

## **Pride & Prejudice**

**Jane Austen - 1813**

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife. However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighbourhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered as the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters.

## **Notes From Underground**

**Fyodor Dostoevsky - 1864**

I am a sick man. ... I am a spiteful man. I am an unattractive man. I believe my liver is diseased. However, I know nothing at all about my disease, and do not know for certain what ails me. I don't consult a doctor for it, and never have, though I have a respect for medicine and doctors. Besides, I am extremely superstitious, sufficiently so to respect medicine, anyway (I am well-educated enough not to be superstitious, but I am superstitious). No, I refuse to consult a doctor from spite. That you probably will not understand. Well, I understand it, though. Of course, I can't explain who it is precisely that I am mortifying in this case by my spite: I am perfectly well aware that I cannot "pay out" the doctors by not consulting them; I know better than anyone that by all this I am only injuring myself and no one else. But still, if I don't consult a doctor it is from spite. My liver is bad, well then let it hurt even worse!

## **Metamorphosis**

**Franz Kafka- 1915**

As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning from uneasy dreams he found himself transformed in his bed into a gigantic insect. He was lying on his hard, as it were armor-plated, back and when he lifted his head a little he could see his dome-like brown belly divided into stiff arched segments on top of which the bed quilt could hardly keep in position and was about to slide off completely. His numerous legs, which were pitifully thin compared to the rest of his bulk, waved helplessly before his eyes.

## **The Stranger**

**Albert Camus – 1942**

Mother died today. Or maybe yesterday, I don't know. I had a telegram from the home: 'Mother passed away. Funeral tomorrow. Yours sincerely.' That doesn't mean anything. It may have been yesterday.

## **Lolita**

**Vladimir Nabakov – 1955**

Lolita, light of my life, fire of my loins. My sin, my soul. Lo-lee-ta: the tip of the tongue taking a trip of three steps down the palate to tap, at three, on the teeth. Lo. Lee. Ta.

## **The Sense of an Ending**

**Julian Barnes – 2011**

"We live in time – it holds us and moulds us – but I've never felt I understood it very well. And I'm not referring to the theories about how it bends and doubles back, or may exist elsewhere in parallel versions. No I mean ordinary, everyday time, which clocks and watches assure us passes regularly: tick-tock, click-clock. Is there anything more plausible than a second in hand? And yet it takes only the smallest pleasure or pain to teach us time's malleability. Some emotions speed it up, others slow it down; occasionally, it seems to go missing- until the eventual point when it really does go missing, never to return."

"But she was there already. I recognized her from distance, her height and stance being instantly familiar. Odd how the image of someone's posture always remains with you."

"How often do we tell our own life story? How often do we adjust, embellish, make sly cuts? And the longer life goes on, the fewer are those around to challenge our account, to remind us that our life is not our life, merely the story we have told about our life. Told to others, but – mainly – to ourselves."