

Starting Out in the Morning

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“That’s how you discover a person’s true nature,” someone in *Starting Out in the Evening* thinks: “by the way she wakes up in the morning.”

For a long time, I have woken up in the morning with nothing. Recently, because I have been sick. Before that, because I was split up among many jobs. Before that, because I nominally had a real job. I miss the days when I woke up with purpose, when I lived to toil at some grand accomplishment. The feeling that all of life is in the service of some larger goal. It’s fantastic.

I have been finally getting over my too-long illness, nursing myself back to strength by reading. When I was a kid, I used to take Saturdays to read, really read, devouring five or six books in one sitting. I haven’t read like that in years, but now I’m doing it again — checking out stacks of books from the library and setting upon them one by one. It’s fantastic.

And I don’t just breeze thru the pages, I roll around in bed and pace the floor and sit in the bath fighting my brain around their words, knowing that there’s some way it all makes sense, some way it can fit together, if only I can summon the strength to grab it. I wake up with thoughts of books in my heads, questions, anecdotes, stories. It’s fantastic.

I feel like the books are bringing me back — back not only to health, but to the world of thought and action, the world of accomplishment, the world of doing something grand with oneself. It’s fantastic.