Marcus Stevens

Mr. Morgan

English

September 1, 2017

**The Diving Bell And The Butterfly**

**By Jean-Dominique Bauby**

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| **Quote** | **Opinion** |
| “His mouth was twisted, his nose damaged, his hair tousled, his gaze full of fear. One eye was sewn shit, the other goggled like the doomed eye of Cain. For a moment I stared at that dilated pupil, before I realized it was only mine.”-Jean-Dominique Bauby/Narrator pg. 25 (Bauby 25) | This quote caught my attention because of the great deal of description the author implemented in this tragic reality of a man. He came to the realization that he was extremely hideous to the outside world, and he will never be accepted as a “normal” human being according to society’s standards. The ending to this quote was extremely profound in the sense that it left you feeling so lucky for what we have, along with deep sympathy for the man. |
| 1. “Or else I dissolve into the landscape and there is nothing more to connect me to the world than a friendly hand stroking gmy numb fingers.”- Narrator pg. 29 (Bauby 29) | Currently, the narrator is illustrating in great detail his favorite part of the hospital he is confined to. Bauby’s writing is extremely deep and well thought out, but at this point in the book, you simply feel sad for him. Describing something so simple that facilities such joy, really brings to light the limited amount of happiness he experiences in this vegetable like state. It is almost like this book is a voice for people inhibited in similar ways to the author, and it attempts to let the reader share in the depression that all of these individuals experience. |
| 1. “Below, people laugh, joke, call out. I would like to be part of all this hilarity, but as soon as I direct my one eye toward them, the young man, the grandmother, and the homeless man turn away, feeling the sudden need to study the ceiling smoke detector.” -Narrator pg. 33 (Bauby 33) | In my opinion, this was one of the lowest points in the novel. The narrator is in a physical therapy room where the normally divided patients are forced to experience the uncomfortable company of each other. The temporarily disabled, the mentally ill, and all of the above are in the presence of one another. This quote highlights the flaws in the world in terms of the treatment of the disabled. Imprisoned within a paralyzed, mute body, the author displays great isolation from the rest of society. Furthermore, the fact that he perceives a homeless man in a position greater than his, truly shows how terrible this situation was to him. |
| 1. “…he was the very model of the couldn’t-care-less doctor: arrogant, brusque, sarcastic-the kind who summons his patients for 8:00a.m., and arrives at 9:00, and departs at 9:05…”-narrator pg. 54 (Bauby 54) | As a disabled person in the state of mind that the narrator is in, it is easy to see that he can have extreme temperament problems. And this is represented by the pure hatred for a man who is helping him sustain his life. Moreover, he has no idea who the doctor is, he has simply lost his sanity, and will continue to regress along this unfortunate journey. I just don’t comprehend why he must use such vulgar and distinct language to criticize a man who helps people for a living. |
| 1. “…to keep my mind sharp, to avoid descending into resigned indifference, I maintain a level of resentment and anger, neither too much nor too little, just as a pressure cooker has a safety valve to keep it from exploding.”-Narrator pg. 55 (Babuy 55) | This was very interesting to me because it made me question how someone could think this mindset is rational and logical. Why anger? What is the reason he chose this aspect of his character over happiness, optimism, or anything else. This is very interesting, as it exposes what type of person Bauby really is, and it perhaps brings a darker side of him to fruition. |
| 1. “From there, we made a tempestuous and magnificent crossing of the Pyrenees leaving behind us a long trail of remarks on the order of “First of all, I never said any such thing.” -Narrator pg. 60 (Babuy 60) | This is actually a point where he reminiscing the days where he was with his wife, and on a great adventure. It refers to a common bickering between significant others, as well as the physical journey. The remarkable part of this, is the fact that this is the one thing he remembers from this trip, and not the relaxing, lackadaisical times. This flashback is not particularly significant to the story, but it was beautifully worded and profound to read. |
| 1. “Today is Father’s Day. Until my stroke, we had felt no need to fit this made-up holiday into out emotional calendar. But today we spend the whole of the symbolic day together, affirming that even a rough sketch, a shadow, a tiny fragment of a dad is still a dad.” -Narrator pg. 70 (Babuy 70) | The author is lamenting the fact that he is just a part of the dad he used to be. He highlights the lack of respect for Father’s Day, and makes you think if we should pause and be thankful for what we have, even if it is a glimpse of what it used to be. Every second counts in this world, and this just emphasizes the point that time is a precious resource. |
| 1. “At the Café de Flore, one of those base camps of Parisian snobbery that send up rumors like flights of carrier pigeons, some close friends of mine over heard a conversation at the next table. The gossipers were as greedy as vultures who have just discovered a disemboweled antelope.”-Narrator pg. 82 (Babuy 82) | These individuals, characterized by the author as Parisian snobs, are despicable to Babuy. He gets word of this gossip, and reveals his true feelings towards these types of people. He has already experienced the life as an outcast within the hospital, and this extends to the outside world as well, which is really getting to him. The impactful language used, such as the comparison of snobs to vultures devouring a carcass, eloquently illustrates the disgust he experiences. He also recognizes the irony that he used to be part of this social structure, but now that they are cannibalizing him, he disagrees with this. It makes me think about the life lesson that could be acquired from this, and applied to my everyday life. |
| 1. “Had I been blind and deaf, or does it take the harsh light of disaster to show a person’s true nature?” -Narrator pg. 83 (Babuy 83) | Although this is a rhetorical question, it is a resonating one. He is getting letters about people that talk about their challenges, medical or otherwise, then he poses this profound question that suggests that only through our failure, trials, and disasters we can find our purist version of ourselves. This is an extremely deep question that I enjoyed contemplating on. It challenged me to think in ways I do not normally think in, and I think that is great. |
| 1. “But I never tire of the smell of French fries.”-Narrator pg. 88 (Babuy 88) | There is a man criticizing the smell of French fries in the area that Babuy is in, and he begins to think of how wonderful that smell is to him. This is a very simple, but thoughtful quote, as it relates to the everyday actions of everyone. On one hand, it is very sad that the author is reduced to find pleasure in something so insignificant as a smell. However, it makes me think about if we should acknowledge these types of things, and begin to appreciate them on a consistent basis. We never know when we are unable to find joy in the things that we love, so we should find joy in even more things that may be less impactful in our lives. |
| 1. “…he wields his inexhaustible faculty for gliding every lily.” -Narrator pg. 116 (Babuy 116) | He is talking about his friend in high school who was notorious to embellish and fabricate all sorts of things. It seems that the author is bemused by it, and describes his career as his niche, where the friend will accomplish anything with ease. He uses this well-known phrase “gilding the lily”, which stuck out to me and made me chose this quote. |

**The Boy In The Striped Pajamas**

**By John Boyne**

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| **Quote** | **Opinion** |
| 1. “’We don’t have the luxury of thinking, some people make all the decisions for us.’”-Bruno’s mother pg. 13 (Boyne 13) | Bruno, protagonist, is moving into his newly acquired home after leaving Berlin for an unknown reason. This area is quite foreign to Bruno for many reasons, including him being accustomed to an abundance of activity. The new place is desolate compared to Berlin, and this enforces the narrator’s discomfort with the move. Bruno says to his mother that he thinks the move is a bad idea. In her quote, his mother is unclear as to what she meant by the luxury of thinking. This foreshadows the story’s future depression and sadness in the everyday ways of life. |
| 1. “He looked the boy up and down as if he had never seen a child before and wasn’t quite sure what he was supposed to do with one: eat it, ignore it, or kick it down the stairs.” -Bruno pg. 18 (Boyne 18) | This quote refers to Lt. Kotler who Bruno encountered standing in his new home. This in many ways serves as a metaphor for Bruno’s discomfort with the fact that his whole family has left Berlin for no reason. Bruno is having a hard time processing the move without any knowledge or reasoning behind it. This stuck out for numerous reasons, including the comedic tone behind it. Bruno does not know how to react to this situation, and this was very evident when reading this chapter. |
| 1. “’Out-With the people who lived here before us, I expect.’”-Gretel pg. 25 (Boyne 25) | Gretel, Bruno’s big sister, is answering his exasperated question of what the meaning behind the house’s name is. The quote explains what the sister’s assumptions are about the significance behind “Out-With”, and it was very intriguing as it was only a little kid’s interpretation on the matter. Since they are outside of Berlin, it pushes me to the notion that it stands for something else, perhaps more sinister. This is yet another instance of foreshadowing, as we later learn that they are just outside of Auschwitz, one of the largest concentration camps during the Holocaust. The fact that the children were told a falsified name for the area says a lot about the family’s circumstances and what is to come later in this book. |
| 1. “’We should never have let the Fury come to diner, some people and their determination to get ahead.’”-Bruno’s Mother pg. 40 (Boyne 40) | Bruno’s mother made this tearful comment to herself just as they were leaving their Berlin home, implying that her husband was willing to compromise or sacrifice his family’s comforts for his professional or ideological ambitions. This could also pertain to Adolf Hitler, as it has become somewhat evident that Bruno’s father is a Nazi soldier, working at the concentration camp that the children had unknowingly discovered. The intricate wording put forth was why I chose this quote, as it was so interesting to interpret. |
| 1. “’Those people… well, they’re not people at all, Bruno.’”-Bruno’s Father pg. 53 (Boyne 53) | This is a very blunt display of the brutality and the inhumanity of the Nazi regime. The father was explaining to Bruno why the family moved there and Bruno asked who the people he could see in the distance were. This response demonstrates the perspective of the Nazis, and shows the irrational way of thought that people experienced every day. The quote was so profound, and was very impactful towards the rest of the story. Moreover, it is the very first glimpse that we get to understand the father’s job, attitude, and overall personality. 7 |
| 1. “’I’m not allowed to say what I fell?’”-Bruno pg. 64 (Boyne 64) | At this point in the story, this is a conversation between Maria, the housekeeper, and Bruno. She is explaining to him the situation that the family is in, as it could cause a great deal of trouble for everyone. Bruno cannot express his true feelings anymore as a result of the tight regulations his family is enduring and the powerful position that the father holds. This was eye catching because it alludes directly back to when Bruno’s mother said, “’We don’t have the luxury of thinking, some people make all the decisions for us’”(Boyne 13). The freedom and luxury that the family is used to is obsolete at this point, and will not come back as long as they stay where they are. |
| 1. “It’s so unfair, I don’t see why I have to be stuck over here on this side of the fence where there’s no one to talk to and no one to play with, and you get to have dozens of friends and are probably playing for hours every day. I’ll have speak to Father about that.” –Bruno pg. 110 (Boyne 110) | In his first encounter with Shmuel after adventuring well outside of his boundaries, Bruno laments his lack of social interaction and ironically views Shmuel’s situation (which is inside a concentration camp) as more desirable. This quote demonstrates the profound lack of understanding in the unfortunate situation his family is in. It caught my attention because of the fact that Bruno’s ignorance may potentially make his situation even worse, as he was explicitly told not to interact with anything or go anywhere near the fence. It simply puzzled me as to how challenging it is for Bruno to comprehend this situation, it is pretty evident as to what the Jew’s situation is. |
| 1. “Bruno thought about it. He realized that he actually wanted to talk about Shmuel a little bit and that this might be a way to do it without having to tell her the truth about his existence.”-Narrator pg. 157 (Boyne 157) | This happened on a rainy, but enlightening day when he and his sister were very bored. Bruno was extremely anxious to reveal his new friend, Shmuel, to his sister. However, Bruno soon realizes that it is not a wise move, as it could cause much danger to his family. It got me to think about people in general, and how they keep secrets. It is simply an innate instinct to tell someone information that most people are not allowed to hear. I can relate to this, but not to this magnitude where my family’s well-being would be at risk. Bruno’s lack of a knowledgeable filter may cause great distress either for him or his family. |
| 1. “He hated Lieutenant Kotler, but he was advancing on him now and all Bruno could think of was the after-noon when he had seen him shooting a dog and the evening when Pavel had made him so angry that he-”-Narrator pg. 172 (Boyne 172) | After Shmuel was brought in to work for the family, Lt. Kotler caught Shmuel eating food that Bruno had given him. After intense interrogation by Kotler, Bruno betrayed his friend out of pure fear and said he did not give him any food. This form of betrayal shows intensity of the Nazi regime. Not only was a Lieutenant feared and criticized by Jews, he was even feared by fellow German’s, who he supposedly serves. It takes me to this question, however. Why would someone say another person is his or her best friend for life, if he or she is not willing to support them and stick up for them in a simple time of need? This is how impactful these dire times are to ordinary people. |
| 1. “I don’t feel anything anymore…”-Shmuel pg. 175 (Boyne 175) | After days of Shmuel not showing up for his job, the two shared another personal moment when Bruno sees the bruises on his face. Shmuel was obviously beaten, and this quote represents the weakening of his mind, body, and spirit. Furthermore, this could be a representation of the concentration camp’s population as a whole. It leaves you with an empty, melancholy impression which may entail something similar to come. |
| 1. “Bruno didn’t know how to feel and decided that whatever happened, he would accept the decision without complaint.”-Narrator pg. 188 (Boyne 188) | At this point, Bruno had turned a corner, where there were some positive aspects about the camp that he did not want to let go. This happiness mainly came from Shmuel and the close companionship that the two had developed. Bruno is about to voyage back to Berlin at the request of his mother, and he is conflicted about being happy or disappointed. Originally, Bruno would have gone back in a heart-beat, but this hesitation shows how impactful Shmuel really was in long run. This ultimate bond got me to think of the type of impact a concentration camp environment would have on me, and how much it would change my views on life. Perhaps it would let me enjoy the smaller things in life, like friends and how much they influence me. |

**The Death of Jim Loney**

**By James Welch**

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| **Quote** | **Opinion** |
| 1. “But when they walked out into the white light of the museum hall, an old dissatisfaction hit her like a mistral wind and she felt quite empty.”-Narrator pg. 9 (Welch 9) | Currently, the Narrator is describing the main character’s lover, Rhea, and her encounters at a museum. For some reason, Rhea’s emotional spectrum is quite dynamic and tends to change easily. Before this quote, Rhea was experiencing the best time of her life. However, this quickly changed as her life’s reality came back into perspective. This rapid feeling of elation is very relatable, as most people attempt to leave the troubles of life and occupy his or her time with something extremely enjoyable. Unfortunately, this euphoria never lasts and this quote a representation of the constant distraction form life’s worries. |
| 1. “’I feel so perfect today. Thank you for being so … in shape.’”-Rhea pg. 11 (Welch 11) | At this point, we are first introduced to the type of relationship Loney and Rhea have. The two are on a short outing and sharing their true feelings to each other. What caught my attention was this short hesitation that Rhea had when saying this sentence. Throughout the whole conversation, the couple was so fluid with what they were saying. Then, this extremely out of place sentence may have revealed the true intentions or mindset of Rhea. Perhaps she only wants Loney for his body, and she is simply playing with him. An alternative interpretation is that perhaps she views Loney as the only source of happiness in her life and she cannot formulate a complete sentence surrounding her deep feelings. The other thing I question is why the author felt the need to describe their relationship in such detail, it is that significant to the life of Jim Loney? |
| 1. “He has no idea we’re batting him back and forth like a Ping-Pong ball, she thought. And I have the advantage now because I’m here.”-Narrator pg. 40 (Welch 40) | Rhea has just asked Loney to move with her to Washington as she has no reason to stay in Montana. As Loney laments his times in Seattle, Rhea is having conflicting feelings about ignoring Kate’s letter, while also experiencing great ecstasy that Loney has virtually agreed to go. I thought this may not be the best move for the two, because Rhea ignoring Loney’s sister’s letter could have dire consequences, especially with Loney’s distrustful nature. Another aspect of this quote that was significant to me is the metaphor that Rhea uses to describe Loney, which makes me question her true nature. This display of selfishness is not good for an already troubled man, and the fact that she compares such an important part of her life to something so insignificant is profound. In my perception of this book, the way the author writes minutely refers to Rhea as a devious person who is willing to be deceptive to get her way. |
| 1. “Amos After Buffalo stood with the sack of groceries in his arms and watched the man walk away from him. The man cradled the dog the way Amos carried firewood.”-Narrator pg. 49 (Welch 49) | Loney’s dog has died and is stuck in frozen mud. Loney has met a young child who is tasked with helping him with the dog. This was a somewhat out of place story in Loney’s life, but I think it may be significant for his psychological state. As the quote says, Loney carried the dog the same way Amos, the child, carried firewood. This analogy may have a deeper meaning behind it, as I believe Loney sees himself in the young boy. Amos is a troubled child who has never experienced a normal Thanksgiving, just as Loney never experienced a normal family and childhood. The way the author wrote it, it seemed as though the two characters shared some sort of connection with one another. This leads me to predict something later to come between these two, perhaps significant to Loney’s life. |
| 1. “But what was really unique about her was her accent, that Southern drawl.”-Narrator pg. 64 (Welch 64) | The first connections between Loney and Painter Barthelme, a police officer, are first introduced in an unexpected way. As the police officer is describing a beautiful teacher he has in hand cuffs, we soon realize that it is Rhea who he is attracted to. This is a great epiphany for the reader, and may foreshadow future trouble with Loeny and the cop. Perhaps this is the beginning of a split between Rhea and Loney, or something even worse to come. This was a great way to end a chapter, leaving the reader in great suspense. |
| 1. “Pretty weasel turned up the tape. Hank Williams was signing “I’m so lonesome I could die.”-Narrator pg. 72 (Welch 72) | During the whole chapter, the narrative of Loney’s pathetic life was put forth. It summarized his life as a downhill slope, starting from the smartest guy in school to the insignificant derelict. This ending to an eye-catching chapter caused a great feeling of pity for Loney, and it was highlighted by the words, “I’m so lonesome I could die”(Harrison 72). It got me to think if Loney would consider this to be true, since the author made it stand out in the writing. This could be a life lesson as well, one that shows you how your high points in life may not last forever, and your lowest points may overcome you at some points. Why else would the author put this unmissable sentence? |
| 1. “He had never looked closely because he didn’t want to recognize any of the faces, and certainly not his own.”-Narrator pg. 84 (Welch 84) | After Loney’s deep conversation with his sister, and revealing that he has no intention to move anywhere. They are visiting the butte for the last time, and he once again sees the wall of faces he despises. This immediately led me to question the reasoning behind the author saying, “…and certainly not his own”(Harrison 84). This was put forth without any context behind the meaning of it, so I interpreted it as symbolism for Loney’s life. The face Loney was apparently scared of shows us that he does not want to accept the reality of his life, which is stuck in the past and never willing to move forward, just like statues. Statues are unable to develop and change, and given Loney’s state of mind at this point, so is he. |
| 1. “He never felt Indian. Indians were people like Cross Gins, the Old Chiefs – Amos After Buffalo. They lived an Indian way, at least tried.”-Narrator pg. 91 (Welch 91) | He is having a conversation with is newly reunited friend, Pretty Weasel, that has uncovered some unfinished problems from Loney’s past. He never realized it, but anywhere he went other than his hometown, he was called Indian or some variation of that word, like chief, super chief, and many more names. This epiphany that Loney experienced may be a source of his great deal of grief. This is a viable explanation, considering that all of these things were in the past and disregarded until this moment. There may be an underlying message that has to do with racial or simple personal issues, but we will never know if this was truly significant. |
| 1. “Now Loney wondered why he had kept it to himself, but even as he wondered a vague memory touched his mind…”-Narrator pg, 105 (Welch 105) | Loney is contemplating on the decision to keep George Yellow Eyes’s death a secret, and wonders why he would do such a thing. We later learn that Loney’s mother left his family to become George Yellow Eye’s mother. Why would he keep his brother’s death a secret? Perhaps he has unresolved contempt for Yellow Eye, that was facilitated through the slim memory of his mother. It seems that as this book progresses, we constantly learn new rationale for his tragic life. |
| 1. “But he was afraid to look up, for he was afraid that he would see his imaginary bird among the stars.”-Narrator pg. 115 (Welch 115) | Loney is strolling just on the outside of Harlem, and he soon sees the sign signifying the city limits. Then he spontaneously mentions this imaginary bird he sees on a daily basis. This leads me to think that the bird exists as a recurring theme, and is put in awkward places to catch the reader’s attention. Perhaps it refers to his past tragedies that he is unwilling to cope with, or it makes reference to his inability to live in that present as his sister does, which may be taking a large toll on him. Despite the wide range of possible interpretations, it is evident that the bird provides significant symbolism for something in Loney’s life. |
| 1. “Because his conciseness had dime in the past couple months, along with his thinking, he didn’t know that he had in that moment devised an end of his own.”-Narrator pg. 122 (Welch 122) | Currently, Loney is feeling a great deal of guilt for shooting the only bear anyone in Harlem has seen in years. Although it was an accident, he cannot come to terms with his faults, and this applies to his whole life. Up to this point in the book, Loney has looked to his past misfortunes and has put all of the blame on himself, even if he cannot control the outcome of the situation. He is digging his own grave by letting himself disregard the realities of life and create false narratives for his life. |

**Walking The Rez Road**

**By Jim Northrup**

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| **Quote** | **Opinion** |
| 1. “He thought of his trigger finger as the judge, jury, and executioner. Luke was a young killing machine trying to stay alive.”-Narrator pg. 15 (Northrup 15) | Luke Warm Water, the main character, is serving in combat in the Vietnam War. In remembering his experiences there, he describes what it was like to kill the enemy and how acting like the person who had someone else’s fate in his control made him feel like the judge, jury, and executioner. Use of this phrase typically implies some injustice, but it reveals the power that he felt. Moreover, this reveals the realities of war and how combat can change you mentally and physically. |
| 1. “’I knew killing people was wrong somehow but this made it worse when it turned out to be a woman.’”-Lug pg. 29 (Northrup 29) | This quote describes a moment in combat when Lug had to hunt down and kill a member of the Viet con, who he found by following the sound of bullets. In this battle, Lug shot a bullet to the head of the soldier, as he approached the person he had just shot, he realized it was a woman. It reminded him of his grandmother who had similar hair as she. This quote shows that the character has some sensitivities to mistreating woman, which was important to showing his humanity. Although many might think that there is no choice in war and it is the survival of the fittest, there may be limitations, and in this case with women. |
| 1. “’Ha, won a Purple Heart? We used to call them Idiot Awards. It meant that you fucked up somehow. Standing in the wrong place at the wrong time, something like that.’”-Lug pg. 30 (Northrup 30) | Lug is responding to his sister’s praise for his Purple Heart, and it is filled with much sarcasm and contempt for the way he had to earn it. While the everyday civilian may view a Purple Heart as a great achievement that requires the utmost respect, the reality of the award is revealed in this quote. No soldier strives to attain this famous medal, and this mentality is representative of the real world as well. |
| 1. “’C’mon let’s go over there before some light-skinned Indian gets the job,’ Rod continued.”-Rod pg. 73 (Northrup 73) | Rod and Luke were getting over a hangover from the previous night, and woke up with the intention of obtaining work. Even in their drowsy, perhaps delusional state, the two were conscious enough to realize that they had competition, particularly in terms of skin tone. The realities of prejudices and racism in the work force are very evident in these two men’s lives. This fact was emphasized by the quote being the first statement Rod makes when he wakes up. You would think that that would not be the first thing that comes to mind following a hangover; however, it only proves the point even more that lighter skinned people get privilege in the two Indians’ world. |
| 1. “Empty pockets, a shower, and a clean, green jail jumpsuit completed the metamorphosis of the free Sawyer Indian to a number.”-Narrator pg. 85 (Northrup 85) | This quote describes Luke’s process of being booked into prison, but the interesting aspect of it is that the same could be said for anyone else. Although he has a strong identity as an Indian, prison is the great equalizer; it puts all skin tones, crimes, and people into one area where they are all treated the same. Therefore, when Luke continues his frequent denigration of other people unlike himself, it becomes obsolete within the prison walls. This draws me to question why the author would continue to highlight the characters’ Indian identity in a time where it is not significant to any degree. |
| 1. “There must have been at least fifty white people wandering around that he didn’t know. Culture shock!”-Narrator pg. 87 (Northrup 87) | Luke Warm Water has just been released from jail and is put through a drug addiction center. Once again, in a mental state focused upon race, he immediately notices the great abundance of white faces. This culture shock was somewhat abnormal, at least when it referred to white people. In the time the book was written, white faces were pervasive, and most people would never feel uncomfortable around them. This book shows a different perspective, one of the minority of the population, and their experiences at the time. Perhaps it could be qualified as reverse racism, or simply a non-conformed perspective on society. |
| 1. “Anything that was said or unsaid, done or undone, was a symptom of the problem that brought a person to the facility, Luke quickly learned. He thought if the only tool you have is a hammer, everything begins to look like a nail. That was the feeling of the place.”-Narrator pg. 87 (Northrup 87) | Like many other quotes that are important to this book, some of them cliché, it aptly describes the circumstances of this story, but also our everyday lives. It encourages the reader to meaningfully and critically assess our surroundings, school, and workplaces. This is also a criticism and commentary of the system that the facility runs. The cookie cutter approach that is put in place to deal with individualized issues is terrible to him, but he must play along to survive in such a place. Furthermore, it is a critique on society in general and how systems of government, healthcare, education, and anything else is run in a non-personalized way. |
| 1. “After getting the skinny from the other skin about how to get along, Luke began to live the role of the drying-out-drunk.”-Narrator pg. 89 (Northrup 89) | A man of another race has given Luke the tools to get through the ineffective treatment facility and sustain his sanity in rehabilitation. He must play along with what the doctors want them to accomplish, and as long as they do that, he will be in the clear. This is a common occurrence, not just in the treatment place, but in many other facets of life. This life lesson could go far for Luke, and perhaps be applied later in the story. |
| 1. “Living there means finding something good in something grim … We have TV, that window to America we see you, you don’t see us.”-Narrator pg. 104 (Northrup 104) | This quote is from a poem before the *Goose Goose* chapter, which describes what it is like to live on a reservation. The complete isolation from the rest of America is one of many things that is troubling about the reservation. They have profound economic and social problems, which the media and the rest of America feeds off of. Yet, Luke is able to find some good in the people within the overwhelming insurrection. |
| 1. “Juris McBrief was a second-generation lawyer. His mother had steered him to and through law school. She wanted him to join her small family law firm after doing pro bono work. Juris was to gain experience form non-paying clients rather than real ones. When other Americans were splashing through the rice paddies in Vietnam, Juris was living at home and struggling through contract law. Because of his generational guilt, Juries went to help the Indians.”-Narrator pg. 116 (Northrup 116) | Juris McBrief is a pro bono lawyer, one of many who provide services to the Indians on the reservation. The quote suggests that the attorney (and probably his mother) is motivated by a noblesse oblige rather than true altruism. It describes his guilt of skipping out on the war by enrolling in law school, which he’s remedying in pro bono service. It also describes his burnout (i.e., Maalox) from working for free for a needy population rife with legal issues. The quote also reveals that McBrief is “learning” how to be a lawyer, suggesting that, when he’s gained enough skill, he’ll abandon them and go work for clients who pay. |
| 1. “That’s par for the course they’ve been mad at us since they got here, rednecks try to stop us with threats, gunfire, and bombs. The state attempts a buyout thinking cash can do anything. We’re valuable to the media we fill their columns and empty air…”-Narrator pg. 136 (Northrup 136) | This is in a poem before the chapter, *Jabbing And Jabbering*, which describes the mistreatment and abuse of the Indian people, even in modern day society. Specifically, it speaks to the idea that money and government services can “help” or “remedy” the past injustices carried out on the Indian population. It also speaks to the modern mainstream media that capitalizes on their circumstances and socioeconomic misfortune. It is significant because it forces one to question the ethics of media reporting, whether some news is really newsworthy, or is the news just for headlines, leading nightly stories and internet clicks. Ironically, these questions are as relevant today as they are when the book was written. |

**It Can’t Happen Here**

**By Sinclair Lewis**

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| **Quote** | **Opinion** |
| 1. “’For the first time in all history, a great nation must go on arming itself more and more, not for conquest—not for jealousy—not for war—but for peace!’”-General Edgeways pg. 2 (Lewis 2) | At the Annual Ladies’ Dinner, General Edgeways was completing his long rhapsody on nationalism when he said this eye catching sentence. The general criticized his country’s intentions in war, and it is safe to assume that he was a traditional mined individual with conquest and imperialism on his mind. However, he felt inhibited by the vision the country has for the military, as peace keepers and monitors. It appears that he despises the rationales for war, and this has comparisons to today’s current militaristic climate. America’s government is currently portraying an offensive stand in terms of military, as it has recently sent troops to the Middle East and is threatening North Korea with declarations of war. The general’s ways of thinking seem to be coming back to fruition in today’s society, and it is very possible that other ideologies within the book may mirror present-day political standpoints. |
| 1. “’ Then watch the Terror! God knows there's been enough indication that we can have tyranny in America—the fix of the Southern share-croppers, the working conditions of the miners and garment-makers, and our keeping Mooney in prison so many years. But wait till Windrip shows us how to say it with machine guns!’”-Doremus pg. 16 (Lewis 16) | Doremus, a Vermont newspaper journalist, is discussing this pivotal time in America, election season. Senator Windrip, who has intentions of a dictatorship, has a very good chance of getting elected, and this has Doremus stressed. This quote talks about the possibility of a dictatorship in America, and shows that anything is possible. He comments in the book that all Americans feel immune and untouchable to corruption; however, this ignorance represented by the American population may lead to the country’s demise. Today, we see a country split on this matter, but many believe this same thing about the current political situation in Washington. Meanwhile, the other half feel that they are untouchable to corruption and have faith in the leaders of America. |
| 1. “’Not happen here? Prohibition—shooting down people just because they might be transporting liquor—no, that couldn't happen in America! Why, where in all history has there ever been a people so ripe for a dictatorship as ours!’”-Doremus pg. 19 (Lewis 19) | After Doremus Jessup’s profound examples of the clouded American perspective, he ends his speech with sarcastic statements that show the population’s unreasonable opinions. Now, Doremus is arguing that people are ready for a dictatorship, and it makes you reflect on the true nature of American citizens. This quote reveals everyone’s incomplete view on life, and how we see America as infallible and absent of any wrongdoing. The superiority we put on ourselves is despicable, meanwhile other countries are mocking our self-praise. Moreover, this may put the country in a predicament in the future, one which may be detrimental to the status of the whole country. |
| 1. “’ Cure the evils of Democracy by the evils of Fascism! Funny therapeutics. I've heard of their curing syphilis by giving the patient malaria, but I've never heard of their curing malaria by giving the patient syphilis!’”-Doremus pg. 20 (Lewis 20) | The three men (Emil Staubmeyer, Doremus, Tasbrough) were attempting to rationalize the future dictatorship they have been predicting. They soon come to the conclusion that it may be a good thing to introduce Fascism into America, in the sense that it may solve the inconsistencies of Democracy. This was a very interesting analogy, as it is very true. The potential harm that could come from this is unprecedented, and very experimental. Using Democracy to cure the harms of Fascism may work, but the opposite may not be true. I found it very insightful that the men talk about Hitler’s prosperous and efficient government, and how he did it through Fascism. It just left me with something very deep to think about. |
| 1. “… vomit Biblical wrath from a gaping mouth; but he would also coo like a nursing mother, beseech like an aching lover, and in between tricks would coldly and almost contemptuously jab his crowds with figures and facts -- figures and facts that were inescapable even when, as often happened, they were entirely incorrect”-Narrator pg. 72 (Lewis 72) | Doremus is analyzing Senator Windrip’s speech and campaigning tactics. Doremus does not understand how the senator is acquiring so much support, as his views are extremely radical, but vague. These strategies are reminiscent to today’s political strategies, where there is a great abundance of rhetoric and empowering speech, but no substance. This novel commented on the political situation of 1935; however, it seems to coincide with today’s politics very accurately. Just as many politicians spew nonsense regarding diplomatic, homeland, and many other issues, it cannot all be taken seriously as a result of these deceptive speech tactics. It brings me to think that Senator Windrip will win the election, as we have just experienced an election where a man who ran a similar campaign became president. |
| 1. “One quarter of them turn "reasonable" and become your enemies, one quarter are afraid to stop and speak and one quarter are killed and you die with them. But the blessed final quarter keep you alive.”-Narrator pg. 201 (Lewis 201) | Doremus is considering abandoning his career as a journalist, with much hesitation and frustration. He then starts thinking about how this heated political situation is changing people around him. This is an exceptionally deep quote which gives insight into what forms of power can change people, even the closest of friends. Each individual is engineered differently, and power will bring out suppressed personalities that are suppressed in every day practices. Perhaps it brings out the worst in people, or it may pull the best qualities in someone. This position will ultimately decipher who people truly are under the façade that they portray to other people. |
| 1. “Every man is a king so long as he has someone to look down on.”-Narrator pg. 155 (Lewis 155) | In this chapter, Doremus is describing how the distribution of power is in history, including the example of Napoleon and many minority groups. Although a simple sentence, it comments on society as a whole, and the true, but unfortunate natures about human nature. This acknowledges the truth that everyone feels powerful at one point or another. This is the way society was formed in America, and this will not change if we want to keep the freedoms we are accustomed to. If we suppress people we know are vulnerable, we will attain power and view ourselves as kings. However, we must avoid that otherwise it results in the great inequality, which we experience today. |
| 1. “’… accomplished by the free, inquiring, critical spirit, and that the preservation of this spirit is more important than any social system whatsoever. But the men of ritual and the men of barbarism are capable of shutting up the men of science and of silencing them forever.’”-Doremus pg. 353 (Lewis 353) | As Doremus contemplates on his status within America, he comes to the realization that the only group who contributes to the good of humanity is the liberals. Doremus and his fellow liberals will sustain a small parcel of civilization, art, and culture under any tyranny that comes to power. This quote reminded me of the colloquial saying: “Nice guys finish last”. The men in power who practice barbaric and corrupt political strategies, will always be capable of disabling the people who work for the common good. Moreover, I found this profound in the sense that it encompasses all virtues that this country holds. With the skewed ideologies putting the country off course of what its original intent was, the book very much coincides with what America is experiencing today. |
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