AND
"THE LOTTERY"**

When The New Yorker magazine published in June of 1948 an allegorical tale of small-town American life with a horrific twist, neither the publication nor its author had any idea of the uproar it would cause. Now considered one of the great short stories of the 20th century, "The Lottery" caused an immediate outcry, torrents of hate mail and instant notoriety for Shirley Jackson (1916–1965).

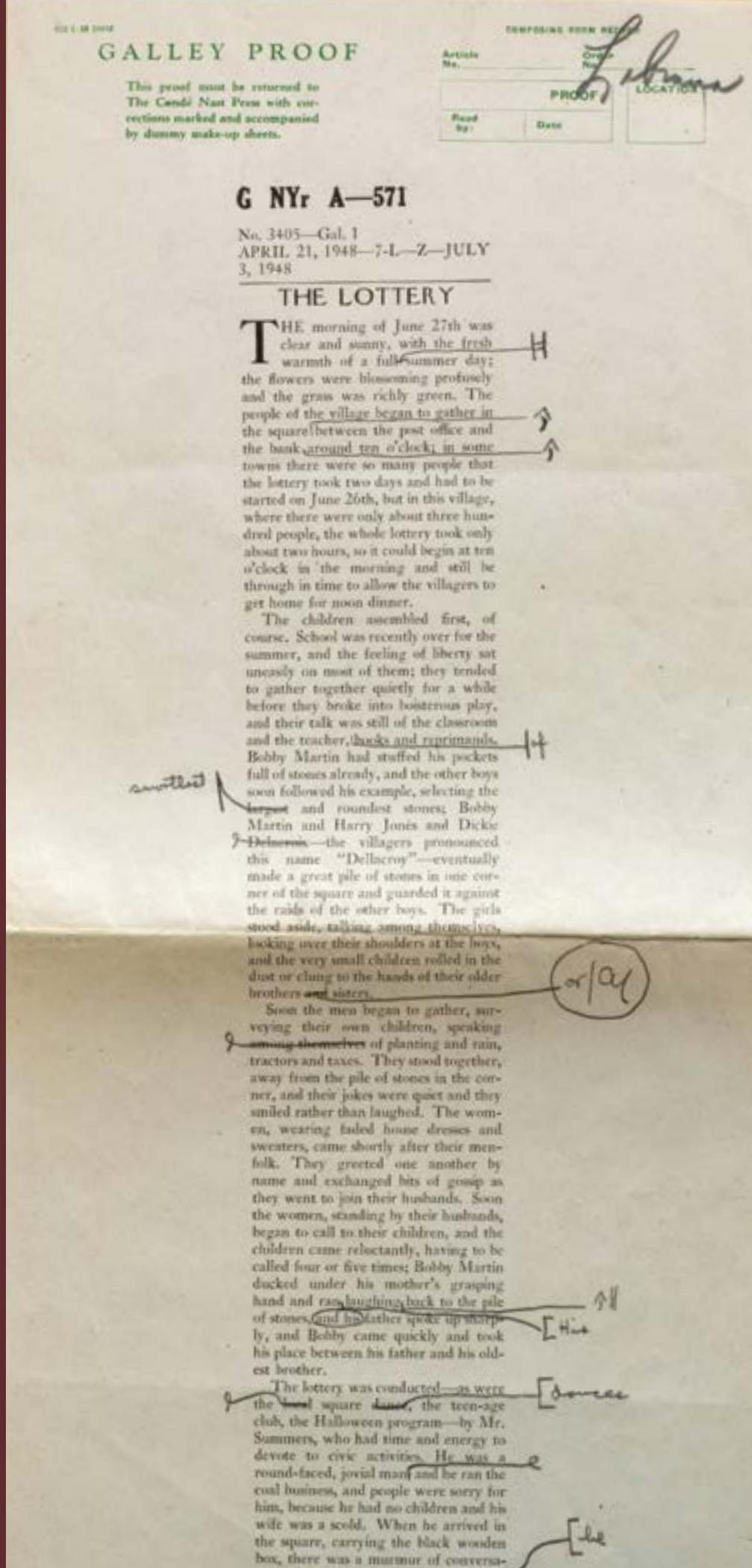
Jackson wrote short stories frequently focused on witchcraft, the occult and abnormal psychology. Her papers—as well as those of her husband, literary critic Stanley Edgar Hyman—can be found in the Library's Manuscript Division. They contain diaries, letters and files on the vaguely autobiographical works "Life Among the Savages" (1953) and "Raising Demons" (1957), in which Jackson presents a comic—albeit strange—account of raising children, cleaning house and cooking meals in a disordered suburban environment.

Letters in the collection from her trusted friends and associates suggest the deep personal regard they held for Jackson as both a professional writer—whose stories were increasingly gaining critical acclaim and popular recognition—and as a wife and mother who successfully balanced her artistic and family roles.

▶ MORE INFORMATION

Shirley Jackson Papers
hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms996001

Stanley Edgar Hyman Papers
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No. 3405—Gal. 1
APRIL 21, 1948—7-1-Z—JULY 3, 1948

THE LOTTERY

THE morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took only about two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, ~~backs~~ and reprimands. Bobby Martin had stuffed his pockets full of stones already, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the largest and roundest stones; Bobby Martin and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix—the villagers pronounced this name "Delacroix"—eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers and sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking among themselves of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their men-folk. They greeted one another by name and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times; Bobby Martin ducked under his mother's grasping hand and ran laughing back to the pile of stones, and his father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted—as were the ~~usual~~ square dance, the teen-age club, the Halloween program—by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversa-

smoothed

or/ol

[Hic]

[dances]

[he]



Ashley Jones

THE LOTTERY

BY SHIRLEY JACKSON (1948)

Shirley Jackson was a 20th Century American writer best known for “The Lottery” (1948) and the popular novel of the supernatural, “The Haunting of Hill House” (1959). Her work is said to have influenced authors including Stephen King, Neil Gaiman and Richard Matheson. “The Lottery” is reprinted with the permission of the author’s son, Laurence Jackson Hyman. © 1948 Shirley Jackson.

The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around 10 o’clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26th, but in this village, where there were only about 300 people, the whole lottery took less than two hours, so it could begin at 10 o’clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones; Bobby and Harry Jones and Dickie Delacroix—the villagers pronounced this name “Dellacroy”—eventually made a great pile of stones in one corner of the square and guarded it against the raids of the other boys. The girls stood aside, talking among themselves, looking over their shoulders at the boys, and the very small children rolled in the dust or clung to the hands of their older brothers or sisters.

Soon the men began to gather, surveying their own children, speaking of planting and rain, tractors and taxes. They stood together, away from the pile of stones in the corner, and their jokes were quiet and they smiled rather than laughed. The women, wearing faded house dresses and sweaters, came shortly after their menfolk. They

greeted one another and exchanged bits of gossip as they went to join their husbands. Soon the women, standing by their husbands, began to call to their children, and the children came reluctantly, having to be called four or five times. Bobby Martin ducked under his mother’s grasping hand and ran, laughing, back to the pile of stones. His father spoke up sharply, and Bobby came quickly and took his place between his father and his oldest brother.

The lottery was conducted—as were the square dances, the teen club, the Halloween program—by Mr. Summers, who had time and energy to devote to civic activities. He was a round-faced, jovial man and he ran the coal business, and people were sorry for him, because he had no children and his wife was a scold. When he arrived in the square, carrying the black wooden box, there was a murmur of conversation among the villagers, and he waved and called. “Little late today, folks.” The postmaster, Mr. Graves, followed him, carrying a three-legged stool, and the stool was put in the center of the square and Mr. Summers set the black box down on it. The villagers kept their distance, leaving a space between themselves and the stool, and when Mr. Summers said, “Some of you fellows want to give me a hand?” there was a hesitation before two men, Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, came forward to hold the box steady on the stool while Mr. Summers stirred up the papers inside it.

The original paraphernalia for the lottery had been lost long ago, and the black box now resting on the stool had been put into use even before Old Man Warner, the oldest man in town, was born. Mr. Summers spoke frequently to the villagers about making a new box, but no one liked to upset even as much tradition as was represented by the black box. There was a story that the present box had been made with some pieces of the box

that had preceded it, the one that had been constructed when the first people settled down to make a village here. Every year, after the lottery, Mr. Summers began talking again about a new box, but every year the subject was allowed to fade off without anything's being done. The black box grew shabbier each year: by now it was no longer completely black but splintered badly along one side to show the original wood color, and in some places faded or stained.

Mr. Martin and his oldest son, Baxter, held the black box securely on the stool until Mr. Summers had stirred the papers thoroughly with his hand. Because so much of the ritual had been forgotten or discarded, Mr. Summers had been successful in having slips of paper substituted for the chips of wood that had been used for generations. Chips of wood, Mr. Summers had argued, had been all very well when the village was tiny, but now that the population was more than three hundred and likely to keep on growing, it was necessary to use something that would fit more easily into the black box. The night before the lottery, Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves made up the slips of paper and put them in the box, and it was then taken to the safe of Mr. Summers' coal company and locked up until Mr. Summers was ready to take it to the square the next morning. The rest of the year, the box was put away, sometimes one place, sometimes another; it had spent one year in Mr. Graves's barn and another year underfoot in the post office, and sometimes it was set on a shelf in the Martin grocery and left there.

There was a great deal of fussing to be done before Mr. Summers declared the lottery open. There were the lists to make up—of heads of families, heads of households in each family, members of each household in each family. There was the proper swearing-in of Mr. Summers by the postmaster, as the official of the lottery; at one time, some people remembered, there had been a recital of some sort, performed by the official of the lottery, a perfunctory, tuneless chant that had been rattled off duly each year; some people believed that the official of the lottery used to stand just so when he said or sang it, others believed that he was supposed to walk among the people, but years and years ago this part of the ritual had been allowed to lapse. There had been, also, a ritual salute, which the official of the lottery had had to use in addressing each person who came up to draw from the box, but this also had changed with time, until now it was felt necessary only for the official to speak to each person approaching. Mr. Summers was very good at all this; in his clean white shirt and blue jeans, with one hand resting carelessly on the black box, he seemed very proper and important as he talked interminably to Mr. Graves and the Martins.

Just as Mr. Summers finally left off talking and turned to the assembled villagers, Mrs. Hutchinson came hurriedly along the path to the square, her sweater thrown over her shoulders, and slid into place in the

back of the crowd. "Clean forgot what day it was," she said to Mrs. Delacroix, who stood next to her, and they both laughed softly. "Thought my old man was out back stacking wood," Mrs. Hutchinson went on, "and then I looked out the window and the kids was gone, and then I remembered it was the 27th and came a-running." She dried her hands on her apron, and Mrs. Delacroix said, "You're in time, though. They're still talking away up there."

Mrs. Hutchinson craned her neck to see through the crowd and found her husband and children standing near the front. She tapped Mrs. Delacroix on the arm as a farewell and began to make her way through the crowd. The people separated good-humoredly to let her through: two or three people said, in voices just loud enough to be heard across the crowd, "Here comes your Missus, Hutchinson," and "Bill, she made it after all." Mrs. Hutchinson reached her husband, and Mr. Summers, who had been waiting, said cheerfully. "Thought we were going to have to get on without you, Tessie." Mrs. Hutchinson said, grinning, "Wouldn't have me leave m'dishes in the sink, now, would you, Joe?" and soft laughter ran through the crowd as the people stirred back into position after Mrs. Hutchinson's arrival.

"Well, now," Mr. Summers said soberly, "guess we better get started, get this over with, so's we can go back to work. Anybody ain't here?"

"Dunbar." several people said. "Dunbar. Dunbar."

Mr. Summers consulted his list. "Clyde Dunbar." he said. "That's right. He's broke his leg, hasn't he? Who's drawing for him?"

"Me. I guess," a woman said, and Mr. Summers turned to look at her. "Wife draws for her husband."

Mr. Summers said, "Don't you have a grown boy to do it for you, Janey?" Although Mr. Summers and everyone else in the village knew the answer perfectly well, it was the business of the official of the lottery to ask such questions formally. Mr. Summers waited with an expression of polite interest while Mrs. Dunbar answered.

"Horace's not but sixteen yet," Mrs. Dunbar said regretfully. "Guess I gotta fill in for the old man this year."

"Right," Mr. Summers said. He made a note on the list he was holding. Then he asked, "Watson boy drawing this year?"

A tall boy in the crowd raised his hand. "Here," he said. "I'm drawing for my mother and me." He blinked his eyes nervously and ducked his head as several voices in the crowd said things like "Good fellow, Jack," and "Glad to see your mother's got a man to do it."

"Well," Mr. Summers said, "guess that's everyone. Old Man Warner make it?"

"Here," a voice said, and Mr. Summers nodded.

A sudden hush fell on the crowd as Mr. Summers cleared his throat and looked at the list. "All ready?" he called. "Now, I'll read the names—heads of families first—and the men come up and take a paper out of the box. Keep the paper folded in your hand without looking at it until everyone has had a turn. Everything clear?"

The people had done it so many times that they only half listened to the directions: most of them were quiet, wetting their lips, not looking around. Then Mr. Summers raised one hand high and said, "Adams." A man disengaged himself from the crowd and came forward. "Hi, Steve." Mr. Summers said, and Mr. Adams said, "Hi, Joe." They grinned at one another humorlessly and nervously. Then Mr. Adams reached into the black box and took out a folded paper. He held it firmly by one corner as he turned and went hastily back to his place in the crowd, where he stood a little apart from his family, not looking down at his hand.

"Allen." Mr. Summers said. "Anderson... Bentham." "Seems like there's no time at all between lotteries any more." Mrs. Delacroix said to Mrs. Graves in the back row.

"Seems like we got through with the last one only last week."

"Time sure goes fast," Mrs. Graves said.

"Clark... Delacroix."

"There goes my old man." Mrs. Delacroix said. She held her breath while her husband went forward.

"Dunbar," Mr. Summers said, and Mrs. Dunbar went steadily to the box while one of the women said, "Go on, Janey," and another said, "There she goes."

"We're next." Mrs. Graves said. She watched while Mr. Graves came around from the side of the box, greeted Mr. Summers gravely and selected a slip of paper from the box. By now, all through the crowd there were men holding the small folded papers in their large hands, turning them over and over nervously. Mrs. Dunbar and her two sons stood together, Mrs. Dunbar holding the slip of paper.

"Harburt... Hutchinson."

"Get up there, Bill," Mrs. Hutchinson said, and the people near her laughed.

"Jones."

"They do say," Mr. Adams said to Old Man Warner, who stood next to him, "that over in the north village they're talking of giving up the lottery."

Old Man Warner snorted. "Pack of crazy fools," he said. "Listening to the young folks, nothing's good enough for them. Next thing you know, they'll be wanting to go back to living in caves, nobody work any more, live that way for a while. Used to be a saying about 'Lottery in June, corn be heavy soon.' First thing you know, we'd all be eating stewed chickweed and acorns.

There's always been a lottery," he added petulantly. "Bad enough to see young Joe Summers up there joking with everybody."

"Some places have already quit lotteries," Mrs. Adams said.

"Nothing but trouble in that," Old Man Warner said stoutly. "Pack of young fools."

"Martin." And Bobby Martin watched his father go forward. "Overdyke... Percy."

"I wish they'd hurry," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son. "I wish they'd hurry."

"They're almost through," her son said.

"You get ready to run tell Dad," Mrs. Dunbar said.

Mr. Summers called his own name and then stepped forward precisely and selected a slip from the box.

Then he called, "Warner."

"Seventy-seventh year I been in the lottery," Old Man Warner said as he went through the crowd.

"Seventy-seventh time."

"Watson." The tall boy came awkwardly through the crowd. Someone said, "Don't be nervous, Jack," and Mr. Summers said, "Take your time, son."

"Zanini."

After that, there was a long pause, a breathless pause, until Mr. Summers, holding his slip of paper in the air, said, "All right, fellows." For a minute, no one moved, and then all the slips of paper were opened. Suddenly, all the women began to speak at once, saying, "Who is it?," "Who's got it?," "Is it the Dunbars?," "Is it the Watsons?" Then the voices began to say, "It's Hutchinson. It's Bill," "Bill Hutchinson's got it."

"Go tell your father," Mrs. Dunbar said to her older son.

People began to look around to see the Hutchinsons. Bill Hutchinson was standing quiet, staring down at the paper in his hand. Suddenly, Tessie Hutchinson shouted to Mr. Summers. "You didn't give him time enough to take any paper he wanted. I saw you. It wasn't fair!"

"Be a good sport, Tessie." Mrs. Delacroix called, and Mrs. Graves said, "All of us took the same chance."

"Shut up, Tessie," Bill Hutchinson said.

"Well, everyone," Mr. Summers said, "that was done pretty fast, and now we've got to be hurrying a little more to get done in time." He consulted his next list. "Bill," he said, "you draw for the Hutchinson family. You got any other households in the Hutchinsons?"

"There's Don and Eva," Mrs. Hutchinson yelled. "Make them take their chance!"

"Daughters draw with their husbands' families, Tessie," Mr. Summers said gently. "You know that as well as

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



Murasaki Shikibu, World Digital Library

OLDEST TO THE SMALLEST TO THE LARGEST

THE TALE OF GENJI

Shawn Miller

One of the world’s oldest novels, “Genji Monogatari” (ca. 1000 A.D.) by Japanese noblewoman Murasaki Shikibu chronicles the lives and loves of Prince Genji, as well as the affairs of his children, grandchildren and other court nobles during the Heian period in Japan (794–1185 A.D.). The tale is told in 54 volumes of illustrated prose, with nearly 800 poems embedded in the narrative, a section of which is pictured at left.

Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera called Shikibu “a dramatic genius ... Her treatments and evolution of writing and novelistic hybrid genres are revolutionary and prophetic of contemporary styles and story structures.”



OLD KING COLE

This tiny edition of the classic children’s nursery rhyme, considered the world’s smallest book, was printed in 1985 by Gleniffer Press, a private press specializing in limited-edition miniatures.

Old King Cole was a merry old soul,
And a merry old soul was he;
He called for his pipe, and he called for his bowl,
And he called for his fiddlers three.
Every fiddler he had a fiddle,
And a very fine fiddle had he;
Oh there’s none so rare, as can compare,
With King Cole and his fiddlers three.



BHUTAN

The largest book in the Library of Congress is a 5-by-7-foot book featuring color images of the Southeast Asian nation of Bhutan. During the early 2000s, a team of students from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology recorded the ancient life and culture in this country and made 40,000 digital images available to the Bhutan National Archives.

A copy of the picture book was donated to the Library of Congress, here shown at left by Helena Zinkham, chief of the Prints and Photographs Division.

▶ MORE INFORMATION

“The Tale of Genji” (World Digital Library)
wdl.org/en/item/2930/

“Old King Cole”
go.usa.gov/x58Y2

anyone else.”

“It wasn’t fair,” Tessie said.

“I guess not, Joe.” Bill Hutchinson said regretfully. “My daughter draws with her husband’s family; that’s only fair. And I’ve got no other family except the kids.”

“Then, as far as drawing for families is concerned, it’s you,” Mr. Summers said in explanation, “and as far as drawing for households is concerned, that’s you, too. Right?”

“Right,” Bill Hutchinson said.

“How many kids, Bill?” Mr. Summers asked formally.

“Three,” Bill Hutchinson said. “There’s Bill Jr., and Nancy, and little Dave. And Tessie and me.”

“All right, then,” Mr. Summers said. “Harry, you got their tickets back?”

Mr. Graves nodded and held up the slips of paper. “Put them in the box, then,” Mr. Summers directed.

“Take Bill’s and put it in.”

“I think we ought to start over,” Mrs. Hutchinson said, as quietly as she could. “I tell you it wasn’t fair. You didn’t give him time enough to choose. Everybody saw that.”

Mr. Graves had selected the five slips and put them in the box, and he dropped all the papers but those onto the ground, where the breeze caught them and lifted them off.

“Listen, everybody,” Mrs. Hutchinson was saying to the people around her.

“Ready, Bill?” Mr. Summers asked, and Bill Hutchinson, with one quick glance around at his wife and children, nodded.

“Remember,” Mr. Summers said, “take the slips and keep them folded until each person has taken one. Harry, you help little Dave.” Mr. Graves took the hand of the little boy, who came willingly with him up to the box. “Take a paper out of the box, Davy,” Mr. Summers said. Davy put his hand into the box and laughed. “Take just one paper,” Mr. Summers said. “Harry, you hold it for him.” Mr. Graves took the child’s hand and removed the folded paper from the tight fist and held it while little Dave stood next to him and looked up at him wonderingly.

“Nancy next,” Mr. Summers said. Nancy was twelve, and her school friends breathed heavily as she went forward switching her skirt, and took a slip daintily from the box. “Bill Jr.,” Mr. Summers said, and Billy, his face red and his feet overlarge, near knocked the box over as he got a paper out. “Tessie,” Mr. Summers said. She hesitated for a minute, looking around defiantly, and then set her lips and went up to the box. She snatched a paper out and held it behind her.

“Bill,” Mr. Summers said, and Bill Hutchinson reached

into the box and felt around, bringing his hand out at last with the slip of paper in it.

The crowd was quiet. A girl whispered, “I hope it’s not Nancy,” and the sound of the whisper reached the edges of the crowd.

“It’s not the way it used to be,” Old Man Warner said clearly. “People ain’t the way they used to be.”

“All right,” Mr. Summers said. “Open the papers. Harry, you open little Dave’s.”

Mr. Graves opened the slip of paper and there was a general sigh through the crowd as he held it up and everyone could see that it was blank. Nancy and Bill, Jr. opened theirs at the same time, and both beamed and laughed, turning around to the crowd and holding their slips of paper above their heads.

“Tessie,” Mr. Summers said. There was a pause, and then Mr. Summers looked at Bill Hutchinson, and Bill unfolded his paper and showed it. It was blank.

“It’s Tessie,” Mr. Summers said, and his voice was hushed. “Show us her paper. Bill.”

Bill Hutchinson went over to his wife and forced the slip of paper out of her hand. It had a black spot on it, the black spot Mr. Summers had made the night before with the heavy pencil in the coal company office. Bill Hutchinson held it up, and there was a stir in the crowd.

“All right, folks,” Mr. Summers said. “Let’s finish quickly.”

Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual and lost the original black box, they still remembered to use stones. The pile of stones the boys had made earlier was ready; there were stones on the ground with the blowing scraps of paper that had come out of the box. Mrs. Delacroix selected a stone so large she had to pick it up with both hands and turned to Mrs. Dunbar. “Come on,” she said. “Hurry up.”

Mrs. Dunbar had small stones in both hands, and she said, gasping for breath. “I can’t run at all. You’ll have to go ahead and I’ll catch up with you.”

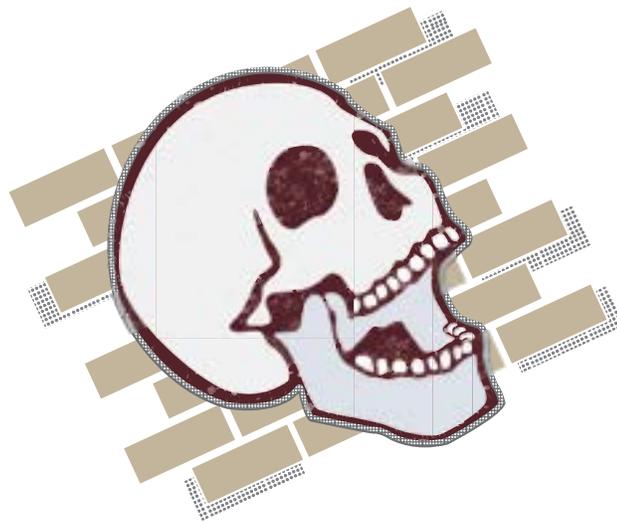
The children had stones already. And someone gave little Davy Hutchinson few pebbles.

Tessie Hutchinson was in the center of a cleared space by now, and she held her hands out desperately as the villagers moved in on her. “It isn’t fair,” she said. A stone hit her on the side of the head.

Old Man Warner was saying, “Come on, come on, everyone.” Steve Adams was in the front of the crowd of villagers, with Mrs. Graves beside him.

“It isn’t fair, it isn’t right,” Mrs. Hutchinson screamed, and then they were upon her. ♦





THE CASK OF AMONTILLADO

BY EDGAR ALLAN POE (1846)

Edgar Allan Poe (1809–1849) was an American writer, poet and critic and is perhaps best known for his poems and stories of mystery and horror, including “The Raven” and “The Tell-Tale Heart.” He was one of the earliest American writers of short stories, and his “Tales” (1845) was named by the Library as one of the “Books That Shaped America” in 2012.

The thousand injuries of Fortunato I had borne as I best could, but when he ventured upon insult, I vowed revenge. You, who so well know the nature of my soul, will not suppose, however, that I gave utterance to a threat. *At length* I would be avenged; this was a point definitely settled—but the very definitiveness with which it was resolved, precluded the idea of risk. I must not only punish, but punish with impunity. A wrong is unredressed when retribution overtakes its redresser. It is equally unredressed when the avenger fails to make himself felt as such to him who has done the wrong.

It must be understood that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile *now* was at the thought of his immolation.

He had a weak point—this Fortunato—although in other regards he was a man to be respected and even feared. He prided himself on his connoisseurship in wine. Few Italians have the true virtuoso spirit. For the most part their enthusiasm is adopted to suit the time and opportunity—to practice imposture upon the British and Austrian *millionaires*. In painting and gemmary, Fortunato, like his countrymen, was a quack—but in the matter of old wines he was sincere. In this respect I did not differ from him materially: I was skillful in the Italian vintages myself, and bought largely whenever I could.

It was about dusk, one evening during the supreme madness of the carnival season, that I encountered my friend. He accosted me with excessive warmth, for he had been drinking much. The man wore motley. He had

on a tight-fitting parti-striped dress, and his head was surmounted by the conical cap and bells. I was so pleased to see him that I thought I should never have done wringing his hand.

I said to him—“My dear Fortunato, you are luckily met. How remarkably well you are looking today! But I have received a pipe of what passes for Amontillado, and I have my doubts.”

“How?” said he. “Amontillado? A pipe? Impossible! And in the middle of the carnival!”

“I have my doubts,” I replied; “and I was silly enough to pay the full Amontillado price without consulting you in the matter. You were not to be found, and I was fearful of losing a bargain.”

“Amontillado!”

“I have my doubts.”

“Amontillado!”

“And I must satisfy them.”

“Amontillado!”

“As you are engaged, I am on my way to Luchesi. If any one has a critical turn, it is he. He will tell me—”

“Luchesi cannot tell Amontillado from Sherry.”

“And yet some fools will have it that his taste is a match for your own.”

“Come, let us go.”

“Whither?”

“To your vaults.”

“My friend, no; I will not impose upon your good

nature. I perceive you have an engagement. Luchesi—”

“I have no engagement—come.”

“My friend, no. It is not the engagement, but the severe cold with which I perceive you are afflicted. The vaults are insufferably damp. They are encrusted with nitre.”

“Let us go, nevertheless. The cold is merely nothing. Amontillado! You have been imposed upon. And as for Luchesi, he cannot distinguish Sherry from Amontillado.”

Thus speaking, Fortunato possessed himself of my arm. Putting on a mask of black silk, and drawing a *roquelaire* closely about my person, I suffered him to hurry me to my palazzo.

There were no attendants at home; they had absconded to make merry in honor of the time. I had told them that I should not return until the morning and had given them explicit orders not to stir from the house. These orders were sufficient, I well knew, to insure their immediate disappearance, one and all, as soon as my back was turned.

I took from their sconces two flambeaux, and giving one to Fortunato, bowed him through several suites of rooms to the archway that led into the vaults. I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors.

The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

“The pipe,” said he.

“It is farther on,” said I; “but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls.”

He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

“Nitre?” he asked, at length.

“Nitre,” I replied. “How long have you had that cough?”

“Ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!—ugh! ugh! ugh!”

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

“It is nothing,” he said, at last.

“Come,” I said, with decision, “we will go back; your health is precious. You are rich, respected, admired, beloved; you are happy, as once I was. You are a man to be missed. For me it is no matter. We will go back; you will be ill, and I cannot be responsible. Besides, there is Luchesi—”

“Enough,” he said; “the cough is a mere nothing; it will not kill me. I shall not die of a cough.”

“True—true,” I replied; “and, indeed, I had no intention of alarming you unnecessarily—but you should use all proper caution. A draught of this Medoc will defend us from the damp.”

CREATIVITY, COPYRIGHT AND THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

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Enabling authors to benefit from their work in this way encourages creativity, while limiting the term of protection helps to make knowledge widely accessible.

—Wendi Maloney is a writer-editor in the U.S. Copyright Office.

Here I knocked off the neck of a bottle, which I drew from a long row of its fellows that lay upon the mold.

“Drink,” I said, presenting him the wine.

He raised it to his lips with a leer. He paused and nodded to me familiarly, while his bells jingled.

“I drink,” he said, “to the buried that repose around us.”

“And I to your long life.”

He again took my arm, and we proceeded.

“These vaults,” he said, “are extensive.”

“The Montresors,” I replied, “were a great and numerous family.”

“I forget your arms.”

“A huge human foot d’or, in a field azure; the foot crushes a serpent rampant whose fangs are imbedded in the heel.”

“And the motto?”

“*Nemo me impune lacessit.*”

“Good!” he said.

The wine sparkled in his eyes and the bells jingled. My own fancy grew warm with the Medoc. We had

passed through walls of piled bones, with casks and puncheons intermingling, into the inmost recesses of catacombs. I paused again, and this time I made bold to seize Fortunato by an arm above the elbow.

"The nitre!" I said; "see, it increases. It hangs like moss upon the vaults. We are below the river's bed. The drops of moisture trickle among the bones. Come, we will go back ere it is too late. Your cough—"

"It is nothing," he said; "let us go on. But first, another draught of the Medoc."

I broke and reached him a flagon of De Grave. He emptied it at a breath. His eyes flashed with a fierce light. He laughed and threw the bottle upwards with a gesticulation I did not understand.

I looked at him in surprise. He repeated the movement—a grotesque one.

"You do not comprehend?" he said.

"Not I," I replied.

"Then you are not of the brotherhood."

"How?"

"You are not of the masons."

"Yes, yes," I said; "yes, yes."

"You? Impossible! A mason?"

"A mason," I replied.

"A sign," he said, "a sign."

"It is this," I answered, producing a trowel from beneath the folds of my roquelaire.

"You jest," he exclaimed, recoiling a few paces. "But let us proceed to the Amontillado."

"Be it so," I said, replacing the tool beneath the cloak and again offering him my arm. He leaned upon it heavily. We continued our route in search of the Amontillado. We passed through a range of low arches, descended, passed on, and descending again, arrived at a deep crypt, in which the foulness of the air caused our flambeaux rather to glow than flame.

At the most remote end of the crypt there appeared another less spacious. Its walls had been lined with human remains, piled to the vault overhead, in the fashion of the great catacombs of Paris. Three sides of this interior crypt were still ornamented in this manner. From the fourth side the bones had been thrown down, and lay promiscuously upon the earth, forming at one point a mound of some size. Within the wall thus exposed by the displacing of the bones, we perceived a still interior recess, in depth about four feet in width three, in height six or seven. It seemed to have been constructed for no especial use within itself, but formed merely the interval between two of the colossal supports of the roof of the catacombs, and was backed by one of their circumscribing walls of solid granite.

It was in vain that Fortunato, uplifting his dull torch,

endeavored to pry into the depth of the recess. Its termination the feeble light did not enable us to see.

"Proceed," I said; "herein is the Amontillado. As for Luchesi—"

"He is an ignoramus," interrupted my friend, as he stepped unsteadily forward, while I followed immediately at his heels. In an instant he had reached the extremity of the niche, and finding his progress arrested by the rock, stood stupidly bewildered. A moment more and I had fettered him to the granite. In its surface were two iron staples, distant from each other about two feet, horizontally. From one of these depended a short chain, from the other a padlock. Throwing the links about his waist, it was but the work of a few seconds to secure it. He was too much astounded to resist. Withdrawing the key, I stepped back from the recess.

"Pass your hand," I said, "over the wall; you cannot help feeling the nitre. Indeed, it is very damp. Once more let me *implore* you to return. No? Then I must positively leave you. But I must first render you all the little attentions in my power."

"The Amontillado!" ejaculated my friend, not yet recovered from his astonishment.

"True," I replied; "the Amontillado."

As I said these words I busied myself among the pile of bones of which I have before spoken. Throwing them aside, I soon uncovered a quantity of building stone and mortar. With these materials and with the aid of my trowel, I began vigorously to wall up the entrance of the niche.

I had scarcely laid the first tier of the masonry when I discovered that the intoxication of Fortunato had in a great measure worn off. The earliest indication I had of this was a low moaning cry from the depth of the recess. It was not the cry of a drunken man. There was then a long and obstinate silence. I laid the second tier, and the third, and the fourth; and then I heard the furious vibrations of the chain. The noise lasted for several minutes, during which, that I might hearken to it with the more satisfaction, I ceased my labors and sat down upon the bones. When at last the clanking subsided, I resumed the trowel, and finished without interruption the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh tier. The wall was now nearly upon a level with my breast. I again paused, and holding the flambeaux over the mason-work, threw a few feeble rays upon the figure within.

A succession of loud and shrill screams, bursting suddenly from the throat of the chained form, seemed to thrust me violently back. For a brief moment I hesitated—I trembled. Unsheathing my rapier, I began to grope with it about the recess; but the thought of an instant reassured me. I placed my hand upon the solid fabric of the catacombs, and felt satisfied. I reapproached the wall; I replied to the yells of him who clamored. I re-echoed—I aided—I surpassed them in volume and in strength. I did this, and the clamor grew still.

It was now midnight, and my task was drawing to a close. I had completed the eighth, the ninth, and the tenth tier. I had finished a portion of the last and the eleventh; there remained but a single stone to be fitted and plastered in. I struggled with its weight; I placed it partially in its destined position. But now there came from out the niche a low laugh that erected the hairs upon my head. It was succeeded by a sad voice, which I had difficulty in recognizing as that of the noble Fortunato. The voice said—

“Ha! ha! ha!—he! he! he!—a very good joke indeed—an excellent jest. We shall have many a rich laugh about it at the palazzo—he! he! he!—over our wine—he! he! he!”

“The Amontillado!” I said.

“He! he! he!—he! he! he!—yes, the Amontillado. But is it not getting late? Will not they be awaiting us at the palazzo, the Lady Fortunato and the rest? Let us be gone.”

“Yes,” I said, “let us be gone.”

“*For the love of God, Montresor!*”

“Yes,” I said, “for the love of God!”

But to these words I hearkened in vain for a reply. I grew impatient. I called aloud—

“Fortunato!”

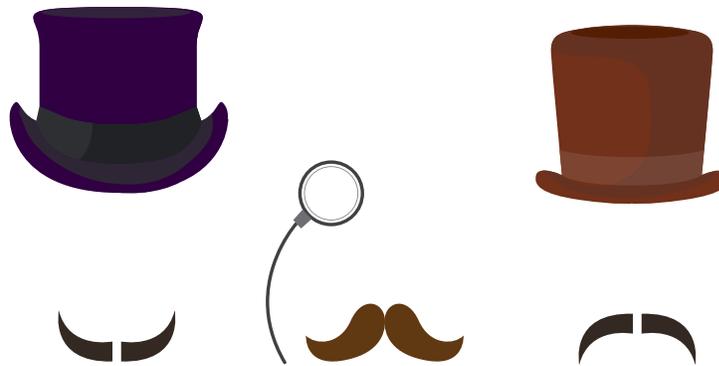
No answer. I called again—

“Fortunato—”

No answer still. I thrust a torch through the remaining aperture and let it fall within. There came forth in reply only a jingling of the bells. My heart grew sick on account of the dampness of the catacombs. I hastened to make an end of my labor. I forced the last stone into its position; I plastered it up. Against the new masonry I re-erected the old rampart of bones. For the half of a century no mortal has disturbed them. *In pace requiescat!* ♦

▶ MORE INFORMATION

Today In History: Edgar Allan Poe Born, 1809
loc.gov/item/today-in-history/january-19



IF I WERE A MAN

BY CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN (1914)

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860–1935) was a prominent American sociologist, writer, feminist and lecturer on social reform.

Mollie was “true to type.” She was a beautiful instance of what is reverentially called “a true woman.” Little, of course—no true woman may be big. Pretty, of course—no true woman could possibly be plain. Whimsical, capricious, charming, changeable, devoted to pretty clothes and always “wearing them well,” as the esoteric phrase has it. (This does not refer to the clothes—they do not wear well in the least—but to some special grace of putting them on and carrying them about, granted to but few, it appears.)

She was also a loving wife and a devoted mother possessed of “the social gift” and the love of “society” that

goes with it, and with all these was fond and proud of her home and managed it as capably as—well, as most women do.

If ever there was a true woman it was Mollie Mathewson, yet she was wishing heart and soul she was a man.

And all of a sudden she was!

She was Gerald, walking down the path so erect and square-shouldered, in a hurry for his morning train, as usual, and, it must be confessed, in something of a temper. ...

A man! Really a man—with only enough subconscious memory of herself remaining to make her recognize the differences.

At first there was a funny sense of size and weight and extra thickness, the feet and hands seemed strangely large, and her long, straight, free legs swung forward at a gait that made her feel as if on stilts.

This presently passed, and in its place, growing all day, wherever she went, came a new and delightful feeling of being the right size.

Everything fitted now. Her back snugly against the seat-back, her feet comfortably on the floor. Her feet? ... His feet! She studied them carefully. Never before, since her early school days, had she felt such freedom and comfort as to feet—they were firm and solid on the ground when she walked; quick, springy, safe—as when, moved by an unrecognizable impulse, she had run after, caught, and swung aboard the car.

Another impulse fished in a convenient pocket for change—instantly, automatically, bringing forth a nickel for the conductor and a penny for the newsboy.

These pockets came as a revelation. Of course she had known they were there, had counted them, made fun of them, mended them, even envied them; but she never had dreamed of how it felt to have pockets.

Behind her newspaper she let her consciousness, that odd mingled consciousness, rove from pocket to pocket, realizing the armored assurance of having all those things at hand, instantly get-at-able, ready to meet emergencies. The cigar case gave her a warm feeling of comfort—it was full; the firmly held fountain pen, safe unless she stood on her head; the keys, pencils, letters, documents, notebook, checkbook, bill folder—all at once, with a deep rushing sense of power and pride, she felt what she had never felt before in all her life—the possession of money, of her own earned money—hers to give or to withhold, not to beg for, tease for, wheedle for—hers... .

When he took his train, his seat in the smoking car, she had a new surprise. All about him were the other men, commuters too, and many of them friends of his.

To her, they would have been distinguished as “Mary Wade’s husband,” “the man Belle Grant is engaged to,” “that rich Mr. Shopworth,” or “that pleasant Mr. Beale.” And they would all have lifted their hats to her, bowed, made polite conversation if near enough—especially Mr. Beale.

Now came the feeling of open-eyed acquaintance, of knowing men—as they were. The mere amount of this knowledge was a surprise to her—the whole background of talk from boyhood up, the gossip of barber-shop and club, the conversation of morning and evening hours on trains, the knowledge of political affiliation, of business standing and prospects, of character—in a light she had never known before.

They came and talked to Gerald, one and another. He seemed quite popular. And as they talked, with this new memory and new understanding, an understanding which seemed to include all these men’s minds, there poured in on the submerged consciousness beneath a new, a startling knowledge—what men really think of women.

Good, average, American men were there; married men for the most part, and happy—as happiness goes in general. In the minds of each and all there seemed to be a two-story department, quite apart from the rest of their ideas, a separate place where they kept their thoughts and feelings about women.

In the upper half were the tenderest emotions, the most exquisite ideals, the sweetest memories, all lovely sentiments as to “home” and “mother,” all delicate admiring adjectives, a sort of sanctuary, where a veiled statue, blindly adored, shared place with beloved yet commonplace experiences.

In the lower half—here that buried consciousness woke to keen distress—they kept quite another assortment of ideas. Here, even in this clean-minded husband of hers, was the memory of stories told at men’s dinners, of worse ones overheard in street or car, of base traditions, coarse epithets, gross experiences—known, though not shared.

And all these in the department “woman,” while in the rest of the mind—here was new knowledge indeed.

The world opened before her. Not the world she had been reared in—where Home had covered all the map, almost, and the rest had been “foreign,” or “unexplored country,” but the world as it was—man’s world, as made, lived in, and seen, by men.

It was dizzying. To see the houses that fled so fast across the car window, in terms of builders’ bills, or of some technical insight into materials and methods; to see a passing village with lamentable knowledge of who “owned it” and of how its Boss was rapidly aspiring in state power, or of how that kind of paving was a failure; to see shops, not as mere exhibitions of desirable objects, but as business ventures, many were sinking ships, some promising a profitable voyage—this new world bewildered her.

She—as Gerald—had already forgotten about that bill, over which she—as Mollie—was still crying at home. Gerald was “talking business” with this man, “talking politics” with that, and now sympathizing with the carefully withheld troubles of a neighbor.

Mollie had always sympathized with the neighbor’s wife before.

She began to struggle violently with this large dominant masculine consciousness. She remembered with sudden clearness things she had read,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

PURSUIT

Gene Luen Yang is an author, illustrator and graphic novelist and literacy advocate. He currently serves as the Library's National Ambassador for Young People's Literature and was named as a 2016 recipient of a "genius" grant from the MacArthur Foundation. This story was created to promote the Miami Book Fair and is used with its permission.



By Gene Luen Yang

lectures she had heard, and resented with increasing intensity this serene masculine preoccupation with the male point of view.

Mr. Miles, the little fussy man who lived on the other side of the street, was talking now. He had a large complacent wife; Mollie had never liked her much, but had always thought him rather nice—he was so punctilious in small courtesies.

And here he was talking to Gerald—such talk!

“Had to come in here,” he said. “Gave my seat to a dame who was bound to have it. There’s nothing they won’t get when they make up their minds to it—eh?”

“No fear!” said the big man in the next seat. “They haven’t much mind to make up, you know—and if they do, they’ll change it.”

“The real danger,” began the Rev. Alfred Smythe, the new Episcopal clergyman, a thin, nervous, tall man with a face several centuries behind the times, “is that they will overstep the limits of their God-appointed sphere.”

“Their natural limits ought to hold ‘em, I think,” said cheerful Dr. Jones. “You can’t get around physiology, I tell you.”

“I’ve never seen any limits, myself, not to what they want, anyhow,” said Mr. Miles. “Merely a rich husband and a fine house and no end of bonnets and dresses, and the latest thing in motors, and a few diamonds—and so on. Keeps us pretty busy.”

There was a tired gray man across the aisle. He had a very nice wife, always beautifully dressed, and three unmarried daughters, also beautifully dressed—Mollie knew them. She knew he worked hard, too, and she looked at him now a little anxiously. But she smiled cheerfully.

“Do you good, Miles,” he said. “What else would a man work for? A good woman is about the best thing on earth.”

“And a bad one’s the worse, that’s sure,” responded Miles.

“She’s a pretty weak sister, viewed professionally,” Dr. Jones averred with solemnity, and the Rev. Alfred Smythe added, “She brought evil into the world.”

Gerald Mathewson sat up straight. Something was stirring in him which he did not recognize—yet could not resist.

“Seems to me we all talk like Noah,” he suggested drily, “or the ancient Hindu scriptures. Women have their limitations, but so do we, God knows. Haven’t we known girls in school and college just as smart as we were?”^{Shawn Miller}

“They cannot play our games,” coldly replied the clergyman.

Gerald measured his meager proportions with a practiced eye.

“I never was particularly good at football myself,” he modestly admitted, “but I’ve known women who could outlast a man in all-round endurance. Besides—life isn’t spent in athletics!”

This was sadly true. They all looked down the aisle where a heavy ill-dressed man with a bad complexion sat alone. He had held the top of the columns once, with headlines and photographs. Now he earned less than any of them. . . .

“Yes, we blame them for grafting on us, but are we willing to let our wives work? We are not. It hurts our pride, that’s all. We are always criticizing them for making mercenary marriages, but what do we call a girl who marries a chump with no money? Just a poor fool, that’s all. And they know it.

“As for Mother Eve—I wasn’t there and can’t deny the story, but I will say this. If she brought evil into the world, we men have had the lion’s share of keeping it going ever since—how about that?”

They drew into the city, and all day long in his business, Gerald was vaguely conscious of new views, strange feelings, and the submerged Mollie learned and learned. ♦

A TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION

BY MARK TWAIN (1880)

Samuel L. Clemens (1835-1910), writing as “Mark Twain,” was a journalist, novelist, and lecturer, best known for “The Adventures of Tom Sawyer” and “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn,” cited by the Library in 2012 as “A Book That Shaped America.”

consider that a conversation by telephone—when you are simply sitting by and not taking any part in that conversation—is one of the solemnest curiosities of this modern life. Yesterday I was writing a deep article on a sublime philosophical subject while such a

conversation was going on in the room. I notice that one can always write best when somebody is talking through a telephone close by. Well, the thing began in this way. A member of our household came in and asked me to have our house put into communication with



Mr. Bagley's, downtown. I have observed, in many cities, that the gentle sex always shrink from calling up the central office themselves. I don't know why, but they do. So I touched the bell, and this talk ensued—

Central Office. [Gruffly.] Hello!

I. Is it the Central Office?

C.O. Of course it is. What do you want?

I. Will you switch me on to the Bagleys, please?

C.O. All right. Just keep your ear to the telephone.

Then I heard, *k-look, k-look, k'look—klook-klook-klook-look-look!* then a horrible "gritting" of teeth, and finally a piping female voice:

Y-e-s? [Rising inflection.] Did you wish to speak to me?"

Without answering, I handed the telephone to the applicant, and sat down. Then followed that queerest of all the queer things in this world—a conversation with only one end to it. You hear questions asked; you don't hear the answer. You hear invitations given; you hear no thanks in return. You have listening pauses of dead silence, followed by apparently irrelevant and unjustifiable exclamations of glad surprise, or sorrow, or dismay. You can't make head or tail of the talk, because you never hear anything that the person at the other end of the wire says. Well, I heard the following remarkable series of observations, all from the one tongue, and all shouted—for you can't ever persuade the gentle sex to speak gently into a telephone—

Yes? Why, how did *that* happen?

Pause.

What did you say?

Pause.

Oh, no, I don't think it was.

Pause.

No! Oh, no, I didn't mean that. I meant, put it in while it is still boiling—or just before it comes to a boil.

Pause.

WHAT?

Pause.

I turned it over with a back stitch on the selvage edge.

Pause.

Yes, I like that way, too; but I think it's better to baste it on with Valenciennes or bombazine, or something of

that sort. It gives it such an air—and attracts so much notice.

Pause.

It's 49th Deuteronomy, 64th to 97th inclusive. I think we ought all to read it often.

Pause.

Perhaps so; I generally use a hair-pin.

Pause.

What did you say? [*Aside*] Children, do be quiet!

Pause.

Oh! B flat! Dear me, I thought you said it was the cat!

Pause.

Since *when*?

Pause.

Why, I never heard of it.

Pause.

You astound me! It seems utterly impossible!

Pause.

Who did?

Pause.

Good-ness gracious!

Pause.

Well, what is this world coming to? Was it right in *church*?

Pause.

And was her *mother* there?

Pause.

Why, Mrs. Bagley, I should have died of humiliation! What did they *do*?

Long Pause.

I can't be perfectly sure, because I haven't the notes by me; but I think it goes something like this: te-rolly-loll-loll, loll lolly-loll-loll, O tolly-loll-loll-*lee-ly-li-i-do!* And then *repeat*, you know.

Pause.

Yes, I think it *is* very sweet—and very solemn and impressive, if you get the andantino and the pianissimo right.

Pause.

Oh, gum-drops, gum-drops! But I never allow them to eat striped candy. And of course they *can't*, till they get their teeth, any way.

Pause.

What?

Pause.

Oh, not in the least—go right on. He’s here writing—it doesn’t bother *him*.

Pause.

Very well, I’ll come if I can. [*Aside.*] Dear me, how it does tire a person’s arm to hold this thing up so long! I wish she’d—

Pause.

Oh, no, not at all; I *like* to talk—but I’m afraid I’m keeping you from your affairs.

Pause.

Visitors?

Pause.

No, we never use butter on them.

Pause.

Yes, that is a very good way; but all the cook-books say they are very unhealthy when they are out of season. And *he* doesn’t like them, any way—especially canned.

Pause.

Oh, I think that is too high for them; we have never paid over fifty cents a bunch.

Pause.

Must you go? Well, *good-by*.

Pause.

Yes, I think so. *Good-by*.

Pause.

Four, o’clock then—I’ll be ready. *Good-by*.

Pause.

Thank you ever so much. *Good-by*.

Pause.

Oh, not at all!—just as fresh—*Which?* Oh, I’m glad to hear you say that. *Good-by*.

[Hangs up the telephone and says, “Oh, it *does* tire a person’s arm so!”]

A man delivers a single brutal “Good-by,” and that is the end of it. Not so with the gentle sex—I say it in their praise; they cannot abide abruptness. ♦

THE ENCHANTED BLUFF

BY WILLA SIBERT CATHER (1909)

Willia Cather (1873–1947) won fame for her novels and stories of frontier life on the American Great Plains, including “O Pioneers!” She won the Pulitzer Prize in 1922 for “One of Ours,” a novel set during World War I, and the Library named “My Antonia” (1918) one of the “Books That Shaped America” in 2012.

We had our swim before sundown, and while we were cooking our supper the oblique rays of light made a dazzling glare on the white sand about us. The translucent red ball itself sank behind the brown stretches of corn field as we sat down to eat, and the warm layer of air that had rested over the water and our clean sand-bar grew fresher and smelled of the rank ironweed and sunflowers growing on the flatter shore. The river was brown and sluggish, like any other of the half-dozen streams that water the Nebraska corn lands. On one shore was an irregular line of bald clay bluffs where a few scrub-oaks with thick trunks and flat, twisted tops threw light shadows on the long grass. The western shore was low and level, with corn fields that stretched to the sky-line, and all along the water’s edge were little sandy coves and beaches where slim cottonwoods and willow saplings flickered.

The turbulence of the river in springtime discouraged milling, and, beyond keeping the old red bridge in repair, the busy farmers did not concern themselves with the stream; so the Sandtown boys were left in undisputed possession. In the autumn we hunted quail through the miles of stubble and fodder land along the flat shore, and,

after the winter skating season was over and the ice had gone out, the spring freshets and flooded bottoms gave us our great excitement of the year. The channel was never the same for two successive seasons. Every spring the swollen stream undermined a bluff to the east, or bit out a few acres of corn field to the west and whirled the soil away to deposit it in spummy mud banks somewhere else. When the water fell low in midsummer, new sand-bars were thus exposed to dry and whiten in the August sun. Sometimes these were banked so firmly that the fury of the next freshet failed to unseat them; the little willow seedlings emerged triumphantly from the yellow froth, broke into spring leaf, shot up into summer growth, and with their mesh of roots bound together the moist sand beneath them against the batterings of another April. Here and there a cottonwood soon glittered among them, quivering in the low current of air that, even on breathless days when the dust hung like smoke above the wagon road, trembled along the face of the water.

It was on such an island, in the third summer of its yellow green, that we built our watch-fire; not in the thicket of dancing willow wands, but on the level

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

THE TECHNICOLOR ADVENTURES OF CATALINA NEON

Last fall, Poet Laureate Juan Felipe Herrera and the Library launched “The Technicolor Adventures of Catalina Neon,” a bilingual, illustrated narrative poem specifically designed as an online interactive reading experience for kids.



The story follows young Catalina as she navigates her “neonized” world with her dog, Tortilla. The most exciting and important part of this project is its collaborative nature: Herrera and illustrator Juana Medina invited second- and third-graders and their school librarians to imagine how Catalina’s story would continue at the end of each chapter, then submit their ideas to propel the adventure forward.

The illustrated poem contains six chapters, each guided by students’ and librarians’ collective imaginations, and was written between October 2016 and June 2017.

► MORE INFORMATION

The Technicolor Adventures of Catalina Neon
read.gov/catalinaneon/

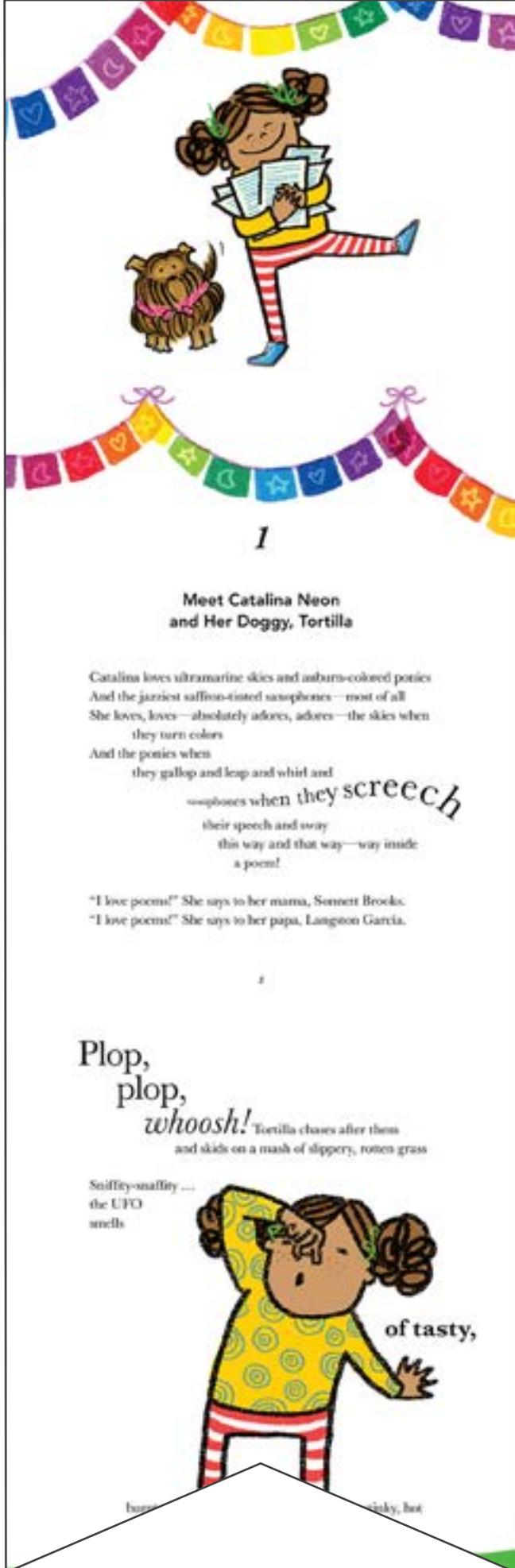
CLASSIC BOOKS ONLINE

Looking for more good reads? The Library offers dozens of rights-free classic books in page-turner format online on its literacy-promotion website—Read.gov—and on selected sections of its main site.

You can enjoy first-edition or other historic versions of “Aesop’s Fables,” “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,” “Anne of Green Gables,” “Mother Goose,” the Brothers Grimm, an illustrated life of Babe Ruth, “A Christmas Carol,” and even some lesser-known classics, such as “A New System of Sword Exercise.”

► MORE INFORMATION

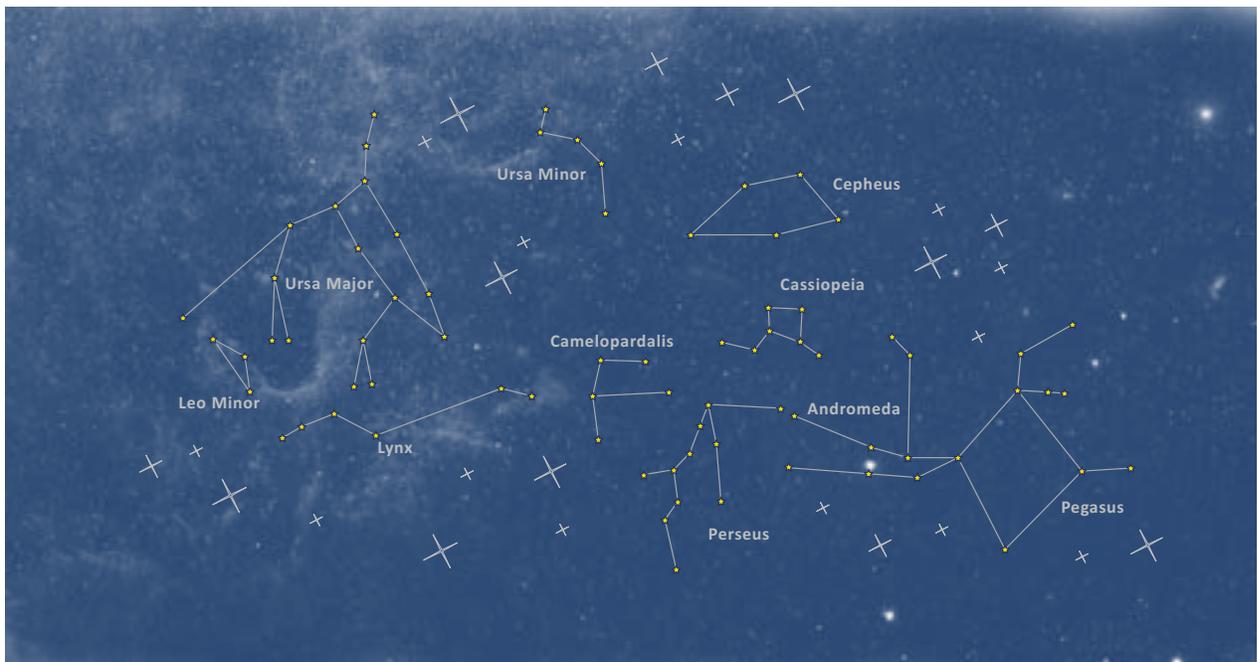
Books Online at Read.gov
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terrace of fine sand which had been added that spring; a little new bit of world, beautifully ridged with ripple marks, and strewn with the tiny skeletons of turtles and fish, all as white and dry as if they had been expertly cured. We had been careful not to mar the freshness of the place, although we often swam out to it on summer evenings and lay on the sand to rest.

This was our last watch-fire of the year, and there were reasons why I should remember it better than any of the others. Next week the other boys were to file back to their old places in the Sandtown High School, but I was to go up to the Divide to teach my first country school in the Norwegian district. I was already homesick at the thought

There was Percy Pound, a fat, freckled boy with chubby cheeks, who took half a dozen boys' story-papers and was always being kept in for reading detective stories behind his desk. There was Tip Smith, destined by his freckles and red hair to be the buffoon in all our games, though he walked like a timid little old man and had a funny, cracked laugh. Tip worked hard in his father's grocery store every afternoon, and swept it out before school in the morning. Even his recreations were laborious. He collected cigarette cards and tin tobacco-tags indefatigably, and would sit for hours humped up over a snarling little scroll-saw which he kept in his attic. His dearest possessions were some little pill bottles that purported to contain grains of wheat from the Holy



of quitting the boys with whom I had always played; of leaving the river, and going up into a windy plain that was all windmills and corn fields and big pastures; where there was nothing wilful or unmanageable in the landscape, no new islands, and no chance of unfamiliar birds—such as often followed the watercourses.

Other boys came and went and used the river for fishing or skating, but we six were sworn to the spirit of the stream, and we were friends mainly because of the river. There were the two Hassler boys, Fritz and Otto, sons of the little German tailor. They were the youngest of us; ragged boys of ten and twelve, with sunburned hair, weather-stained faces, and pale blue eyes. Otto, the elder, was the best mathematician in school, and clever at his books, but he always dropped out in the spring term as if the river could not get on without him. He and Fritz caught the fat, horned catfish and sold them about the town, and they lived so much in the water that they were as brown and sandy as the river itself.

Land, water from the Jordan and the Dead Sea, and earth from the Mount of Olives. His father had bought these dull things from a Baptist missionary who peddled them, and Tip seemed to derive great satisfaction from their remote origin.

The tall boy was Arthur Adams. He had fine hazel eyes that were almost too reflective and sympathetic for a boy, and such a pleasant voice that we all loved to hear him read aloud. Even when he had to read poetry aloud at school, no one ever thought of laughing. To be sure, he was not at school very much of the time. He was seventeen and should have finished the High School the year before, but he was always off somewhere with his gun. Arthur's mother was dead, and his father, who was feverishly absorbed in promoting schemes, wanted to send the boy away to school and get him off his hands; but Arthur always begged off for another year and promised to study. I remember him as a tall, brown boy with an intelligent face, always lounging among a

lot of us little fellows, laughing at us oftener than with us, but such a soft, satisfied laugh that we felt rather flattered when we provoked it. In after-years people said that Arthur had been given to evil ways even as a lad, and it is true that we often saw him with the gambler's sons and with old Spanish Fanny's boy, but if he learned anything ugly in their company he never betrayed it to us. We would have followed Arthur anywhere, and I am bound to say that he led us into no worse places than the cattail marshes and the stubble fields. These, then, were the boys who camped with me that summer night upon the sand-bar.

After we finished our supper we beat the willow thicket for driftwood. By the time we had collected enough, night had fallen, and the pungent, weedy smell from the shore increased with the coolness. We threw ourselves down about the fire and made another futile effort to show Percy Pound the Little Dipper. We had tried it often before, but he could never be got past the big one.

"You see those three big stars just below the handle, with the bright one in the middle?" said Otto Hassler; "that's Orion's belt, and the bright one is the clasp." I crawled behind Otto's shoulder and sighted up his arm to the star that seemed perched upon the tip of his steady forefinger. The Hassler boys did seine-fishing at night, and they knew a good many stars.

Percy gave up the Little Dipper and lay back on the sand, his hands clasped under his head. "I can see the North Star," he announced, contentedly, pointing toward it with his big toe. "Anyone might get lost and need to know that."

We all looked up at it.

"How do you suppose Columbus felt when his compass didn't point north any more?" Tip asked.

Otto shook his head. "My father says that there was another North Star once, and that maybe this one won't last always. I wonder what would happen to us down here if anything went wrong with it?"

Arthur chuckled. "I wouldn't worry, Ott. Nothing's apt to happen to it in your time. Look at the Milky Way! There must be lots of good dead Indians."

We lay back and looked, meditating, at the dark cover of the world. The gurgle of the water had become heavier. We had often noticed a mutinous, complaining note in it at night, quite different from its cheerful daytime chuckle, and seeming like the voice of a much deeper and more powerful stream. Our water had always these two moods: the one of sunny complaisance, the other of inconsolable, passionate regret.

"Queer how the stars are all in sort of diagrams," remarked Otto. "You could do most any proposition in geometry with 'em. They always look as if they meant something. Some folks say everybody's fortune is all

written out in the stars, don't they?"

"They believe so in the old country," Fritz affirmed.

But Arthur only laughed at him. "You're thinking of Napoleon, Fritzey. He had a star that went out when he began to lose battles. I guess the stars don't keep any close tally on Sandtown folks."

We were speculating on how many times we could count a hundred before the evening star went down behind the corn fields, when someone cried, "There comes the moon, and it's as big as a cart wheel!"

We all jumped up to greet it as it swam over the bluffs behind us. It came up like a galleon in full sail; an enormous, barbaric thing, red as an angry heathen god.

"When the moon came up red like that, the Aztecs used to sacrifice their prisoners on the temple top," Percy announced.

"Go on, Perce. You got that out of Golden Days. Do you believe that, Arthur?" I appealed.

Arthur answered, quite seriously: "Like as not. The moon was one of their gods. When my father was in Mexico City he saw the stone where they used to sacrifice their prisoners."

As we dropped down by the fire again someone asked whether the Mound-Builders were older than the Aztecs. When we once got upon the Mound-Builders we never willingly got away from them, and we were still conjecturing when we heard a loud splash in the water.

"Must have been a big cat jumping," said Fritz. "They do sometimes. They must see bugs in the dark. Look what a track the moon makes!"

There was a long, silvery streak on the water, and where the current fretted over a big log it boiled up like gold pieces.

"Suppose there ever was any gold hid away in this old river?" Fritz asked. He lay like a little brown Indian, close to the fire, his chin on his hand and his bare feet in the air. His brother laughed at him, but Arthur took his suggestion seriously.

"Some of the Spaniards thought there was gold up here somewhere. Seven cities chuck full of gold, they had it, and Coronado and his men came up to hunt it. The Spaniards were all over this country once."

Percy looked interested. "Was that before the Mormons went through?"

We all laughed at this.

"Long enough before. Before the Pilgrim Fathers, Perce. Maybe they came along this very river. They always followed the watercourses."

"I wonder where this river really does begin?" Tip mused. That was an old and a favorite mystery which the map did not clearly explain. On the map the little

black line stopped somewhere in western Kansas; but since rivers generally rose in mountains, it was only reasonable to suppose that ours came from the Rockies. Its destination, we knew, was the Missouri, and the Hassler boys always maintained that we could embark at Sandtown in flood-time, follow our noses, and eventually arrive at New Orleans. Now they took up their old argument. "If us boys had grit enough to try it, it wouldn't take no time to get to Kansas City and St. Joe."

We began to talk about the places we wanted to go to. The Hassler boys wanted to see the stock-yards in Kansas City, and Percy wanted to see a big store in Chicago. Arthur was interlocutor and did not betray himself.

"Now it's your turn, Tip."

Tip rolled over on his elbow and poked the fire, and his eyes looked shyly out of his queer, tight little face. "My place is awful far away. My uncle Bill told me about it."

Tip's Uncle Bill was a wanderer, bitten with mining fever, who had drifted into Sandtown with a broken arm, and when it was well had drifted out again.

"Where is it?"

"Aw, it's down in New Mexico somewheres. There aren't no railroads or anything. You have to go on mules, and you run out of water before you get there and have to drink canned tomatoes."

"Well, go on, kid. What's it like when you do get there?"

Tip sat up and excitedly began his story.

"There's a big red rock there that goes right up out of the sand for about nine hundred feet. The country's flat all around it, and this here rock goes up all by itself, like a monument. They call it the Enchanted Bluff down there, because no white man has ever been on top of it. The sides are smooth rock, and straight up, like a wall. The Indians say that hundreds of years ago, before the Spaniards came, there was a village away up there in the air. The tribe that lived there had some sort of steps, made out of wood and bark, hung down over the face of the bluff, and the braves went down to hunt and carried water up in big jars swung on their backs. They kept a big supply of water and dried meat up there, and never went down except to hunt. They were a peaceful tribe that made cloth and pottery, and they went up there to get out of the wars. You see, they could pick off any war party that tried to get up their little steps. The Indians say they were a handsome people, and they had some sort of a queer religion. Uncle Bill thinks they were Cliff-Dwellers who had got into trouble and left home. They weren't fighters, anyhow.

"One time the braves were down hunting and an awful storm came up—a kind of waterspout—and when they got back to their rock they found their little staircase had been all broken to pieces, and only a few steps were left

hanging away up in the air. While they were camped at the foot of the rock, wondering what to do, a war party from the north came along and massacred 'em to a man, with all the old folks and women looking on from the rock. Then the war party went on south and left the village to get down the best way they could. Of course they never got down. They starved to death up there, and when the war party came back on their way north, they could hear the children crying from the edge of the bluff where they had crawled out, but they didn't see a sign of a grown Indian, and nobody has ever been up there since."

We exclaimed at this dolorous legend and sat up.

"There couldn't have been many people up there," Percy demurred. "How big is the top, Tip?"

"Oh, pretty big. Big enough so that the rock doesn't look nearly as tall as it is. The top's bigger than the base. The bluff is sort of worn away for several hundred feet up. That's one reason it's so hard to climb."

I asked how the Indians got up, in the first place.

"Nobody knows how they got up or when. A hunting party came along once and saw that there was a town up there, and that was all."

Otto rubbed his chin and looked thoughtful. "Of course there must be some way to get up there. Couldn't people get a rope over someway and pull a ladder up?"

Tip's little eyes were shining with excitement. "I know a way. Me and Uncle Bill talked it all over. There's a kind of rocket that would take a rope over—life-savers use 'em—and then you could hoist a rope-ladder and peg it down at the bottom and make it tight with guy-ropes on the other side. I'm going to climb that there bluff, and I've got it all planned out.

Fritz asked what he expected to find when he got up there.

"Bones, maybe, or the ruins of their town, or pottery, or some of their idols. There might be 'most anything up there. Anyhow, I want to see."

"Sure nobody else has been up there, Tip?" Arthur asked.

"Dead sure. Hardly anybody ever goes down there. Some hunters tried to cut steps in the rock once, but they didn't get higher than a man can reach. The Bluff's all red granite, and Uncle Bill thinks it's a boulder the glaciers left. It's a queer place, anyhow. Nothing but cactus and desert for hundreds of miles, and yet right under the bluff there's good water and plenty of grass. That's why the bison used to go down there."

Suddenly we heard a scream above our fire, and jumped up to see a dark, slim bird floating southward far above us—a whooping-crane, we knew by her cry and her long neck. We ran to the edge of the island, hoping we might see her alight, but she wavered southward

along the rivercourse until we lost her. The Hassler boys declared that by the look of the heavens it must be after midnight, so we threw more wood on our fire, put on our jackets, and curled down in the warm sand. Several of us pretended to doze, but I fancy we were really thinking about Tip's Bluff and the extinct people. Over in the wood the ring doves were calling mournfully to one another, and once we heard a dog bark, far away. "Somebody getting into old Tommy's melon patch," Fritz murmured sleepily, but nobody answered him. By and by Percy spoke out of the shadow.

"Say, Tip, when you go down there will you take me with you?"

"Maybe."

"Suppose one of us beats you down there, Tip?"

"Whoever gets to the Bluff first has got to promise to tell the rest of us exactly what he finds," remarked one of the Hassler boys, and to this we all readily assented.

Somewhat reassured, I dropped off to sleep. I must have dreamed about a race for the Bluff, for I awoke in a kind of fear that other people were getting ahead of me and that I was losing my chance. I sat up in my damp clothes and looked at the other boys, who lay tumbled in uneasy attitudes about the dead fire. It was still dark, but the sky was blue with the last wonderful azure of night. The stars glistened like crystal globes, and trembled as if they shone through a depth of clear water. Even as I watched, they began to pale and the sky brightened. Day came suddenly, almost instantaneously. I turned for another look at the blue night, and it was gone. Everywhere the birds began to call, and all manner of little insects began to chirp and hop about in the willows. A breeze sprang up from the west and brought the heavy smell of ripened corn. The boys rolled over and shook themselves. We stripped and plunged into the river just as the sun came up over the windy bluffs.

When I came home to Sandtown at Christmas time, we skated out to our island and talked over the whole project of the Enchanted Bluff, renewing our resolution to find it.

Although that was 20 years ago, none of us have ever climbed the Enchanted Bluff. Percy Pound is a stockbroker in Kansas City and will go nowhere that his red touring-car cannot carry him. Otto Hassler went on the railroad and lost his foot braking; after which he and Fritz succeeded their father as the town tailors.

Arthur sat about the sleepy little town all his life—he died before he was 25. The last time I saw him, when I was home on one of my college vacations, he was sitting in a steamer-chair under a cottonwood tree in the little yard behind one of the two Sandtown saloons. He was very untidy and his hand was not steady, but when he rose, unabashed, to greet me, his eyes were as clear and warm as ever. When I had talked with him for an hour

and heard him laugh again, I wondered how it was that when Nature had taken such pains with a man, from his hands to the arch of his long foot, she had ever lost him in Sandtown. He joked about Tip Smith's Bluff, and declared he was going down there just as soon as the weather got cooler; he thought the Grand Cañon might be worth while, too.

I was perfectly sure when I left him that he would never get beyond the high plank fence and the comfortable shade of the cottonwood. And, indeed, it was under that very tree that he died one summer morning.

Tip Smith still talks about going to New Mexico. He married a slatternly, unthrifty country girl, has been much tied to a perambulator, and has grown stooped and gray from irregular meals and broken sleep. But the worst of his difficulties are now over, and he has, as he says, come into easy water. When I was last in Sandtown I walked home with him late one moonlight night, after he had balanced his cash and shut up his store. We took the long way around and sat down on the schoolhouse steps, and between us we quite revived the romance of the lone red rock and the extinct people. Tip insists that he still means to go down there, but he thinks now he will wait until his boy, Bert, is old enough to go with him. Bert has been let into the story, and thinks of nothing but the Enchanted Bluff. ♦

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FINDING A VOICE

BY RACHEL SMOOKLER (2016)

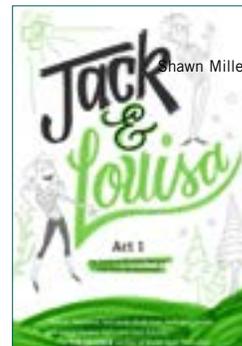
Rachel Smookler won the 2016 First Place Grand Prize in the 2016 Library of Congress National Book Festival Summer Writing Contest, "A Book That Shaped Me," with this essay. She is a rising 7th-grade student in Wilmington, Delaware.

As the lights came up, I saw the blurred faces of the audience staring at me in the bright spotlight. As I exhaled, all of my nervousness whooshed out of me like a deflating balloon. When I inhaled, excitement took its place as I prepared to sing the first note of the opening song. This was the beginning of Act 1.

Last summer, I never could have imagined myself performing in front of hundreds of people. At my old school, my classmates labeled me as the shy girl who barely talked. My family was moving over the summer from Maryland to Delaware, and my main goal was to change that label at my new school. After the move, books were my best and only friends. Like a rabbit hiding from the world in its hole, I stayed in my room, and shut the world out. "Jack and Louisa: Act 1" by Andrew Keenan-Bolger and Kate Wetherhead helped me out of my hole. When I started reading this book, all of my sadness and loneliness flew away, like birds flying free in the wind. I was transported on stage singing a song from "Into the Woods" with Jack and Louisa.

In this book, Jack reluctantly moved from an exciting New York City life as a Broadway actor to a boring suburban life in Ohio. He missed all of the familiar activities in New York such as picnicking in Central Park and eating ice cream on the Hudson River. He was also sad to not attend 7th grade at the Professional Performing Arts School. After moving I felt the same way. I missed my favorite Maryland activities such as eating mint chocolate chip ice cream at the Annapolis Ice Cream Company, enjoying the beach with friends, and devouring blue crabs at local seafood restaurants. "Jack and Louisa: Act 1" helped me feel less alone since it was about another kid going through the same challenges as me.

Reading the book also made me curious about Broadway. I started looking up songs from musicals and listening to them. Soon, I became what Louisa calls a "Musical Theater Nerd," someone who is obsessed with musical theater. I dusted off my mom's old "Secret Garden" CD. When I listened, I immediately fell in love with the mysterious, ghostly songs. My parents got so tired of me playing the soundtrack nonstop that they begged me to turn it off, just like Jack and Louisa's parents did whenever they played "Into the Woods."



When winter arrived, the opportunity to change my label and explore my interest in musical theater came along. I mustered up every bit of courage I had and auditioned for my school's musical. By then, I had made many friends besides Jack and Louisa at my new school. I even encouraged my new friends to audition with me. With the courage that Jack and Louisa gave me, I felt like I could do anything. When my turn to audition came, I felt all my nervousness disappear. That weekend, I was thrilled to find out I was cast as a narrator! I knew that I had achieved my goal to change my label. I wasn't a shy girl who had lost her voice, but an actress whose voice would be heard throughout a large auditorium.

My school's musical was a success and before the curtain fell, I gave Jack and Louisa a bow in my imagination for helping in so many ways. This book helped me find and explore my new passion for musical theater and to learn that change can bring new adventures and exciting opportunities. It also gave me the courage to show the world my true self. ♦

LIBRARY SPONSORS YOUTH READING-WRITING PROGRAM

The Library of Congress sponsors an annual reading and writing contest for young people: "A Book That Shaped Me: Letters About Literature." The program combines two longtime successful programs that have encouraged students to write about their reading experiences and how it has affected their lives.

"The two programs have very similar goals—getting kids to read and write about the books they love," said Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden. "This integration will deepen the impact of the programs and enable the

Library to market them more effectively."

The summer contest targets rising 5th- and 6th-grade students and will be managed in collaboration with libraries in six states as in past years. Winners will be honored at the 2017 National Book Festival, which will take place Saturday, Sept. 2.

► MORE INFORMATION

Contests for Young People
read.gov/contests/

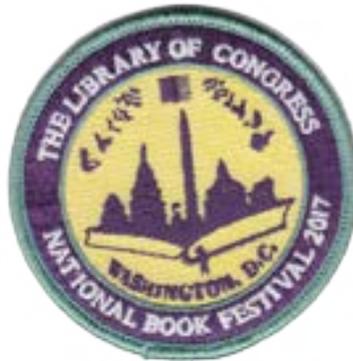
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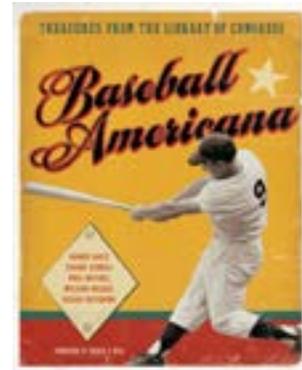
This classic 1910 print by M. Norstad features a father and son reading during a camping trip (8"x10", larger sizes available).



National Book Festival Patch

Product #21505259
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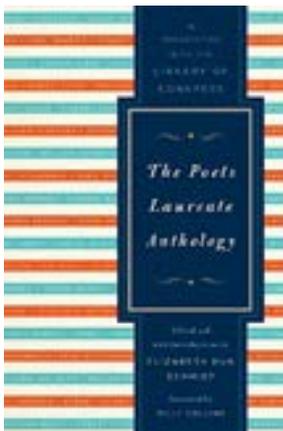
Designed to be earned by scouts taking part in the National Book Festival, this handsome patch is a wonderful memento of the 2017 festival for non-scouts, as well.



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1. Gloria Gaynor performs in the Great Hall at the Library's Bibliodiscotheque celebration, May 6.

2. Conservator Julie Biggs speaks with members of Congress and guests about President Abraham Lincoln's second inaugural address during a Preservation Night display, June 6.

3. Ann Compton moderates a discussion with Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao and Netflix CEO Reed Hastings during the third annual Daniel K. Inouye Distinguished Lecture hosted by the John W. Kluge Center, May 18.

4. Jayme Stone performs folk and dance music from his Alan Lomax project with Moira Smiley, Sumaia Jackson and Joe Phillips during a Homegrown Concert Series event, May 4.

5. Exhibition director Betsy Nahum-Miller discusses the courtroom illustration collection and highlights of the new Drawing Justice exhibition, May 10.



6

6. Tim Gunn discusses fashion and the disco era with Deputy Librarian of Congress Robert Newlen, May 2.

All photos by Shawn Miller

FEDLINK HONORS EXCELLENCE IN FEDERAL LIBRARIANSHIP

The Federal Library and Information Network (FEDLINK) honored the following 2016 award winners at its Spring Exposition on May 9.

Large Library/Information Center: NASA Goddard Information and Collaboration Center, Greenbelt, Maryland, was recognized for its efforts to transform its physical space and expand its services to meet the evolving needs of its cutting-edge research community.

Small Library/Information Center: Federal Communications Commission Library, Washington, D.C., was recognized for serving the research needs of staff at the facility's headquarters, as well as those located at field offices around the country.

Federal Librarian: Michael Steinmacher of the Barr Memorial Library, Fort Knox, Kentucky, was recognized for his innovation and promotion of meaningful and creative library services, programs and events.

Federal Library Technician: Jennea Augsbury at the Department of Veterans Affairs, Dallas, Texas, was recognized for her extraordinary dedication to serving the needs of the medical center staff and veterans.

► **MORE:** loc.gov/item/prn-17-064/

YANG LAUNCHES “READING WITHOUT WALLS” PROJECT

Gene Luen Yang, National Ambassador for Young People's Literature, launched his Reading Without Walls reading program during a Library of Congress event in April with Librarian of Congress Carla Hayden.

Reading Without Walls challenges young people to explore, through books, worlds outside their comfort zones. Specifically, it asks readers to read a book about a character who does not look like them or live like them; read a book about a topic they do not know much about; or read a book in a format that they do not normally read for fun, such as a chapter book, an audio book, a graphic novel or a book in verse.

► **MORE:** loc.gov/item/prn-17-051/

RARE HARRIET TUBMAN PHOTO ACQUIRED IN JOINT ACQUISITION



Image courtesy of Swann Galleries

The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture and the Library of Congress announced the joint acquisition of an album of 44 rare photographs, including a previously unrecorded portrait of abolitionist and Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman and the only known photograph of John Willis Menard, the first African American man elected to the U.S. Congress.

The images are part of the photo album of Emily Howland (1827–1929), a Quaker schoolteacher who taught at Camp Todd, the Freedman's School in Arlington, Va. The collaboration ensures these pieces of American history will be accessible to the public in perpetuity.

► **MORE:** loc.gov/item/prn-17-045/

CARD CATALOG FOCUS OF NEW LIBRARY BOOK

A new book exploring the history of the card catalog—that venerated chest of small drawers that contained the known universe—has been published by the Library of Congress in association with Chronicle Books. The lavishly illustrated volume tells the story of libraries' organizing approaches—from the layout of papyrus scrolls at the Library of Alexandria and playing cards with notes on the back that served librarians during the chaos of the French Revolution—to the doorstep of the digital information retrieval we use today.

“The Card Catalog: Books, Cards, and Literary Treasures,” includes illustrations featuring the Library's original catalog cards (many with fascinating annotations) and the covers of many familiar, beloved books in its collections. It is available through the Library Shop (see page 23).

► **MORE:** loc.gov/item/prn-17-050/



SALMAN RUSHDIE TELLS THE STORY OF HOW HE FELL IN LOVE WITH READING.

When I was a boy in Bombay we lived in a three-story villa on a low hill looking down on busy Warden Road and out to the Arabian Sea, the same villa which, renamed, can be found in my novel “Midnight’s Children.” A narrow tree-lined lane looped down the hill to the road below, and at the junction of the lane and the road there stood a small bookstore called Reader’s Paradise. A few doors further down Warden Road there was a candy store called Bombelli’s, featuring in its windows a three-foot box labeled One Yard of Chocolates.

In spite of the lure of the chocolates, it was to the bookstore that my feet led me when I got down from the school bus, day after day, and it was in that literary Eden that I fell in love with reading. (There was a second great bookstore downtown, the much larger Thacker’s, and visits there were like entries into an Arabian Nights cave of treasure. But a visit to Thacker’s required the use of a motor car and therefore at least one parent. Reader’s Paradise required neither, and was my daily stop.)

Some famous English-language children’s books made it to India, others didn’t. So “Winnie-the-Pooh” didn’t make it, but I easily found and devoured “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland,” “Through the Looking Glass,” and even the much more obscure Lewis Carroll works “Sylvie and Bruno” and its sequel “Sylvie and Bruno Concluded,” of which all I remember is the wonderful sequence of nonsensical “I thought I saw...” verses:

*I thought I saw a Rattlesnake
That questioned me in Greek;
I looked again, and found it was
The Middle of Next Week.
The one thing I regret, I said,
Is that it cannot speak.*

*I thought I saw a Banker’s Clerk
Descending from a Bus.
I looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus.
“If this should come to dine,” I said,
“There won’t be much for us.”*

I was particularly fascinated by the “Swallows and Amazons” series of books by Arthur Ransome, about two families of children messing about in boats in the Lake District of England. I remember being very impressed by how much

personal freedom these children had! Their parents let them go off in these boats unsupervised and sleep on islands by themselves. How could children possibly be allowed to behave like this? It made me think that England must be an amazing place, because you could run wild. In fact it isn't and you can't. But the books were great.

I went in search of more places where I could feed my reading addiction. I found a second haven not far from home, a little way north along Warden Road: a small, inexpensive paperback lending library located at the melodramatically named Scandal Point. Here I discovered the writers so beloved by Indian readers—P.G. Wodehouse, Agatha Christie, and John Masters, author of “Bhowani Junction,” which became an Ava Gardner movie.

But it was the Perry Mason novels by Erle Stanley Gardner that really hooked me, “The Case of the Howling Dog,” “The Case of the Lucky Legs,” and so on. (I wondered how the hapless D.A., Hamilton “Ham” Burger, kept his job after being trounced in court by the great Perry Mason time after time.) Then I read somewhere that Gardner kept three secretaries in three separate trailers and spent his working day going from trailer to trailer dictating three different novels, and my admiration knew no bounds. This was clearly the greatest writer in the world.

At Reader's Paradise, near the cash register at the back of the store, was a stack of comic books, and so I became acquainted, during the 1950s, with all the great superheroes of the time, Batman, Superman, Aquaman, Wonder Woman and J'onn J'onzz the Martian. I've always thought my parents were smart not to force me to read only “good” books. As long as I was reading, they were content, and they were right. The habit of reading, once formed, will last a lifetime, and the good books get their turn in the end. What matters is to be seduced.

Salman Rushdie is an award-winning Indian-British novelist and essayist. His novels include “Midnight's Children,” “The Satanic Verses,” “The Ground Beneath Her Feet,” “The Enchantress of Florence” and “Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights.”

◉ **MORE INFORMATION**

Salman Rushdie at the 2008 National Book Festival
go.usa.gov/xNwYg

Salman Rushdie at the 2016 National Book Festival
go.usa.gov/xNwY2



Books courtesy Freepik



Shawn Miller

NBF BOOKLOVERS CIRCLE

A NEW PROGRAM SUPPORTS THE NATIONAL BOOK FESTIVAL AND ENHANCES THE EXPERIENCE FOR ATTENDEES.

Each year the Library of Congress National Book Festival brings together tens of thousands of book lovers, with more than 100 of their favorite authors for interesting conversation, book signings and family fun.

Over the years the event has grown and evolved, and in 2017 promises to be one of the best ever, with six blockbuster authors on a 2,500-seat Main Stage streamed live to audiences all over the world.

It is a true celebration of reading: a place where best-selling authors connect with fans, readers discover new writers, and the power of storytelling carries the day.

Thanks to its many sponsors and supporters, the Festival has always been free to the public. This is by design, as the Library strives to promote reading and literacy to all. However, the Library of Congress needs your help to ensure the festival's future.

The Library is asking festival fans and literacy supporters to consider joining the first-ever Booklovers Circle with a \$1,000 donation.

Booklovers will be recognized for their generosity with two badges for reserved seating in any of the festival stages including the Main Stage, expedited entry at the Washington Convention Center, and invitations to Library of Congress literacy events throughout the year, including the opening reading of the new Poet Laureate Consultant in Poetry.

This limited opportunity is a great way to both give back to an event that has enriched so many lives and become a "must-do" on the annual literary calendar, while also enhancing your festival experience.

With authors this year including Pulitzer-Prize winning historian David McCullough, the wildly popular genre-bending novelist Diana Gabaldon, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and New York Times best-seller David Baldacci, this year's festival can't be missed.

▶ MORE INFORMATION

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The 2017 Library of Congress National Book Festival takes place 9 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 2, at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in Washington, D.C. Poster by Roz Chast

The National Book Festival, led by Co-Chairman David M. Rubenstein, is made possible by the generous support of Charter Sponsors include the Institute of Museum and Library Services, The Washington Post and Wells Fargo; Patron sponsors, The James Madison Council and the National Endowment for the Arts; Contributor-level sponsors the National Endowment for the Humanities and Scholastic Inc.; and, in the Friends category, Mensa Education and Research Foundation.



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July 13



July 20



July 27



August 3



August 10



August 17



exhibitions

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**Outdoor Summer
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Through
Aug. 17, 2017

**Drawing Justice:
The Art of
Courtroom
Illustrations**
Through
Oct. 28, 2017

**Echoes of the
Great War:
American
Experiences of
World War I**
Through
January 2019

MORE INFORMATION:
Film Series
loc.gov/item/prn-17-082/
Exhibitions
loc.gov/exhibits/