

PASSAGES



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*The Greatest Quotations
From Sporting Literature*



Edited by Chuck Wechsler & Jim Casada

Published by SPORTING CLASSICS

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The Greatest Quotations from Sporting Literature

Is published by SPORTING CLASSICS

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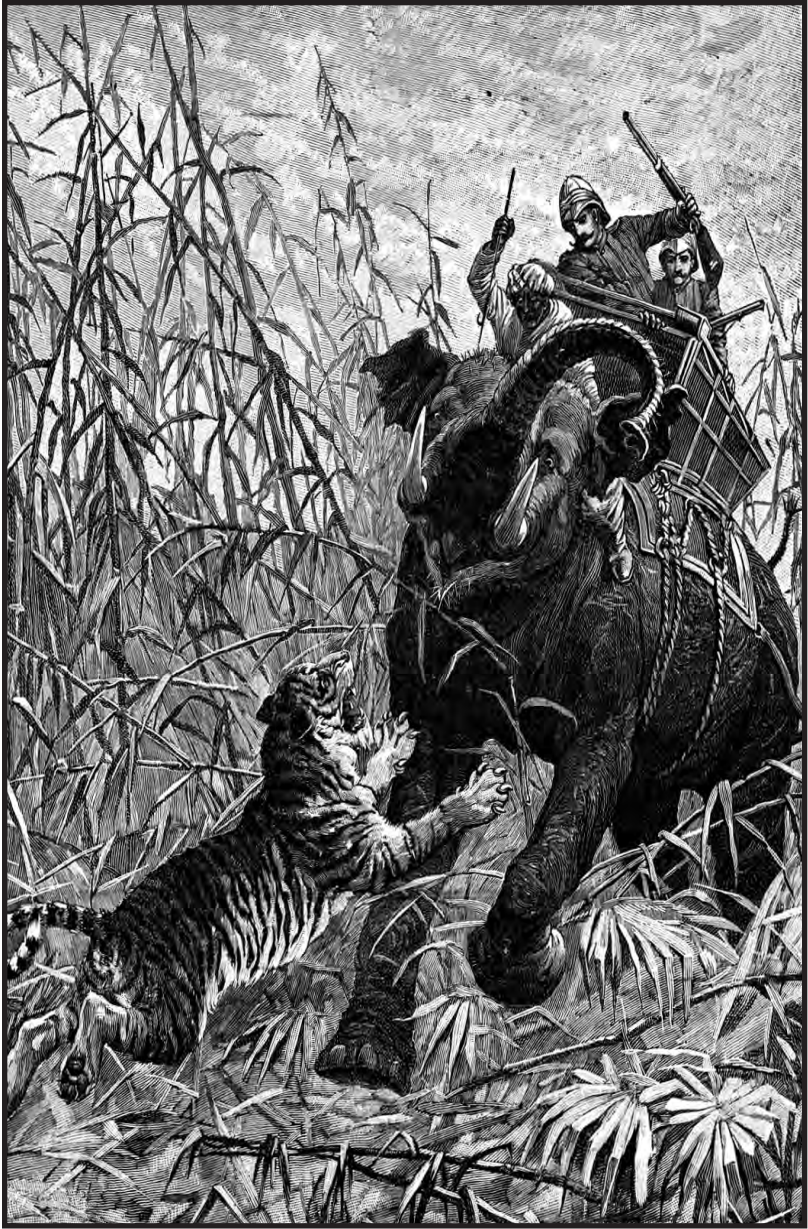
Passages is founded on the thoughtful contributions of more than 300 avid hunters and fishermen who over the past three decades submitted literary quotations to *Sporting Classics*.

It was Jim Casada who conceived the idea for the magazine's "Quotes" page and who provided most of the excerpts published in our early years. But it wasn't long before we were receiving a steady stream of quotes from subscribers.

The Deluxe Edition of *Passages* lists many of those who contributed quotes that were first published in *Sporting Classics* and now appear on these pages. Among these individuals, two men – Albert Mull and Roger A. Bradley – deserve special mention because of the sheer enormity of their contributions. They may well be the most voracious and discerning readers of hunting and fishing literature on the planet.

Others who made regular contributions include Daniel Block, W. N. Bradley, David R. Drinan, Lou Duncan, Billy G. Ellis, C. Hunter "Red" Meitzen, John E. Pipas, Frank M. Possert, Erling Rovick and Bob Whitehead. Our thanks to all of these loyal readers for their time and expense in sharing literally thousands of wonderful excerpts from books, magazines and poetry.

Lastly, thanks to Lee Anne Futrell for her excellent typesetting and proofing the more than 700 quotations that grace these pages. – *Chuck Wechsler, publisher*



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Introduction

By Jim Casada

I enjoyed a wonderful boyhood. Marvelously misspent days without end on trout streams during spring and summer; freedom to roam the Appalachian woodlands and old, abandoned farms where I hunted squirrels, rabbits, grouse and quail in the fall and winter; and a home life that today some might say was one of deprivation. To do so, though, you would have to look at things as they stood in the 1950s through the distorting lens of our modern world.

Our family did not own a television; our party-line phone was not intended for idle teenage exchanges (not to mention the real likelihood someone would be listening in should you dare chance a conversation with your girlfriend of the moment); and the big radio in a wooden cabinet was intended for family gatherings in the evening to listen to the *Grand Old Opry*, *The Wayne Rainey Show* out of WCKY in Cincinnati or programs such as *Gunsmoke*. Looking back, I realize that my childhood in North Carolina's Great Smokies, far from being tainted by deprivation, was one of pure delight, in large part because of books.

My upbringing and family circumstances led me to books at an early age. The local library had been founded by our next-door neighbor, and my parents were great believers in the educational and entertainment values of reading.

Books have always been constant companions and a source of endless joy. These words are being written in a room where I'm surrounded by thousands of volumes crowded onto library-type, floor-to-ceiling shelves, and rest assured these

books – all focusing on the outdoors, Africa or the southern Appalachians – serve purposes other than decoration. I’ve read most of them, some of them many times over, and there isn’t a book in this room, throughout the house or in our two storage sheds that hasn’t at least been perused.

From the outset my reading tastes leaned heavily toward the sporting experience. After all, I was “raised right” – hunting and fishing from a young age, and when I couldn’t be wading a trout stream, running a trotline, checking a trap line, or ambling through woods after bushytails, reading about such experiences was the next best thing. On top of that, books from early favorites and giants of the outdoor literary scene such as Zane Grey, Theodore Roosevelt, Robert Ruark, Havilah Babcock, Nash Buckingham, Jack O’Connor and Charlie Elliott let me share vicariously in sport near and far.

As I read those books and sporting magazines – for me the “big three” of the 1950s, *Outdoor Life*, *Field & Stream* and *Sports Afield* were monthly manna from a literary heaven – certain descriptive phrases, felicitous analogies and memorable pieces of poetry stuck in my mind. Even today, although I haven’t read the full poem in years, I think I could recite most of Robert Service’s *The Cremation of Sam McGee*. The same holds true for other poems that piqued my interest, such as Rudyard Kipling’s stirring verses from far-flung corners of the British Empire or Sidney Lanier’s *Song of the Chattahoochee*.

Yet most of all it was the writings of talented outdoor authors that captured my imagination. It might be Corey Ford or John Taintor Foote describing the essence of interaction between man and dog; Buckingham, Babcock or Ruark depicting the enduring beauty of a staunch point or the timeless excitement of a covey rise; or adventurers such as Sam Baker

or Fred Selous who carried me breathlessly along with them as they ventured into the wilds of Africa.

For years, indeed decades, those phrases rattled around in my brain to little effect (albeit with considerable personal pleasure). Then, roughly three decades ago, that changed. I had the opportunity to become involved in the realization a dream that had enthralled me since boyhood; namely, a chance to tread, albeit timidly and in decidedly inferior fashion, in the footsteps of my literary heroes.

A ninth grade English teacher planted a seed by commenting on an essay I had written on squirrel hunting: “This is the type of material, in much more sophisticated form, which is bought by outdoor magazines.” Those words made a lasting impact, and eventually I took my first tentative footsteps in writing on the outdoor experience – initially just the occasional magazine piece along with a weekly column in my local newspaper, but I began to dream of doing work for national magazines and maybe even writing a book.

Then came a personal breakthrough of major proportions. A new magazine, *Sporting Classics*, came to my attention. It appealed to all the things about the outdoor experience I cherished: good writing, a feel for tradition, respect for the history of sport, and an overriding sense of precisely what the magazine’s title indicated, a love for all that is “classic” about the worlds of hunting and fishing.

In a burst of enthusiasm tinged by a dose of reality that told me “no way,” I queried the magazine. The concept I offered was a profile of a man whose career I had studied deeply in my research as a university professor of history, Frederick C. Selous. To my amazement and sheer delight, I was given the “go ahead” for a story on Selous, and it appeared in an early issue of the magazine (January/February, 1984). A reader survey shortly

thereafter gave the piece high marks, and within a year I was contributing features on a regular basis.

My name soon appeared on the masthead, and periodically I would journey from my home down to Camden, South Carolina, where the magazine had its headquarters in the early days, for brainstorming sessions. I've been closely involved with the magazine and its book-publishing adjunct ever since, and it says something about my lengthy linkage with *Sporting Classics* when I realize that no one, other than Duncan Grant, who was one of the founders, has a longer history with the publication.

Those early planning meetings and editorial gatherings ranged widely across matters such as suitable columns and columnists, features for upcoming issues, a couple of book reprinting endeavors (Premier Classics and The African Collection), topics that would likely have the most reader appeal, and more.

At some point in those conversations I mentioned how much I enjoyed reading quotations connected with the outdoor experience. I even offered a couple of examples, among them my all-time favorite – “In the school of the woods there is no graduation day.” – from Horace Kephart's *Camping and Woodcraft*. From that first tentative suggestion came a back-of-the-magazine page that has become immensely popular among readers.

Early on I provided almost all of the contributions for the “Quotes” page. To that end, I made a practice of jotting down memorable quotations from whatever I was reading at the time. Before long my file included scores of brief excerpts, along with author, name of the book or magazine and when it was published. That file still resides in a cabinet in my study.

To attract more contributions from its readers, the magazine offered a free gift subscription for every published quotation sent in by a subscriber. Yet that incentive clearly

was only incidental to a number of devoted readers who might be described as “gold star” contributors. They sent in quotations almost on an issue-by-issue basis, and many of them had selections published over an extended period of years. I would like to think that the opportunity to be a part of the magazine tickled their fancy, and there is no question whatsoever that these loyal readers have “carried” the “Quotes” page for many years.

Today, it remains the first place I visit as each new issue appears, and I can invariably count on there being at least one or two quotations that tickle my fancy, that come from a book I haven’t read or that I somehow overlooked when I did read the work.

I wish I could take credit for the idea of bringing some of the best material from 28 years of “Quotes” into one book, but I can’t. However, once the publisher approached me with the concept, it was one I embraced with great delight. Preparing this work, which involved going back over all the years and issues of the magazine and reading every quotation we have ever published, has been an exercise in pure pleasure. As I read through the material, all sorts of fond memories flooded my mind, and *Passages* will be a comfort and a companion for me in years to come. The end product comes from selecting quotations we thought especially powerful, meaningful or humorous, and for my part, my opinion of each author entered into the picture.

Many of you will find a favorite author or quotation missing from these pages, but by the same token, you will certainly find plenty here to tickle your fancy, feather your funny bone or give you pause to ponder an especially insightful thought. If that proves to be the case, the book will have accomplished its mission.



A Fit Inheritance

By Michael Altizer

“Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations.”

– *Henry David Thoreau, Walden*

Carly’s gone.

I left her on James Island in Charleston this morning for her first year of graduate school and just got home a couple of hours ago.

I’m very proud of her. She’s turned into a fine writer, and she is studying to be a marine biologist and so help save the world, just like she’s wanted to do since she was little and first saw the sea. And now it’s way past midnight and I miss her terribly and I can’t get to sleep.

There are neither stars nor moon to light my way for a long wandering walk in the woods. I have a flight out at daylight for New Mexico, and I am bewildered and bemused and alone. So for the next few hours of my life, I will read.

I intend to read nothing except what I really want to read, and I only want to read what is good. It might be Beryl Markham or perhaps Isak Dineson. It may be Jack O’Connor or Dylan Thomas or José Ortega y Gasset.

It could be Charles Waterman or Robert Ruark or Nash Buckingham.

But whatever it is, these next few hours will be the best hours of my day.

As they’ve always been.

The first book I remember was a volume of John James Audubon's *Quadrupeds of North America* that arrived by mail one grey winter morning when I was 4 while Dad was still at work in the mine. I remember how excited he was when he got home that night, and how, after he had rid himself of the coal dirt and we'd finished our supper, he swung me into his lap and opened the book and let me see the myriad wild creatures that lived in a world that, until then, I thought only contained squirrels and rabbits and deer.

A couple of years later he wrangled me to his side one stormy Friday evening when I was playing cowboy and read me a story by Ernest Thompson Seton about a great grey wolf, and so planted the notion in my young and impressionable mind that words possessed far more power than did my little toy six-gun and mop-handle horse.

A few years later I read for myself a story by Jim Carmichel about how a lion kills, and I gradually realized, *Oh . . . so you can do THAT with words.*

Ever since, the written word has been a mystical and transporting vehicle for me. With it I have hunted bears and lions and dragons and woodcock. I have caught salmon in Alaska and trout in Argentina, climbed mountains in Nepal, walked on the Moon and sailed the solar winds out past Neptune and Pluto.

I have seen the fiery bands of Borealis, felt the bitter winds of a cold Arctic night, rescued damsels, slain trolls, rejoiced in victory, wrestled with fear, and have conversed with the likes of Soloman and Socrates and Aeschylus . . . and, yes, even with Mr. Carmichel.

The words of Lovett and Lightfoot and Leonard Cohen set to music have been my faithful companions for years, searing themselves into my psyche just as surely as those of Sandburg and Steinbeck and John Paul Sartre.

I have learned perseverance from the *Book of Job*, patience

from Marcel Proust and tenacity from Thomas Hornbein, and was sharing their words with Carly long before she first started shaping sentences for herself.

The notion of Excellence is expressed with no greater effect in the crafting of a fine Purdey gun than it is in the writings of George Bird Evans or Ben Ames Williams. And who is to say that when I'm alone on some misty mountain in the Smokies or in the dry desert heat of Utah or on a rain-swollen river in Alaska, that my regard for solitude and contemplation is any greater than when I am reading Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* or Dag Hammarskjöld's *Markings* or Ray Bergman's *Trout*?

And now I find I must sometimes pause and think for a moment before I can distinguish reality from metaphor, aspiration from actual experience.

To this day I can't say with any certainty which was more enthralling, that sudden encounter I had in my 53rd year with the old she-grizzly in Alaska, or the palpitating tremor that accompanied the story of Badlands Billy as he faced down and destroyed the Penroof Pack along that narrow ledge in the Dakotas in the story by Mr. Seton that Dad read to me on that fateful Friday night when I was 6. For my heart rate was equally elevated with each.

The people I have known, the places I have loved, the birds and animals and fish I have pursued with rod and camera and gun and pen – even the air I have breathed – are these things any more real than those I've encountered in the printed pages that have carried me to them and beyond?

I know Franz Kafka's "Burrow" as well as I do the aspen edges of Sawmill Canyon or the precipitous cliffs that surround Ghost Ranch, and many times I have entered its maze and slept secure in its Castle Keep.

I have sailed the virgin seas with Zane Grey, mended

walls with Robert Frost, gone on pilgrimage with John Bunyan and hunted the deep southern forests with William Faulkner. I've cast flies on the Traftal with Roderick Haig-Brown, fished the Gulf Stream with Ernest Hemingway and trekked across Africa with Theodore Roosevelt.

And I still don't understand how.

Just how is it that mere words can fetch us into places of such lyrical grandeur? How can we be so enthralled by such seemingly abstract combinations of letters and symbols and marks as to cause us to accept as real that which we know to be only paper and pixels and ink?

Do writers possess such powers of cognition all on their own? Or are they merely the conduits through which these stories and ideas freely flow? I have written some of them for myself, and I still don't have an answer.

And so I am left to wonder if perhaps these thoughts and visions are somehow held in trust by a Higher Power, seeking those here in the material world who might be capable of receiving them or retrieving them – kindred spirits who can understand and experience them and then express their true meaning to others?

All I know for certain is that my body is growing older and my joints are growing stiffer, and the aches of age are becoming less allegorical and more acute.

Nonetheless, I stubbornly continue to physically go to the places and do the things I have loved and dreamed of since childhood. But I am also resolved to the fact that from time to time I must make my way through this world solely with words.

And so tonight I'll hunt lions with Saxton Pope and Arthur Young. I will track man-eaters with Jim Corbett and then hand-line marlin with Santiago. I'll climb the

Matterhorn with Edward Whymper, stand atop Everest with Tenzing Norgay, see the plains of Patagonia with Charles Darwin and walk the Road to Emmaus with The Risen Lord.

I'll go for cape buffalo with Frederick Selous, fish the flats with Flip Pallot and hunt ruffed grouse along that last lonely road with Corey Ford . . . and still try to get in an hour or so of sleep before my morning flight.

And if I don't make it all the way to Tinkhamtown by the time the plane lands in New Mexico, it's really not all that important. After all, I can still resume the journey once I get to the ranch and have dinner and then call Carly to tell her I love her.

For someday, perhaps someday *soon*, I'll get there myself.





EAGLE

HOUND

AT HOME

Pointer
And Quail

WATER
AND WOODS

WATER & WOODS

RETRIEVER

A FLIGHT FOR SAFETY

Dogs



Dogs

“At this spot are deposited the remains of those who possessed Beauty without Vanity, Strength without Insolence, Courage without Ferocity, and all the Virtues of Man, without his Vices. This praise would be unmeaning flattery if inscribed over human ashes and is but just tribute to the memory of some dogs.”

These words by an unknown author appear on a sign overlooking Big Fish Lake in Pasco County, Florida. It was this lake, incidentally, which produced a 20-pound 2-ounce largemouth bass, the one-time world record.

“Boy,” the old man said, “I will tell you a very wise thing. If a man is really intelligent, there’s practically nothing a good dog can’t teach him. But a dumb man can’t learn anything from a smart dog, while a dumb dog can occasionally learn something from a smart man. Remember that.”

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

A dog does not live as long as a man and this natural law is the font of many tears. If a boy and puppy might grow to manhood and doghood together, and together grow old, and so in due course die, full many a heartache might be avoided. But the world is not so ordered, and dogs will die and men will weep for them so long as there are dogs and men.

Ben Ames Williams, *Bird Dog Book*, 1989

A dog is the only creature on earth that lives with his God.

Charles Morgan, *On Retrievers, Hunting, Bird Dog Training*, 1971

A good dog lives forever in the heart.

Donald McCaig, *Nop’s Trials*, 1992

A man who's got to break a dog don't deserve the dog.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

And he was jest a dog, Lawd, but such a dog as ain't never been on dis-yeah green earth . . . It ain't for no common field hand like me to know what kind of 'rangemints you got up yonder, and maybe dey ain't no allowance made for dogs and such. But in time I heard bird-dog folks say you got a plantation leased up yonder, and it's a thousand miles long and twice as wide, and dey ain't no briers ner rattlesnakes, and it ain't never ground-froze, and de birds is golden birds with sapphire eyes and dey don't run and dey don't flush wild, and ain't no night to spoil de hunt, and no whistle to call the dogs in; and dat's where de good dogs go when dey die.

Vereen Bell, "Wesley's Prayer for Old Sam," *Two of a Kind*, 1943

But there is one best place to bury a dog. If you bury him in this spot, he will come to you when you call – come to you over the grim, dim frontiers of death, and down the well-remembered path to your side again. And though you call a dozen living dogs to heel, they shall not growl at him nor resent his coming, for he belongs there. People may scoff at you, who see no lightest blade of grass bent by his foot-fall, who hear no whimper, people who may never really have had a dog. Smile at them, for you shall know something that is hidden from them. The one best place to bury a good dog is in the heart of his master.

Ben Hur Lampman for the *Portland Oregonian*.
Reprinted in Labrador Retriever – Friend and Worker by
S. Kip Farrington, Jr., 1976

Dogs

Dogs' lives are short, too short, but you know that going in. You know the pain is coming, you're going to lose a dog, and there's going to be great anguish, so you live fully in the moment with her, never fail to share her joy or delight in her innocence, because you can't support the illusion that a dog can be your lifelong companion. There's such beauty in the hard honesty of that, in accepting and giving love while always aware it comes with an unbearable price. Maybe loving dogs is a way we do penance for all the other illusions we allow ourselves and for the mistakes we make because of these illusions.

Dean Koontz, *The Darkest Evening of the Year*, 2007

Establishing oneself in a dog's confidence is the foundation of training.

Archibald Rutledge, *Hunter's Choice*, 1946

Every bird hunter, and that goes for the breed, secretly dreams and longs to own a royally bred animal, broken to the Queen's taste and able to win on any circuit of field trials. But in the end, like most of us, he must be satisfied with plain Belle or Jack, and finds in them the traits of a lowlier dogcraft that can be wine to his soul.

Nash Buckingham, *Mark Right*, 1936

Every puppy begins by conceiving his master to be a god; it is that master's business never to do anything to make that dog change his mind.

Archibald Rutledge, *Hunter's Choice*, 1946

PASSAGES

Faithful, lovable little dog! I don't think I could have felt the loss of a human companion more. I felt at least her life with me had been a happy one. I buried her with my own hands by moonlight; and as I laid her in her little grave, I almost wished I could rest beside her in the quiet brush by the roaring cool river. A sad, sad day.

Arthur H. Neumann, *Elephant Hunting in East Equatorial Africa*, 1898

Her coat has lost its sheen, and the years have pulled her skin tighter to her frame. She now looks at me from within dark sockets, and her eyes are aware of things I don't understand. Whatever they recognize, however, will someday become plain to me, and I too will be caught looking achingly at an old friend I love.

Guy De La Valdene, *Making Game*, 1985

I know full well dogs have souls. Heaven could not be Heaven without dogs, if it were not so, I would sooner be in Hell with dogs, than in Heaven without.

Lewis Carey, *My Gun and I*, 1933

I still enjoy the company of most dogs more than that of most people, because dogs are capable of uncomplicated enthusiasm.

John Gierach, *Standing in a River Waving a Stick*, 1999

I suspect there are no bad bird dogs, even though there are many that we do not understand.

Charles F. Waterman, *Times and Places, Home and Away*, 1988

Dogs

I think it was Robert Benchley who once remarked, “Everybody should have a dog. It teaches him to turn around three times before lying down.” Brown dogs do a great deal more than that. They provide excuses for adventures, teach him how to whistle loud and clear, improve his throwing arm, and most important, instill in him the incredible responsibility that comes with being loved unquestioningly, totally, and irrevocably.

Gene Hill, *Tears & Laughter*, 1997

I think we are drawn to dogs because they are the uninhibited creatures that we might be if we weren't certain we knew better. They fight for honor at the first challenge, make love with no moral restraint, and they do not for all of their marvelous instincts appear to know about death.

George Bird Evans, *Troubles with Bird Dogs*, 1975

If a dog is so wild you need a helicopter to follow him, the fond owner remarks, “Ain't he eager?” If he's so lazy he stays underfoot like a hungry cat when you open the refrigerator door, the owner says, “Ain't he careful?” If he fights other dogs, the owner says, “Ain't he got spirit?” If every dog in the neighborhood licks him regularly, the remark is, “Ain't he got the good disposition?”

Eddie Finlay, *Down the Creek*, 1967

If a man is really intelligent, there's practically nothing a good dog can't teach him.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

PASSAGES

If you've ever seen a beagle, hot on rabbit scent, run through multiflora rose without missing a step, then you know what I mean. Or maybe you've seen a Chesapeake break ice with his chest to grab a goldeneye on a day when the wind slices through your parka like a frozen dagger. He knows the bird is out there, and pain is overshadowed by the promise. See this and you will see what passion looks like.

C. Stanley Mason, *Voices on the Wind*, 2002

It is easy to forget that in the main we die only seven times more slowly than our dogs.

Jim Harrison, *The Road Home*, 1999

It is love – and of this I have no doubt – that makes a dog work the hardest for its master.

Charles Fergus, *A Rough-Shooting Dog*, 1991

Like a dog, he hunts in dreams.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *Locksley Hall*, 1876

Never knew a man not to be improved by a dog.

Robert Ruark, *Something of Value*, 1955

No man can follow a rollicking, bungling, and overjoyous pup all day without laughing a lot and crying a little.

Havilah Babcock, *I Don't Want to Shoot an Elephant*, 1958

Plus je vois des representants du peuple, plus j'aime mes chiens. The more I see the representatives of the people, the more I love my dogs.

Comte Alfred E'Orsay, 1850

Dogs

Retrieving is what makes the difference between a good dog and a great one. It is the icing on the cake, the cherry atop the sundae, the lace on a bride's pajamas.

Havilah Babcock, *Jaybirds Go to Hell on Friday*, 1964

She was a fetching-looking mutt, with black curly bangs and deep brown eyes which were either pools of uncalculated wisdom or the windows of an empty soul. To this day I can't say which.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *The Old Duck Hunters and Other Drivel*, 1967

The best way to learn to train a dog is to let a dog that's smarter than you are train you.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

The dog is the only being that loves you more than you love yourself.

Fritz von Unruh, *from Dogs Never Lie About Love* by Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, 1977

The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him, and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself, too.

Samuel Butler, *A Treasury of Humorous Quotations*, Herbert V. Prochnow, (ed.) 1969



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The honor and loyalty of a dog had no equivalent with humankind. It was the difference between diamonds and cut glass. Hard and long ago he had learned that, and its value. There could be only one acceptable exchange. When you accepted the trust in canine eyes, it must be for their lifetime. Anything less was a betrayal. A betrayal he could not abide. Particularly with a dog bred for the gun.

Mike Gaddis, *Jenny Willow*, 2002

The one absolutely unselfish friend that man can have in this selfish world, the one that never deserts him, the one that never proves ungrateful or treacherous, is his dog.

Senator George G. Vest in a Missouri legal case, Burden v. Hornsby, 1925

The perfection of a life with a gun dog, like the perfection of an autumn, is disturbing because you know, even as it begins, that it must end. Time bestows the gift and steals it in the process.

George Bird Evans, *An Affair with Grouse*, 1982

There is but one place to bury Sam, A place where I can find him on point, A place where he'll come when I call, A place where he'll always be close . . . My heart.

Ken Jacobson, *Politically Correct Hunting*, 1995

There is no welcome more open and unselfish than that of a dog at the return of a beloved master.

Ferrol Sams, *The Whisper of the River*, 1984

Dogs

Two powerful forces are at work within the dog: the age-old, inherited instinct to course the quarry; and the newer instinct, man-made, to stalk and point the bird. By careful, selective breeding man has achieved a process of evolution, in only a few hundred years, which nature might well have taken thousands to equal.

Burton L. Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1947

Watch the old dog. She'll sense a change far earlier than we do. She'll raise her head from a nap as if she's been called, when no one has called her. She'll go out in the side yard and point herself north and raise her nose and half-close her eyes and stand there a full minute, reading the air, finding things out, things that are far away and won't happen for days.

Leon Hale, *Home Spun*, 1997

Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot little puppies.

Gene Hill, *Just Dogs*, 1988

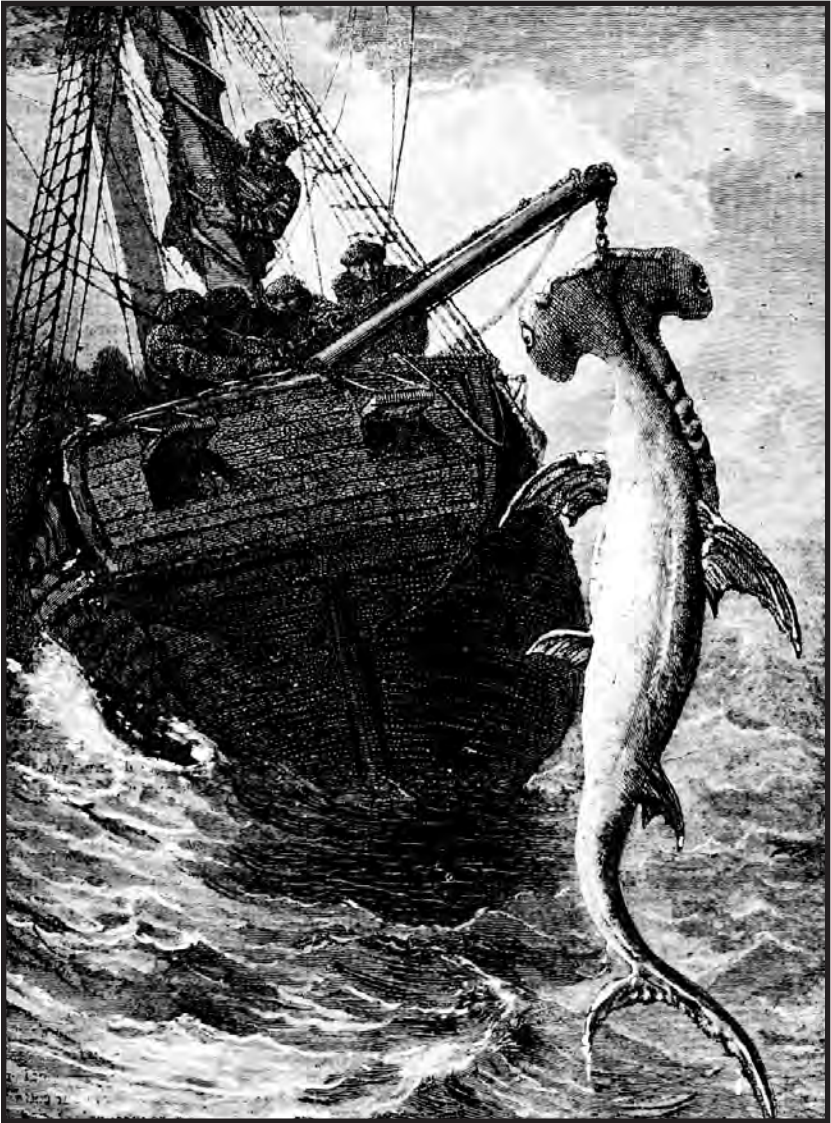
You get too fond of a dog. Not until after his death do you realize how much he meant to you. I sometimes wonder if the pleasure in owning a dog is worth the misery caused by his death.

J.A. Hunter, *Hunter*, 1952





Fishing



Fishing Prose

A fish of five pounds can break a leader just as quickly as a fifty pounder. Anyone who tries to stop a fresh salmon of any size from running will break his tackle. He has failed in the whole idea of playing a fish, which is to give line whenever the pressure calls for it and before the tackle breaks. He is blaming the fish for his own shortcomings and advertising his own ignorance.

Lee Wulff, *The Atlantic Salmon*, 1958

A fish that gets away always carries some insoluble secret with him.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *Fisherman's Winter*, 1954

A fisherman is always hopeful – nearly always more hopeful that he has any good cause to be. He is probably most hopeful of all when he goes out in the early dawn, feeling that he has stolen an hour on his brothers and earned himself a reward by sheer virtue and fortitude. But the hope of the evening rise is a darker, more powerful hope; it is a mysterious time, when miracles may happen.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *The Living Land*, 1961

A fly tier is an artist. The pelts of exotic birds and animals are his paints and the hook is his palette. He uses a vast and varied assortment of materials . . . and binds them all together with natural silk to create his impression of a living insect. His work is subjected to an eye far more critical than that of any human reviewer – the sharp, wary eye of the trout.

Steve Raymond, *The Year of the Angler*, 1983

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A good angler must not only bring an inquiring, searching, observing wit, but he must bring a large measure of hope and patience and a love and propensity to the art itself; but having once got and practiced it, then doubt not but angling will prove to be so pleasant that it will prove, like virtue, a reward to itself.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1653

A good gamefish is too valuable to be caught only once. The fish you release is your gift to another angler.

Lee Wulff, *Handbook of Freshwater Fishing*, 1938

A released trout is like a wonderful dream you can have again and again.

Harry Middleton, *Southern Living*, February, 1990

A river is never quite silent; it can never, of its very nature, be quite still; it is never quite the same from one day to the next. It has its own life and its own beauty, and the creatures it nourishes are alive and beautiful also. Perhaps fishing is, for me, only an excuse to be near rivers.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *A River Never Sleeps*, 1944

After all, fly fishers for salmon set out to tempt the unfeedable with the uneatable which, of itself, is bizarre.

Philip Green, *New Angles on Salmon Fishing*, 1984

All dead fish look more or less alike.

Philip Wylie, *The Visiting Fire-Eater*, 1940

All fathers pray for their sons to outfish them.

Thomas Lynch, *Bodies in Motion and at Rest*, 2000

Fishing

All men are equal before trout.

President Herbert Hoover, 1874-1964

All the things which will outlast London are important to the philosophic man. . . When London Bridge has tumbled down, and the sewers of the hive have ceased to pollute the waters, there will be salmon opposite the Imperial Chemicals building, but no Imperial Chemicals building opposite the salmon.

T.H. White, *England Have My Bones*, 1936

All trout fishermen, even the most sophisticated of the dry-fly purists, are boys at heart, with a boy's wonder and joy in a stream, the feel of it, the sounds, and the sense of being a part of its life and movement.

Sigurd F. Olson, *The Singing Wilderness*, 1956

An experienced angler can wish for no sounder satisfaction than to coach an apt and earnest disciple.

Syl MacDowell, *Western Trout*, 1948

And what sport doth yield a more pleasing content, and less hurt and charge than angling with a hooke!

Captain John Smith, 1616

Angling may be said to be so like the mathematics that it can never be fully learnt.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1656



Angling, if followed in the spirit of contemplative and thoughtful attitude it fosters, is bound to strengthen the character. Because of it, I look forward to a beautiful old age. Declining years filled with glorious memories. And even when I do get so feeble that I cannot wade a stream, I shall have the blessed memories with me until the end.

Ray Bergman, *Just Fishing*, 1945

Any person who does not fish is bordering on the psychotic. He is a poor, abnormal creature from another world who may know how to make a living but who does not know how to live.

Philip Rice, *Hot to Catch Bass*, 1958

Because hope is cast for and retrieved, the act of angling itself is life-affirming. I, for one, don't want to get down to that day when I need only one more clean shirt and have to say, "Damn, I should have gone fishing when I had the time."

Paul Quinnett, *Pavlov's Trout*, 1994

But it is the fish, above all, that makes the angler's life, and every fish has its own special appeal.

John Bailey, *Ultimate Freshwater Fishing*, 1998

But now, as the day waned and the fire in the west faded out, all was changed, sounds and sights, and the sentiments created by them. A soft mist floated up from the stream, half suiting the landscape, glimmering as it was in the feeble moonshine, with a soft, gauzy veil, illumined by the lustrous beauty within, like transparent lace interspersed between the eye and the face of a fair woman.

Henry William Herbert, *Trouting Along the Catasauqua*, 1879

Fishing

But of course the first decent fish of any species a kid catches is the Big One and you don't forget it any more than you forget the first girl in your life.

Robert F. Jones, *The Ultimate Fishing Book*, 1981

Civilization is a harsh fact, but with a little imagination we dreamers can deal with it. As long as the fish don't know that the rumble is a truck or a train, not thunder, I can pretend as well; the choice between the dream and the reality is still an easy one.

Gene Hill, *Passing a Good Time*, 1996

Create the life you want, then fish it.

Paul Quinnett, *Pavlov's Trout*, 2006

Even the old-timers along the seacoast will tell you that the thrill of catching stripers never wears off. I've landed many, but with every one I enjoyed that anxiety and heavy pounding of my heart, and my hands still shake with nervousness as I bend over to unhook it.

Milt Rosko, *Secrets of Striped Bass Fishing*, 1966

Ever since fishing rods were first used, fixed ideas have been responsible for blank days.

W.R. Reynolds, *Fly and Minnow*, 1930

Every fishing water has its secrets. A river or a lake is not a dead thing. It has beauty and wisdom and content. And to yield up these mysteries, it must be fished with more than hooks.

Zane Grey, *The Fisherman's Guide to Life*, 1996

PASSAGES

Every river has its own quality: and it is part of wisdom to know and love as many as you can.

Henry Van Dyke, *Little Rivers*, 1895

Experience usually is what you get when you don't get what you want, but if there were no such thing as optimism there wouldn't be any such thing as fishing.

Michael McIntosh, "Char for the Course," *Sporting Classics*, January 1996

Fishermen are the only children I know who can celebrate Christmas every day all summer long . . .

Robert Traver, *Trout Magic*, 1974

Fishermen were no doubt off the coast of Newfoundland before Cabot got there, in Frobisher Bay before Frobisher got there, in Hudson Strait before Hudson, and in Lancaster Sound before Ross arrived. These men, as it were, stepped aside long enough to let the gentlemen explorers discover the land, and then went back to fishing.

Arctic Dreams, *Barry Holstun Lopez*, 1986

Fishin' is a silent sport and a lot of conversation scares the fish and wrecks the mood.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

Fishing 'tis an affair of luck.

Henry van Dyke, *Fisherman's Luck*, 1899

Fishing consists of a series of misadventures interspersed by occasional moments of glory.

Howard Marshall, *Reflections on a River*, 1967

Fishing

Fishing has a dignity, a simplicity, a ruggedness and honesty little dreamed of in this materialistic world.

Zane Grey, *Tales of Fresh Water Fishing*, 1928

Fishing is a chance to wash one's soul with pure air, with the rush of the brook, or with the shimmer of the sun on the blue water.

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing For Fun - And to Wash Your Soul*, 1963

Fishing is a condition of mind wherein one cannot possibly have a bad time.

Zane Grey, *Tales of Southern Rivers*, 1924

Fishing is a constant reminder of the democracy of life, of humility and of human frailty . . . and the forces of nature that discriminate for no man.

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun and to Wash Your Soul*, 1963

Fishing is a great deal like sex. When it's good, it's absolutely wonderful. And when it's bad, it's still pretty damn good.

William G. Tapply, *Opening Day and Other Neuroses*, 1990

Fishing is a world created apart from all others, and inside it are special worlds of their own . . .

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It*, 1976

Fishing is discipline in the quality of man – for all men are equal before fish.

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun – and To Wash Your Soul*, 1963

PASSAGES

Fishing is the art of taking more fish out of a stream than were ever in it.

Oliver Herford, *1863-1935*

Fishing makes us less the hostages to the horrors of making a living. In some Jungian (Carl, late of Switzerland) sense it returns us to the aesthetics of the ancient art of gathering and hunting our food. It is a time warp we may step into for a little peace.

Jim Harrison, *A Plaster Trout in Worm Heaven*, 1978

Fishing puts me in touch with another of nature's species, in beautiful surroundings that are as old as time. That is where I want to be; this is how I am renewed.

Joan Salvato Wulff, *Joan Wulff's Fly Fishing*, 1991

Fishing, I should have explained, teaches us to perform small acts with care. It humbles us. It enriches our friendships. It cultivates reverence for wild things and beautiful places. It offers relief from overdue bills and endless chores and appalling world events. It makes us participants in nature instead of spectators, a crucial distinction because participants tend to become passionate and protective and spectators tend to become indifferent.

Jerry Dennis, *The River Home*, 1998

Fly fishing may be a pleasurable amusement but angling or float fishing I can only compare to a string and a stick with a worm on one end and a fool on the other.

British lexicographer Samuel Johnson, *1709-1784*

Fishing

Fly fishing seems not to work at all at first, and I resisted it. But that gorgeous, speckled creature – so mysterious and shy – more and more seemed made for fly fishing. It ate flies, which appeared mysteriously on the water and had a secret life beneath the surface; its rise was delicate and haunting. I felt so proud of that first trout I caught on a fly that I wanted more, right away – as much of it as I could get.

Nick Lyons, *Spring Creek*, 1992

Flyfishing is to fishing as ballet is to walking.

Howell Raines, *Flyfishing Through the Midlife Crisis*, 1993

For centuries philosophers and theologians have attempted to prove the existence of a divine being. Fly fishermen need no further proof than the brook trout, a fish whose beauty can only be explained by involving a Higher Power.

Tom David, *The Little Book of Fly Fishing*, 1997

For it may be that if I continue to strive to be a good fisherman – an endeavor that I believe obscures a multitude of sins – I shall find at last the veritable stream that leads back to Eden and, lifting my eyes from my final cast, shall see beyond the pool the angel of the Flaming Sword, no longer forbidding but beckoning.

Frederic F. Van de Water, *In Defense of Worms*, 1949



PASSAGES

From the declining years of the very first fisherman right up to the present, I am reasonably sure that fishing never has been what it was in the days of youth. But each new generation has found its own days of youth, fishing on through maturity with considerable satisfaction, recognized the decline of the erstwhile glories – and cheerfully gone on fishing and complaining.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *Fisherman's Summer*, 1959

Give me mine angle. We'll to the river; there, my music playing far off, I will betray Tawny-finned fishes; my bended hook shall pierce their slimy jaws; and as I draw them up, I'll think them everyone an Antony, And say, "Ah, ha! You're caught."

William Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, Scene 5, 1606-1607

God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1653

Grip your oars, men and clutch your souls!

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, 1851

Happy and sad, happy and sad, the inevitable conjunction! I had felt the life of that trout so intensely because he was dying; the strange sympathy that links hunter and hunted had been in full force for those few moments we were connected, and I felt severed when his life dropped away. Even something as harmless as fishing comes down to it in the end; the bitter and the sweet, the pleasant memory tinged with sadness, the trout living and the trout dead.

W.D. Wetherell, *Vermont River*, 1984

Fishing

He has the first quality of an angler, which is not to measure the pleasure by the catch.

Winston Churchill, *The Hinges of Fate*, 1950

Here is no sentiment, no contest, no grandeur, no economics. From the sanctity of this occupation, a man may emerge refreshed and in control of his own soul. He is not idle. He is fishing, along with himself in dignity and peace. It seems a very precious thing to me.

John Steinbeck, (1902-1968)

How animated and beautiful a pool becomes when a fighting fish surges to its surface to do or die!

Gordon MacQuarrie, *You Take Your Worms*, 1933

I am inclined to believe that bragging is most satisfactory when practiced during the eating of fish. The fried fish is there on your plate, evidence of the truths you are telling; and as your stomach fattens, your ego prospers.

Edmund Ware Smith, *The One-Eyed Poacher of Privilege*, 1941

I chose my cast, a March Brown and a Dun, and ran down to the river, chasing hope.

Wilfred S. Blunt, *A New Pilgrimage*, 1889

I envy not him that eats better meat than I do, nor him that is richer, or that wears better clothes than I do; I envy nobody but him, and him only, that catches more fish than I do.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1653

PASSAGES

I fell in love with Montana at first sight. I was young and all the world was beautiful to me, but Montana was a great splendor. The steep, snow-clad reaches caught my eye first, and they were wonderful to see, but over time, my affection came to be for the welcoming valleys. And not for the valleys, exactly, but for the rivers that run through the valleys. And not for the fastest or deepest rivers, but for the smaller ones that would support a floating fly.

Charles Kuralt, *Charles Kuralt's America*, 1995

I fish because fishing takes me to places where land is still as it always has been, and as long as such places still exist, there is hope for mankind. I fish because fishing humbles a man, and humility is a rare virtue. But most of all, I fish because it makes me feel closer to myself.

Steve Raymond, *The Year of the Angler*, 1995

I fish because I love to; because I love the environs where trout are found, which are invariably beautiful, and hate the environs where crowds of people are found, which are invariably ugly.

John Voelker (AKA Robert Traver), *Testament of a Fisherman*, 1964

I have fished for trout more than forty years. Twenty years ago I thought I knew all that could be learned in regard to these fish. I understood their habits and the use of artificial flies at all times and seasons. Now I make no such claims. I do not know a great deal about trout and never expect to.

John McDonald, *The Complete Fly Fisherman*, 1947

Fishing

I have lived! The American continent may now sink under the seas, for I have taken the best that it yields, and the best was neither dollars, love, nor real estate.

Rudyard Kipling, *after landing his first Clackamas River steelhead in May 1926*

I have no doubt that Adam fished with a worm after his expulsion from paradise.

Theodore Gordon, *The Complete Fly Fisherman, 1947*

I have the greatest respect for the brown trout. He's the remembered fish of my youth, and has taught me more about fly fishing than any other fish. Of all the trouts and salmons, he is the most exacting in the conditions he sets as to tackle, and he is the most determined in seeking the shelter of weeds and snags when he feels the hook.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *"The Gamest Fish of All," 1956*

I shall now confess to you that none of those three trout had to be beheaded, or folded double, to fit their casket. What was big was not the trout, but the chance. What was full was not my creel, but my memory.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac, 1949*

I still don't know why I fish or why other men fish . . . But I do know that if it were not for the strong, quick life of rivers, for their sparkle in the sunshine, for the cold grayness of them under rain and the feel of them about my legs as I set my feet hard down on rocks or sand or gravel, I should fish less often.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *A River Never Sleeps, 1946*

PASSAGES

I think it's a pity that we fishermen have allowed ourselves to get into the habit of using the word "fight" so freely in connection with our sport and quarry . . . The truth is that a two-pound fish does not fight a 200-pound angler. It fights the clinging hook and the restraint of the two-pound test line, and even then the noblest and most exciting part of the fish's reaction is flight, not fight.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *The Gamest Fish of All*, 1956

I understand now what fishing writers mean by "determined pull." There was no grab, like a trout's. He [the salmon] simply took hold of me, not caught hold, and held me down. It was as if I were a small boy that he was going to spank.

T.H. White, *England Have My Bones*, 1936

I watched him swim slowly away with my bright leader dragging beside him. Is it not the loss of things which makes life better? What we have gained is ours; what is lost is gone, whether fish, or love, or fame.

Zane Grey, *The Best of Zane Grey*, 1992

I will give any trout all the breaks in the world so long as I am practically certain he won't get away.

Edmund Ware Smith, *The One-Eyed Poacher of Privilege*, 1941

I'd rather go to hell in a boat than to heaven by any other means of transportation.

Louise Dickinson Rich, *Happy the Land*, 1946

If I fished only to capture fish, my fishing trips would have ended long ago.

Zane Grey, *Tales of Southern Rivers*, 1924

Fishing

If you are a true fisherman, you hunger for explanations. You gladly accept directions to the honeyhole of truth. I know few thoughtful anglers who are not amateur philosophers, and fewer still who do not seek a deeper understanding of themselves and the fish and the water.

Paul Quinnett, *Darwin's Bass*, 1996

If you wish to be happy for an hour, get intoxicated. If you wish to be happy for three days, get married. If you wish to be happy for eight days, kill your pig and eat it. If you wish to be happy forever, learn to fish.

Chinese Proverb

In my view the best time to go trout fishing is when you can get away.

Robert Traver, *Trout Madness*, 1960

In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing. We lived at the junction of great trout rivers in western Montana, and our father was a Presbyterian minister and a fly fisherman who tied his own flies and taught others. He told us about Christ's disciples being fishermen and we were left to assume, as my brother and I did, that all first-class fishermen on the Sea of Galilee were fly fishermen and that John, the favorite, was a dry-fly fisherman.

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It*, 1976

Is it more honest to learn of the movements of battles and kings and countries or the movement of a catfish under a sunken log?

Philip Lee Williams, *The Heart of a Distant Forest*, 1984

PASSAGES

It (fishing) brings meekness and inspiration from the scenery of nature, charity toward tackle makers, patience toward fish, a mockery of profits and egos, a quieting of hate, a rejoicing that you do not have to decide a darned thing until next week.

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun – And to Wash Your Soul*, 1963

It is impossible to be a true fisherman and not be hopeful.

Ed Zern (ed.), *Zane Grey's Adventures in Fishing*, 1952

It requires no very profound insight to guess that the author of “Big Two-Hearted River” would no more publicly expose the identity of his own precious trout water than he would that of an adored woman he'd slept with.

Robert Traver, *Trout Magic*, 1974

It was the biggest trout I had ever seen and I killed it quickly, but in the weeks that followed I always passed that pool with a touch of sadness. There is nothing as empty as a pool without a trout, particularly when the guilt is yours.

Ernest Schwiebert, *Remembrances of Rivers Past*, 1972

It's all very well for Izaak Walton to have settled the question centuries ago, on a purely philosophical basis, by reminding us that no man can be said to have lost that which he never had. On that basis, of course, there is no such thing as a lost fish. But if it doesn't exist, why does it hurt so much?

Arnold Gingrich, *The Joys of Trout*, 1973

Fishing

Kids have one Christmas to look forward to each year, but a fisherman has the same thrill of anticipation every time he takes off fishing.

John Voelker (AKA Robert Traver), *Voelker's Pond, 2002*

Long before the return of the red-winged blackbirds to the marsh and the early bursting of pussy-willows in country parlours, while the snow still lies in patches in the woods and in the shady places behind the barn and the bluejay and the crow are still the only birds around the house, each year it comes, as far back as I can remember – the urge to go fishing.

Dana S. Lamb, *Trout Streams and Salmon Rivers, 1963*

Lures, for example, may indeed be samples of the best assets of humankind. Is a fishing lure not a package of hope and ingenuity? Is it not a symbol of our endless determination and imagination? Do we quit when the fish are not biting? Not me, not you. We change lures!

Ron Schara, *Classic Fishing Lures & Tackle, 2001*

Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after.

Henry David Thoreau, (1817-1862)

May they (anglers) cast their flies into beauty and draw them back over the waters of peace.

Odell Shepard, *Thy Rod and Thy Creel, 1930*

My father's soul is made of water, river water that silver trout swim through and old fishermen love. It's always been a mystery to me, peoples' souls. You can't see them, but my father's soul is more clear to me than most things in this world. I know that if I could hold it in my small hand, I would be holding poetry and rivers and thoughts. Then, in the deep shadows, I would find a tiny trout fly that holds it all together.

Jaime Delp, *from Michael Delp's The Coast of Nowhere, Meditations on Rivers, Lakes and Streams, 1997*

Nevertheless, a true fact remains: the fish you desire to get are attracted, absolutely alone, by the lure you offer. The rest of the rig is incidental, and of less importance. You are absolutely certain to get fish with a good lure and gut leader, even if you use a pole cut from the forest and a ball of twine, though the sport may not be great, but you cannot get fish with a poor lure on the finest rod, reel, and line ever bought.

Louis Rhead, *Fisherman's Lures and Game-Fish Food, 1920*

No fisherman can escape the comforting, haunting feeling that the world is eternal and that as it continues, some part of him will continue with it, wandering across the planet perhaps, like a migrating salmon that always knows the way home.

Bill Barich, *Ultimate Fishing Book, 1991*

No human being, however great, or powerful, was ever so free as a fish.

John Ruskin, *The Eagle's Nest, 1872*

Fishing

No one ever owns a river like this. It cannot be bought or sold. We can only fish it or borrow it, use it or spend much of our lives on it, and in the process perhaps become something more than we once were.

Lani Waller, *River of Dreams*, 1979

Of all the liars among mankind, the fisherman is the most trustworthy.

William Sherwood Fox, *Silken Lines and Silver Hooks*, 1954

On the last day all fishermen are akin to pallbearers, worse yet, pallbearers who must macabrely attend their own funerals. For going out on the last day is a melancholy ritual that must be observed, a sad job that must be done, like decently burying the dead. But our hearts are leaden and each cast is like waving farewell forever to our adored trout. For what we enchanted fishermen really want is to go on fishing, fishing, FISHING – fishing forever into the very vaults and corridors of heaven. With fishermen it's always tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow.

Robert Traver, *Anatomy of a Fisherman*, 1964

One has but to look into the eye of the pickerel – what an eye! What colors! What craft, what resolve, hate, rebellion, tenacity of purpose gleam from the jeweled orb as he is drawn up, captured but not conquered! There is a shark in him – see the teeth; and a leopard in him – see the spots; and a lion for courage, and a unicorn for strength.

Fannie Pearson Hardy, *Tales of the Maine Woods*, 1891

PASSAGES

One night a fisherman was reported missing. The next morning a farmer found his body lodged against the roots of a tree. The farmer dragged him out of the river and called Dr. George Russell, the town doctor. Dr. Russell came, and walking up to the body, looked at it for a minute, then leaned down and picked up the creel fastened to the body by a short rope. He opened it and counted the fish inside it, sizing them up with his practiced eyes, for he was a great fisherman himself. Then, laying the creel back down beside the body, he said, "Twelve good fish. He died happy."

Norman Rockwell, *My Life as an Illustrator*, 1960

Our native brook-trout is much loved of man. It has to be something more than a fish; it is an ideal. It will always hold first place in the hearts of many anglers.

George M. L. LaBranche, *The Dry Fly and Fast Water*, 1914

Perhaps I could just lease a place in heaven, in case there's no decent trout water there.

Harry Middleton, *The Earth is Enough*, 1966

Poets talk about "spots of time," but it is really fishermen who experience eternity compressed into a moment. No one can tell what a spot of time is until suddenly the whole world is a fish and the fish is gone. I shall remember that son of a bitch forever.

Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It*, 1976

Fishing

Prescription is no part of trout fishing; there are no rules; there is no score. Aside from legal protection of trout, the individual alone decides how he wants to play the game. If his fishing is recreation, that is enough, no matter whether it is with a clumsy alder pole and worms, or with the most delicate bamboo rod and flies.

John Crowe, *The Book of Trout Lore*, 1947

Rivers and the inhabitants of the watery elements are made for wise men to contemplate and for fools to pass by without consideration.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1656

Slowest sport God ever put together, but it beats hiring a psychiatrist.

Walter Mondale, *speaking on his love of ice fishing in National Geographic Traveler*

Some men will fish only when the moon is full, others when it's empty, and still others only in between. But sun, moon, fog, mist, time, tide and crashing barometers are all alike to the real gone fisherman. In his secret heart he still knows that the best time to go fishing is when he can get away.

Robert Traver, *Anatomy of a Fisherman*, 1964

Some of the world's best fishing is in the library, where it's open to everybody to enjoy vicariously, whereas in actuality some of it is preserved for poops who wouldn't know enough to miss it if they never had it.

Arnold Gingrich, *The Joys of Trout*, 1973

Soon after I embraced the sport of angling I became convinced that I should never be able to enjoy it if I had to rely on the cooperation of fish.

Sparse Grey Hackle, *Fishless Days, Angling Nights*, 1971

Surely the best virtue of fishermen is their hopefulness.

Ed Zern, *Zane Grey's Adventures in Fishing*, 1952

That is night fishing, the essence of angling, the emperor of sports. It is a gorgeous gambling game in which one stakes the certainty of long hours of faceless fumbling, nerve-racking starts, frights, falls, and fishless baskets against the off-chance of hooking into – not landing necessarily, or even probably, but hooking into – a fish as long and heavy as a railroad tie and as unmanageable as a runaway submarine.

Sparse Grey Hackle, *Fishless Days, Angling Nights*, 1971

The charm of fishing is that it is the pursuit of what is elusive, but attainable: A perpetual series of occasions for hope.

Author unknown

The dry-fly is the highest of the arts.

T.H. White, *England Have My Bones*, 1936

The enthusiast can remember many an empty creel, but never an empty fishing day, for he casts his flies into beauty and draws back over the waters of peace. Though he may take no fish, the total result of his day's labor may remind him forcibly of the Apostle's definition of Faith, it will not be his own fault if he does not bring home at least a sabbath calm of body and mind and soul.

Odell Shepherd, *The Harvest of a Quiet Eye, A Book of Digressions*, 1927

Fishing

The perfect dry-fly fisherman does not exist, and it is doubtless a good thing that he does not, or surely he would be intolerable to all us imperfect anglers.

Sparse Grey Hackle, *Fishless Days, Angling Nights*, 1971

The precise details of what happens in a day's work on a stream are of real value to yourself and others. Except in the case of a record fish, it isn't important that you took a trout; it's exactly how you took him that's important.

John Tainter Foote, *A Wedding Gift*, 1924

The question of sportsmanship depends entirely upon the individual, not on the tackle used in catching the fish.

Ray Bergman, *Fresh-Water Bass*, 1942

The secret places are the soul of fishing.

John Gierach, *Where the Trout Are as Long as Your Leg*, 1991

The spirit of the boy lies dormant in many of us, and only needs to be released by just going fishing. . .

Theodore Gordon quoted by **Austin Francis**, *Catskill Rivers*, 1983

The stream, which had been dull and sullen all day long, broke into a cheerful smile.

Charles Dickens, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, 1843

The things in life that we enjoy the most are those for which we have to work and for which there are no set rules for attainment.

William W. Michael, *Dry Fly Trout Fishing*, 1951

PASSAGES

The true fisherman approaches the first day of fishing with all the sense of wonder and awe of a child approaching Christmas.

Robert Traver, *Trout Madness*, 1989

The true trout fisherman is like a drug addict; he dwells in a tight little dream world all his own, and the men about him, whom he observes obliviously spending their days pursuing money and power, genuinely puzzle him, as he doubtless does them.

Robert Traver, *Trout Madness*, 1960

The ultimate trout does not exist, unless perhaps it is the first trout or the last trout of a fisher's life. Nonetheless, each trout is uniquely individual, one of the Master's originals, cast in silver, tinted in gold, patterned by species, unequaled in spirit and etched into the soul of anyone whose life it may touch.

Michael Altizer, *The Last Best Day*, 2007

There are, as you may have observed, a number of people who can only be happy while they're suffering. Some insist on physical misery, some on mental or spiritual. The fisherman is blessed, because he can and often does enjoy both kinds simultaneously.

Zane Grey's Adventures in Fishing, *Ed Zern, editor*, 1952

There is a modest claim that I may make: I have liberated myself from trophies and scores. It was not difficult . . . Mostly I just grew older. Once I had dreamt of catching big trout, read books about how to do it, and chased them from Patagonia to Donegal. When I catch one now, I am still pleased. It is a gift, but it is not a triumph.

Datus C. Proper, *The Last Old Place: A Search Through Portugal*, 1992

Fishing

There is certainly something in angling that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit, and a pure serenity of mind.

Washington Irving, (1783-1859)

There is no monopoly on courage. It is the quality of courage found in fish that leads men to fish for them. And it is something of the same quality in man himself that keeps him wading bravely through swift waters even when the hour is late and shadows are closing in around him.

Steve Raymond, *The Year of the Angler*, 1983

There is no more graceful and healthful accomplishment for a lady than fly-fishing, and there is no reason why a lady should not in every respect rival a gentleman in the gentle art.

W.C. Prime, *Fishing with the Fly*, 1883

There is no telling the fascination of fishing. I loved it as a boy, and now no less as a man. And to tell what I owe to fishing would take a better book than I have written.

Ed Zern (editor), *Zane Grey's Adventures in Fishing*, 1952

There is the story of the Wall Street broker who was quite an angler. He lived for his weekend and vacations so he could fish. A friend asked him whether he thought of it as an escape from reality. "Certainly not," he said. "It's an escape from the routine, humdrum, worrisome world, to reality. Fishing is more real to me than Wall Street."

Charles K. Fox, *Escape to Reality, Sport Fishing USA*, 1971

There will be no joy on long winter nights making reinventory of the tackle unless there be behind it the indelible recollection of having caught a few big ones, and the anticipation of bigger ones to come.

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun – and To Wash Your Soul*, 1963

They live in a world of flickered mirage, in the fractal sheerings of Bahamian light dancing on bright sand in shallow water. In a place without shade, they are shadows; you see them when they are not there, and when they are, you do not. They arrive silent as thought, hesitant, shimmering, almost invisible, for the sunlight itself seems to pass through them, cleaving itself into rippling shards that refract around the swimming fish, dissolving their individual shapes into an abstraction of the water itself. When you do see them, always it is just a moment after you have sensed them, as if you suddenly remembered that they were here. Bonefish. Right there. Coming this way.

Ed Gray, *Shadows on the Flats*, 1997

They were men who at home have sacred dens in their houses, and in them they worship a heathen god in the form of a glass case full of dainty rods. They have hundreds of flies, suited to all kinds of moods of all kinds of fish . . . There are creels, reels, silver ammunition flasks, rare prints of the forefathers of the lure, books of tall stories so dear to the craft . . . In such places these men gather – through the tobacco smoke the lakes blow softly, the ponds wait idly, and the brooks bubble pleasantly in imagination.

Frederick Remington, *Selected Writings*, 1981

Fishing

To me, any fishing that involves casting is just another form of hunting. And, in some ways, it is far more difficult. Fish must either be stalked or outguessed as to where they may be lying, and the presentation of 6/0 stainless tarpon fly or a jassid dry to a skinny-water brown trout is absolutely as demanding as picking off a walking impala at three hundred yards. You can see an animal and perhaps shoot him, but a fish, once located, must also be outwitted. If the cast is the equivalent of the shot, then the stalk is no less demanding.

Peter Hathaway Capstick, *Horizons*, 1989

Traffic jams, rude waitresses, long lines, unremitting noise, and overcrowding are the psychological assassins of modern life. They can be successfully ditched on a stream or a river or pond or out in the middle of a big, blue lake.

Paul Quinnett, *Pavlov's Trout*, 1994

Trout are rather inconstant readers of the outdoor magazines, I suspect, for contrary to the sage fish wisdom there embalmed, they sometimes inhabit the damndest most unlikely looking places.

Robert Traver, *Anatomy of a Fisherman*, 1964

Trout do not lie or cheat and cannot be bought or bribed or impressed by power, but respond only to quietude and humility and endless patience.

Robert Traver, *Trout Madness*, 1974

PASSAGES

Up North – seemed cleaner and harsher than anywhere else – a sharp wind out of the northwest kicking up whitecaps on the open reaches, and wooden rowboats painted dark green tied up to cockeyed piles, with cabins of peeled spruce logs squatting, smoking, back in the woods, and always a lone man in a red and black checkered lumberjack shirt fishing from shore – casting and reeling, casting and reeling, again and again . . . Muskie country.

Robert F. Jones, *The Ultimate Fishing Book*, 1981

We have come to realize that angling is something more than a primordial passion. While the lust for the chase still exists and rightfully should, emphasis nowadays is placed upon the aesthetic aspect. We have come of age. We are no longer fishermen, providing for the table; we are anglers, seeking through the medium of white water, quiet pools, bird voices and the play of sunlight and shadow something which we cannot find in the daily channels of our lives.

William J. Schaldach, *Fish by Schaldach*, 1937

We may say of angling as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries: “Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did;” and so, if I might be judge, God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling.

Izaak Walton, *The Compleat Angler*, 1653

We never get over the fishing fever; it’s a delightful disease and thank the Lord there is no cure.

Creek Chub Bait Co. brochure, 1951

Fishing

We who go a-fishing are a peculiar people. Like other men and women in many respects, we are like one another, and like no others, in other respects. We understand each other's thoughts by an intuition of which we know nothing. We cast our flies on many waters, where memories and fancies and facts rise, and we take them and show them to each other, and small or large, we are content with our catch.

W.C. Prime, *I Go A-Fishing*, 1873

When I cast to a trout, there is always that feeling, just below the skin, that I might somehow reach just beyond the given, and feel on my line the full weight of things – the weight of mountain and river laced into flesh and bone by rising trout.

Harry Middleton, *On the Spine of Time*, 1991

Wild water – how it draws us back to itself from our boyhood to our old age, and lures us on and on, down and down, as though just beyond each bend lay the answers to all our questionings and the goal of all our hopes. It draws and lures us by an infinite variety. No two stretches of any living brook are the same or similar to a seeing eye.

Odell Shepard, *They Rod and They Creel*, 1984

Wish . . . that once in your life the fates conspire in your favor, the planets pause in their circling, the waters part, and there beneath your uncoiling line will rise something miraculous, something worth all your longing, something extraordinarily fine.

W.D. Wetherell, *Upland Stream*, 1991

PASSAGES

You can't say enough about fishing. Though the sport of kings, it's just what the deadbeat ordered.

Thomas McGuane, *Silent Seasons*, 1978

You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, he thought. You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman. You loved him when he was alive and you loved him after. If you love him, it is not a sin to kill him. Or is it more?

Ernest Hemingway, *The Old Man and the Sea*, 1952

You know there's never a time when I'm not fishing – just days when I can't do it in water.

Jay Hill, *The Gentleman's Society of Angling*, 2002

You will search far to find a fisherman to admit that a taste for fishing, like a taste for liquor, must be governed lest it come to possess its possessor.

Sparse Grey Hackle, *Fishless Days, Angling Nights*, 1954

Zane Grey once remarked to the effect that there was never an angler who lived but that there was a fish capable of taking the conceit out of him! Truer words were never spoken.

Ralph Bandini, *Veiled Horizons*, 1939

Think of this. You are on a brook or a lake you fished some years ago. There, across the little feeder stream, is the same muskrat house. You hear the old, mysterious conversation between frogs and the scolding of redwing blackbirds. A strange feeling comes over you; everything is still the way it was when you fished here last. Then you realize as long as you fish here, nothing will ever change.

Gene Hill, *Sunlight & Shadows*, 1996

Fishing





Humor

PASSAGES



Humor

A galloping moose is about as graceful as a knock-kneed man in a sack race.

Eric Collier, *Never Trust a Moose*, 1953

A Gentleman sincerely believes that hunting is a great and royal sport; but a beater is not of this opinion.

Blaise Pascal, *Thoughts*, 1648

A good rule of angling philosophy is not to interfere with any fisherman's peculiar ways of being unhappy, unless you want to be hated.

Ed Zern, editor, *Zane Grey's Adventures in Fishing*, 1952

A hunter who ain't a liar, a fisherman who won't toy with the truth is generally the kind of man who will do you one in the eye on a cattle trade, foreclose a mortgage on a widder, and sneak stamps out of the petty-cash box.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man's Boy Grows Older*, 1957

A hyena's giggle is date night in the female ward of a madhouse.

Robert Ruark, *Horn of the Hunter*, 1952

A powder magazine at Rock Springs, Wyoming containing 1,500 kegs of powder, 700 pounds of dynamite and several boxes of giant powder was exploded by drunken Finlanders firing a pistol shot into the magazine. The remains of the Finns were scattered over 20 acres.

Gatchell Museum newsletter, Gatchell Museum Association, Buffalo, Wyoming

PASSAGES

A true sportsman is one who can catch a large fish, release it, and never tell anyone.

Charley Dickey, *Movin' Along with Charley Dickey*, 1985

A wife and a steady job have ruined many a good duck hunter.

Anonymous

Advice is what older men give to younger men when they no longer can set them a bad example.

Irvin S. Cobb, *Exit Laughing*, 1941

All skill is in vain when an angel pees in the touch hole of your musket.

German proverb, *date unknown*.

Allcocks' Model Perfect Hooks are the sharpest made. Try them on your Bottoms.

From a 1912 Allcock advertisement

An American and an Englishman were sitting around the campfire with their Newfoundland guide. "I think," said the American, "the best part of fishing is sitting around the fire with a cup of coffee, the stormy sky overhead and the call of the loon echoing across the country." "Oh no," said the Englishman, "the best part of fishing is early in the morning, as the mist rises off the river and you make the perfect cast, knowing full well as the line goes out that the fly will land exactly in the right place and that a trout will rise to it." The Newfoundlander sized both men up and remained silent. When pressed for his opinion he said: "The best part of trouting is when you gets your fish up on the beach and beats his head in on a rock."

Ian Charles Bell, *On the Pond*, 1975

Humor

An expert fisherman is supposed to be a man who catches fish, but we know experts who'd rather catch nothing fishing like experts than catch plenty fishing like amateurs.

Eddie Finlay, *Down the Creek*, 1967

An incurable turkey hunter must either discipline his wife to his vagaries, or else suffer a good many domestic shocks.

Archibald Rutledge, *Those Were the Days*, 1955

Before he's hatched, a male turkey lies in his shell, thinking up ways to outmaneuver the human hunter. This is a scientific fact to which any gobbler hunter will attest.

Charlie Elliott, *Turkey Hunting with Charlie Elliott*, 1991

Billy in the lead studying the ground at either side of the horse, leaning with his forearms across the horse's wither. "Are you a tracker?" said John Grady. "I'm a trackin' fool. I can track low-flying birds." "What do you see?" "Not a damn thing."

Cormac McCarthy, *Cities of the Plain*, 1998

Deer hunting is just as much a matter of speculation as marriage.

Archibald Rutledge, *Days Off in Dixie*, 1935

Don't Try. I am sleeping inside with a BIG DOG, an ugly woman, two shotguns and a claw hammer.

Hand-scrawled sign on the boarded-up front of a New Orleans oriental rug business, Sept. 2, 2005

During seven days' shooting I fired ninety-nine cartridges for a score of two snipe . . . Sometimes an Indian bystander would say with grave politeness, and no twinkle apparent in his eye, that I was shooting very well, but God was kind to the birds.

Brigadier John Masters, *Bugles and a Tiger*, 1948

Fishermen are born honest, but they get over it.

Ed Zern, *To Hell With Fishing*, 1945

Fishin' is when you ain't got no worry, nor no enemy, nor no dislike for nothin' nor nobody – an' they're bitin' good.

Edmund Ware Smith, *A Tomato Can Chronicle*, 1937

Fishing is a delusion entirely surrounded by liars in old clothes.

Don Marquis, (1878-1937)

Fishing is very similar to golf because in both sports you hold a long skinny thing in your hand while nothing happens for days at a time.

Dave Barry, *syndicated newspaper humorist*

For the fishing, there's Fergus the ghillie and his lads. He'll buy your gear and make your flies and give you more advice than you need for nothing. A bottle of whisky occasionally will halve the advice and double the catch.

Morris L. West, *Summer of the Red Wolf*, 1971

Freud defined normality as the ability to love and work. Well, I love fishing and work very hard at it. It's comforting to know that this is normal.

William G. Tapply, *Opening Day and Other Neuroses*, 1990

Humor

He can take one sniff of you half a mile downwind and tell you the color of your grandmother's wedding dress.

F.H. Riggall, *Grizzly Country*, 1972

He paused dramatically, flipped the blanket, and produced a gleaming Ithaca ten-bore magnum with double recoil pads, single trigger, ventilated rib, and one-power Weaver scope. Doc Hall's eyes had the gleam of a Marine lieutenant, just back from a year in Korea, watching his wife step out of her shower.

Corey Ford, *Corey Ford Sporting Treasury*, 1987

Honey, lemme tell you somethin'," the elderly lady instructed. "If a man's a man, and he's worth having, he's gonna chase somethin'. It might be whiskey; it might be gamblin'; it might be women; it might be money; it might be huntin' and fishin'. But he is going to chase somethin'! Just be glad your man likes to hunt and fish, 'cause then you know where he is and what he's doin'!"

Robert Hitt Neill, *Going Home*, 1987

I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.

Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1884

I justify my meat eating by tradition. My ancestors have been killing and eating meat for five million years. What kind of egotist would it take to break a tradition like that?

Dr. Steven N. Austad, *Natural History*, June 1999

PASSAGES

I was reading about how countless species are being pushed toward extinction by man's destruction of forests. Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us.

Bill Watterson, *Calvin and Hobbs*, 1991

I've never known an outdoorsman who owned all the gear he thought he needed. Even if he owns it, the odds are that he can't find it.

Charley Dickey, *Movin' Along with Charley Dickey*, 1985

If Adam had known a double gun and bird dog, he'd never allowed the jezebel Eve to play in the apple orchard. Bet on it.

John R. Smestad, *The Double Gun Journal*, 1991

If God didn't want men to hunt, He wouldn't have given us plaid shirts.

Johnny Carson on *The Tonight Show*

If I were invited to shoot when I might fish, I should feel somewhat in the frame of mind of the man who, on being asked, "Wilt thou have this woman to be thy wedded wife?" said, "Yes, I will, but I would rather have her sister."

Sydney Buxton, *Fishing and Shooting*, 1902

If one hunter tells another in cold blood that he has succeeded in stalking a wild turkey, the latter has the right to ask the imager of such things as just where he buys the stuff that brings on so prodigious a dream.

Archibald Rutledge, *Plantation Game Trails*, 1921

Humor

If people concentrated on the really important things in life, there'd be a shortage of fishing poles.

Author unknown, in *Green Trout Gazette*, 1990

If there were a great and all-seeing Seer of Shotgunning, you could seek him on his mountaintop and ask, "Why do I hit the hard targets and miss the easy ones?"

Gene Hill, *Shotgunner's Notebook*, 1989

If you are going to be stupid, you have to be tough.

Prominently posted at Kejulik River Lodge, King Salmon, Alaska

In 1620 *The Mayflower* with pilgrims aboard entered Plymouth Harbor for the first time. The captain of *The Mayflower* noticed several canoes of Indians fishing. He asked one of them "How is fishing?" and the reply he got was: "Slow . . . you should have been here yesterday."

Author unknown

In all fishermen a certain amount of screwballery is likely to crop up.

Edmund Ware Smith, *For Maine Only*, 1959

In my opinion, the way lures actually work is that the fish see one go by, and they get to laughing so hard and thrashing around so that occasionally one of them snags itself on the hook.

Dave Barry, *syndicated newspaper humorist*, 1992

PASSAGES

It's just not possible for me (3,000 miles away) to tell you what caliber gun to have in your home. You know your neighbors better than I do.

Will Rogers, (1879-1935)

Life is just too short to go quail hunting with the wrong people.

President Jimmy Carter, *An Outdoor Journal*, 1988

My mother-in-law's only daughter once put the female lament with brevity and eloquence. "If you were out chasing blondes, I might be able to do something about it," she wailed. "But tell me, oh tell me if you can and dare, how any mere woman can compete with a fish!"

Robert Traver, *Trout Magic*, 1974

Nobody with a full stringer of fish goes home by the way of the back alley.

Mark Twain, (1835-1910)

Nothin' on this earth is increasin'. There ain't as many fish, but there ain't as many of a lot of things, like pheasants or buffaloes. Even the Brontosauruses that used to hang out on the front lawn got scarce after I quit drinkin'. The only thing there's more of is human, and some of them ain't human.

Frank Mundis, *Frontispiece, In the Slick of the Cricket* by Russell Drumm, 1997

Humor

On a chalk stream one evening a man killed two and a half brace of splendid trout. A fellow-guest who had had a blank day, after having greatly admired the catch, asked the successful angler what he had taken them on. "All on the red quill," he answered. "Then, sir," replied he-of-the-empty creel, "I am able to inform you that you were using the wrong fly."

A. Courtney Williams, *Trout Flies, a Discussion and a Dictionary*, 1932

On a hard hunting trip in mid-winter, civilized man learns once more (1) To earn his food and eat it with hearty appetite; (2) To feel the delicious comfort of warmth and shelter after extreme exposure; (3) To enjoy the life-renewing qualities of sound sleep after utter exhaustion; and incidentally; (4) To appreciate a respite from the eternal temptations of sex.

J. Wong-Quincey, *Chinese Hunter*, 1938

On the way home late that afternoon, we canoed past the Indian village. A small Indian boy ran down to the shore and waved his arms. "Want frog?" he shouted. "Five cents!" "No," we shouted back. "Go to hell then," he cried, and ran to the village.

Joe Brooks, *Bass Bug Fishing*, 1947

Once, when Joe had called again and we were listening for moose, we heard, come faintly echoing, or creeping from far through the moss-clad isles, a dull dry rushing sound with a solid core to it, yet as if half-smothered under the grasp of the luxuriant and fungus-like forest, like the shutting of a door in some distant entry of the damp and shaggy wilderness. If we had not been there no mortal would have heard it.

When we asked Joe in a whisper what it was, he answered, "Tree fall."

Henry David Thoreau, *The Maine Woods*, 1846

One airport customs official took the .577 from its case, checked the serial number and then looked down the bores. "I see you hunt with a double barrel shotgun," he said. I let the remark pass. He then read the inscription on the barrels out loud: "Holland and Holland. This gun must have been made in the Netherlands. Definitely not a good piece, in my opinion."

Carl Labuschagne, *"Make Mine a Turnbolt," The Shooter's Magazine, July 1994*

One evening after I had turned in, the flap of my tent opened and the countess came in wearing a lace Parisian nightgown that covered her but poorly and carrying a beer glass full of whiskey. She sat down on the edge of my cot, offered me a drink, and then took one herself. "Hunter, my friend, I am lonely," she told me sadly. "Countess, where's your husband?" I asked her. She looked at me a long time. "Hunter, you Englishmen ask the strangest questions," she said and flounced out of my tent.

J.A. Hunter, *Hunter, 1952*

One reason opportunity isn't recognized more often is that it goes around disguised as work.

Author unknown

One thing I have learned from hunting; how to cuss. This I can do competently in eight languages, and I'm working on the ninth.

Robert Ruark, *Use Enough Gun, 1966*

Other anglers may contradict me, but I firmly believe that if a man had foul-hooked his best friend through the nose, and that friend ran, the man would strike by instinct.

Rudyard Kipling, *"On Dry-Cow Fishing as A Fine Art," 1926*

Humor

Outside of a dog, a book is a man's best friend; and inside a dog, it's too dark to read.

Groucho Marx, (1890-1977)

Patriotic enthusiasm combined with the contents of the little bottle at length had its effect, and we broke into song, the horse broke into a gallop and the wagon almost broke into bits before we reached Windermere.

A.B. Frost, 1875

Personally, I have never been able to figure out the exact value of a compass to a man adrift in a strange country. What is the use of knowing where north is if you don't know where you are?

Irvin S. Cobb, *The Plural of Moose Is Mise*, 1921

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

The Bible, *St. John, Chapter 21, Verse 3*

Sweetest little wife, I think all the time of my little laughing, teasing beauty . . . And, I could almost cry, I love you so. But, I think the hunting will do me good.

Theodore Roosevelt, as reprinted in *Montana Outdoor Magazine, September, 1993*

The average bass fisherman may think he doesn't know much, and he's probably right.

Charley Dickey, *Movin' Along with Charley Dickey*, 1985

PASSAGES

The average young hunter started out in his mid-teens, gunning up a storm. His hunting effort rose until he was in his early 20s, and then fell off. Of course it fell off. Chasing girls is a fulltime project if it's done right.

John Madson, *John Madson: Out Home*, 1979

The bride was presented in marriage by her mother and father. Her father was present even though it was the first day of dove season.

News item in the Daily Press, Newport News, Virginia, on September 12, 1993

The English country gentleman galloping after a fox – the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable.

Oscar Wilde, 1864-1900

The first pursuit that a young man just out of boyhood should take up is hunting and afterwards he should go on to the other branches of education, provided he has the means.

C.E. Hare, *Xenophon* – from *The Language of Field Sports*, 1949

The fisherman fishes as the urchin eats a cream bun – from lust.

T.H. White, *England Have My Bones*, 1912

The hunter's nose may be regarded as useless except to find camp at evening when the bacon and coffee are ready.

Theodore S. Van Dyke, *The Still Hunter*, 1913

The path of least resistance makes men and rivers crooked.

Author unknown

Humor

The reason I am awed by shotgun shooters is that most of them don't know how in the hell they do what they do.

Charles F. Waterman, *Times and Places, Home and Away*, 1988

The Traffic Manager, 2 down, driver to enter my yard very cautiously points locked up. No one can go out. Myself Shedman Porters all in office. Lion sitting before office door. Telegram sent by Hindi railway station master to traffic manager on the "Lunatic Line."

Published by W.S. Rainsford, The Land of the Lion, 1909

The truth is, fish have very little sex life. If you have ever tried to make love under water, you will know why.

Ed Zern, *How to Tell Fish from Fishermen*, 1947

The worst enemies of wildlife are the Republicans and the Democrats.

Jay N. (Ding) Darling, *father of the Federal Migratory Waterfowl Stamp, (1876-1962)*

There are only two who should never be questioned: God and the camp cook. Both hold your fate in their hands.

Michael McGurity, *as quoted in Game Days by Chris Dorsey, 1995*

There is a curious wistfulness which pervades the spirits of barefoot boys in spring. Perhaps already there's a hint that life is not as big as hope, or quite as sweet as memory. Yet it is a time when gratification and yearning come close to balancing.

Edmund Ware Smith, *A Tomato Can Chronicle, 1937*

PASSAGES

There is no use in your walking five miles to fish when you can be just as unsuccessful near home.

Mark Twain as quoted in *R.G. Deindorfer's Positive Fishing, 1981*

This book is dedicated to the Bureau of Internal Revenue, with the hope that it will be of interest to them.

Havilah Babcock, *The Education of Pretty Boy, 1960*

To take advantage of the last precious minutes, you've got to stay afield as late as the birds do, regardless of a houseful of guests, the sanguine promises you've made the missus, or the overdraft bank notice at home. To heck with everybody and everything when birds are feeding and fish are biting. Stay late and lie like a dog if necessary.

Havilah Babcock, *The Best of Babcock, 1985*

When a fisherman can't locate his favorite rod, the best thing for his wife to do is take a long trip.

Charley Dickey, *Movin' Along With Charley Dickey, 1985*

When I get up at five in the morning to go fishing, I wake my wife up and ask, "What'll it be dear, sex or fishing?" And she says, "Don't forget your waders."

Paul Quinnett, *Darwin's Bass, 1996*

Whenever I need a psychiatrist, I go fly fishing, holding a boat to be superior to a couch any day of the week. A fly rod is good for whatever ails a man. Any incurable infirmity to which the flesh is heir is sure to respond to its persuasive therapy. And it is especially recommended for ulcers, nervous breakdowns and overdoses of wedlock.

Havilah Babcock, *Jaybirds Go to Hell on Friday, 1964*

Humor

Where the following story came from I do not know. It may be apocryphal, but it contains a point of interest to all fishermen. I was supposed to be returning after a day's fishing without a single fish when I met a boy who was toting home a beautiful catch. I asked, "Where did you get them?" He said, "You just walk down that lane marked 'Private' till you come to a sign saying 'Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted'. Just beyond is a stream marked 'No Fishing Allowed' and there you are."

President Herbert Hoover, *Fishing for Fun and to Wash Your Soul*, 1963

Wielding a fly rod is the most fun you can have standing up.

Arnold Gingrich, *The Joys of Trout*, 1971

You are likely to be shot only if you get between an Englishman and a grouse. This will happen only during the season, between mid-August and mid-December. The English hardly ever shoot each other on purpose. They have agreed among themselves not to, even in the course of normal workaday crime.

Shepard Mead, *How to Live Like a Lord Without Really Trying*, 1964

You can always tell a fisherman, but you can't tell him much.

Corey Ford, *Field & Stream*, 1964

You know what the ideal dove gun for any given day is? Your other gun – the one you left home in the closet.

Gene Hill, *Hill Country*, 1974

You wonder if a fish goes home and exaggerates the size of the bait it stole.

Comedian Bob Hope, 1962



Hunting

PASSAGES



Hunting

“Natural” man is always there, under the changeable historical man. We call him and he comes – a little sleepy, benumbed, without his lost form of instinctive hunter, but, after all, still alive. Natural man is first prehistoric man – the hunter.

Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting*, 1942

A duck hunter is truth with freezing feet, beauty in long flannels, wisdom in a gale, and the hope of the future with nature as his God.

Charley Dickey, *The Duck Hunters Book*, 1982

A good shotgun is a comfort; it feels lively and it smells like an old friend and never has to be buried.

Datus C. Proper, *Where the Road Ends, Field & Stream*, 1990

A goose represents the rebel in all of us and because they're wild and free, they have a certain quality that shines out and makes us wish that we were not bound to labor in life, but rather that we could drift as they do with the seasons.

Paul S. Bernsen, *The North American Waterfowler*, 1972

A gun has no voice with which to sing its own song, no words to tell its own story. A pity, that, because there are stories beyond counting locked mutely behind those insensible barriers of wood and steel. Epic tales, odd happenings, romantic yarns, spellbinding or mundane, no matter; every gun could tell us something, give us some window or mirror to history.

Michael McIntosh, *More Shotguns and Shooting*, 1998

A gun without hammers is like a spaniel without ears.

King George V, *circa 1920*

A hunting camp is one of the few places left to us where we can dream of a near perfect tomorrow. Where the harsh realities of lost riches and faded glories can be forgotten and the dreams of what might be come down to a delightful day with not too much wind, a crisp morning silvered with frost, and find us – at long last – with the right gun, shells, dogs and friends who will be pleased for forever to remember the day we “did it all.”

Gene Hill, *Hill Country, 1978*

A peculiarity of the sportsman is that the more unsuccessful he has been on one hunting excursion, the more eager is his desire to hunt again, and the more sanguine are his hopes of success.

Howland Gasper, *The Complete Sportsman, 1893*

A peculiar virtue in wildlife ethics is that the hunter ordinarily has no gallery to applaud or disapprove of his conduct. Whatever his acts, they are dictated by his own conscience, rather than by a mob of onlookers. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance of this fact.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac, 1949*

A shotgun is only half a weapon without a good dog at your side.

Authur Macdonald Hastings, *The Shotgun, 1981*

Hunting

A wild duck is not to be valued in terms of food along with chickens and pork chops. It means day breaking over the marshes and the whistle of fast wings in the gray light. Who can put a price on the sight of black ducks climbing over the willows or pintails setting their wings to the decoys?

David M. Newell, *The Fishing and Hunting Answer Book*, 1948

A woodcock will spring up so suddenly before you that no one could convince you he did not intend flying at least a half mile. Then, ere he has reached the tops of the alders, he will change the thing which operates in place of his mind and drop, unconcernedly, back to earth. The roar of your gun and the hissing of shot through the atmosphere, where he was a split second before, makes not the slightest difference. He will alight and sit as dumbly as a wooden Indian, not even wondering what it is all about.

Burton L. Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1947

Against the bright, luminous sky one sees just after sunset on clear, cold days the geese were etched, flock upon following flock. Those farthest away bore on with steadily beating pinions, the nearer birds beginning their glide, great wings cupped. It was beautiful beyond speech, almost heartaching to behold, and suddenly Carl was aware of the gun slanted back across his curved arm, and without reason (but with a certain knowing), he saw that the gun gave the sight a greater beauty, for it was his hunter's soul that transfixed him at the sight of the living splendor overhead.

Kenneth Otterson, *Last Casts & Stolen Hunts*, 1993

All boys are bloodthirsty savages. But there's a heap more to it than killing. Seeing the whole world come alive again after a long winter's nap and a wild, wet spring is more fun, 'specially as you grow older, than all the shootin' and fishin' there is. And I never was able to explain it, but the critters seem to notice this too. You'll see how tame everything is this time of the year, when it's wilder'n a buck rabbit in the shootin' season.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

All hunting is a kind of love affair. If you can hear a beautiful piece of music without wanting to learn it by heart; if you can see a beautiful woman without wishing to love her; if you can see a fine specimen of game without wishing to take it, you have no human heart.

Denys Finch-Hatton, as quoted in *Colin Laurie McKelvie's, A Future for Game?*, 1985

Already I was beginning to fall into the African way of thinking: That if you properly respect what you are after, and shoot it cleanly and on the animal's terrain, if you imprison in your mind all the wonder of the day from sky to smell to breeze to flowers – then you have not merely killed an animal. You have lent immortality to a beast you have killed because you loved him and wanted him forever so that you could always recapture the day.

Robert Ruark, *Use Enough Gun*, 1952

An ideal hunting partner . . . is one who makes it unnecessary for me to praise myself.

Havilah Babcock, *Tails of Quails 'n Such*, 1951

Hunting

An old gun will carry the toothmarks of long-dead craftsmen, the scars of hard hunts completed before you were born, the smooth patina left by the hand of an earlier generation. When today's hunters use such guns, they carry an extra magic that I cannot define, but must acknowledge. And if you acquire a new gun, you are starting a chain that may extend into the future as long as hunters welcome the fall.

Stephen Bodio, *Good Guns Again*, 1994

And what will we take from November? To some of us, the pheasants will seem smarter, the quail and grouse faster, the ducks a little higher than we remember. It is not important that we do especially well; it is important only that we be there.

Gene Hill, *A Listening Walk and Other Stories*, 1985

And when everything clicks, it is as if the shotgun were a set of talons or jaws or a beak, a potent extension of the body – one points with the left hand, out in front, gripping the barrels, the shot is loosed, it reaches out from brain and soul, through wood and metal, through thin air, to intercept the wild fleeing form.

Charles Fergus, *A Rough Shooting Dog*, 1991

Any sportsman who can kill a deer without the tingling spine, the quick clutch at his heart, the delicious trembling of nerve fibers when the game is finally down, has no place in the deer woods.

Lawrence R. Koller, *Shots at Whitetails*, 1987

Any woman who does not thoroughly enjoy tramping across the country on a clear frosty morning with a good gun and a pair of dogs does not know how to enjoy life.

Annie Oakley, 1895

Anyone who hunts elephants, rhino or buffalo is a candidate for catastrophe.

Robert Ruark, *Horn of the Hunter*, 1952

Anything partially hidden, revealing itself in snatched glimpses, is always more alluring – a woman's thigh or an elephant's tusk – and makes the heart race faster; one's imagination does the rest.

A.M.D. (Tony) Seth-Smith, *For the Honour of a Hunter*, 1996

As an expert shot and hunter of some experience, he was more than justified in seeing Africa on a hunting safari instead of merely as a tourist. His hopes were not so much to pile up trophies as to participate genuinely in the African way of life. A hunter on a hunting trip can better achieve this than a tourist with four cameras.

Peter Beard, *End of the Game*, 1965

As I took that step, I knew he was running. He wasn't in the browse at all, but angling into invisibility at the rock wall, racing straight into the elevation, bounding toward zero gravity, taking his longest arc into the bullet and the finality and terror of all you have made of the world, the finality you know that you share even with your babies with their inherited and ambiguous dentition, the finality that any minute now you will meet as well.

Thomas McGuane, *The Heart of the Game*, 1980

Hunting

As long as there is such a thing as a wild goose, I leave them the meaning of freedom. As long as there is such a thing as a cock pheasant, I leave them the meaning of beauty. As long as there is such a thing as a hunting dog, I leave them the meaning of loyalty. As long as there is such a thing as a man's own gun and a place to walk free with it, I leave them the feeling of responsibility. This is part of what I believe I have given them when I have given them their first gun.

Gene Hill, *A Hunter's Fireside Book*, 1972

At home a friend will ask, "Been bird hunting?" You will say that you have, and when he asks, "Have any luck?" You will think of what you have held in your heart instead of your hand, and tell him that you certainly did – without a doubt.

Gene Hill, *Field & Stream*, November, 1990

Bird hunting is a social pastime, not a solitary adventure. It takes two to do it right; companionship is half the hunt.

Havilah Babcock, *Jaybirds Go to Hell on Friday*, 1965

But I do still hunt, and when someone occasionally asks me why, it occurs to me that the only reason we have brains large enough to formulate that question is that our distant ancestors got the extra protein it took to evolve the organ by supplementing their diets with meat, first as scavengers, then as hunters. Hunting made us who and what we are. It's in our nature more deeply than clothing, tools or language. Other than that, I can't think of a good reason.

John Gierach, *Fool's Paradise*, 2008

But I realize now that he wasn't shivering from the cold. He was shivering with pent-up excitement. How could a boy – or an old man like me, for that matter – not be excited on such a day, with the sky singing goose songs above the black water and the frozen plowground, a celestial chorus of strong, hot, close-feathered birds pelting up and down the river and across the fields as the light strengthens and the blood gets up?

Robert F. Jones, *“Ruined for Life,” Shooting Sportsman, 1994*

Can memories be measured by gold? If so, then I am rich indeed. Who can value in gold the worth of the memory of that first grouse, of that first double, or of the day when five grouse got up from a brush pile, one after another while I, armed with a pump gun, missed them all. There are thousands of memory bonds stored in the safe-deposit box of my memory, and each has its coupon of happiness and health attached.

Burton Spiller, *Drummer in the Woods, 1962*

Deep in the guts of most men is buried the involuntary response to the hunter's horn, a prickle of the nape hairs, an acceleration of the pulse, an atavistic memory of his fathers, who killed first with stone, and then with club, and then with spear, and then with bow, and then with gun, and finally with formulae.

Robert C. Ruark, *Horn of the Hunter, 1954*

Doubtless youth sees with a glamorous eye, magnifying certain pictures and treasuring memories of them for all the years to come. I believe I had that sort of eye. A hundred ducks were a thousand; the geese filled all the sky. There were forty quail in an average covey – once upon a time.

Roland Clark, *Pot Luck, 1945*

Hunting

Doves . . . Are the easiest hard shootin' in the world. Or maybe it's the other way around. Maybe they're the toughest easy shootin' in the world. I'm telling you right now, you figger to miss more'n you hit, and it wouldn't surprise me none if you didn't hit any for your first box o' shells.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

Each time we go afield, we're confirmed in our belief that this is where we rightly belong, pounding these hills or wading that swamp, shivering in the cold rustling confines of the blind, pushing through the thorns or pausing to catch our breath on the windswept hilltop, watching the indefatigable dog seek out the truths or falsities of the next thick cover.

Robert F. Jones, *Dancers in the Sunset Sky*, 1966

Elk hunting runs deep. Not that it's always fun, because it isn't. It's a contrast in superlatives, ranging from agony to euphoria, and it will stretch your sense and your senses to the limit. It raises you higher, drops you lower, deep into your body, mind, emotions and soul. You may like elk hunting, you may not, but definitely you won't forget it.

Dwight Schuh, *Game Country*, October, 1989

Every man should have an active, muscle-building, fat-destroying, lung-developing hobby. I choose trapshooting because this thrilling, fascinating, invigorating sport trains the brain and develops brawn. It's a sport that gives one the chance for hobnobbing with the best of sportsmen.

John Philip Sousa, *DuPont Powder Co. booklet*, circa 1910

PASSAGES

Fall turkey hunting is fun. It is gay and bright and frothy as light summer literature. It smells good and it looks good and it feels good, but like making love to chorus girls, there ain't no depth to it.

Tom Kelly, *Tenth Legion*, 1973

Few indeed seem fitted for archery or care for it. But that rare soul who finds in its appeal something that satisfies his desire for fair play, historic sentiment, and the call of the open world, will be happy.

Saxton Pope, *Hunting with the Bow and Arrow*, 1923

Few things are so fatal to ultimate success as an early germination of the idea that you are a "pretty smart chap on deer." It is almost as ruinous as the idea that you are a poet. The teachers you need are disappointment and humiliation.

T.S. Van Dyke, *The Still-Hunter*, 1904

For a first deer, there is no habitat so lush and fine as a hunter's memory.

Patrick McManus, *They Shoot Canoes, Don't They?*, 1977

For me, the first measure of hunting isn't whether it is civilized, or conforms to suburban morality, but whether or not it jeopardizes the things that we hunt. If we hunt well, no game species is jeopardized.

John Madson, *John Madson: Out Home*, 1979

Hunting

For the next half minute, the two hunters found it difficult to breathe. But it was a rapturous breathlessness, and they felt each other very close and unafraid. Then out of the shadows, full into the moonlight, strode three lions. They came boldly, royally.

Edison Marshall, *The Last Charge*, 1917

From that day on I have been a lover of mule deer . . . They were my first love and still remain my strongest . . . Somehow the sight of an old mule deer buck, head high, antlers lying along his broad back, returns me definitely to my childhood and the day I first felt the mystery of wild game and wild country.

Jack O'Connor, *Game in the Desert Revisited*, 1977

Fruitless hunts are by no means a modern invention.

Archibald Rutledge, *Those Were the Days*, 1955

Game butchery is as objectionable as any other form of wanton cruelty or barbarity; but to protest against all hunting of game is a sign of softness of head, not of soundness of heart.

Theodore Roosevelt, *African Game Trails*, 1910

Getting one's first partridge is a business of prime importance. Ask any bird-hunter, and he will recall every detail of his first partridge with more accuracy than his first paycheck, his first drink, or his first marriage.

Newton F. Tolman, *North of Monadnock*, 1961

God created man and He created the world for him to live in; I reckon He created the kind of a world He would have wanted to live in if He had been a man – the ground to walk on, the Big Woods, the trees and the water, and the game to live in it. And maybe He didn't put the desire to hunt and kill game in man, but I reckon He knew it was going to be there, then man was going to teach himself that, since he wasn't quite God yet.

William Faulkner, *The Big Woods*, 1955

Grandsir used to say that a 12 gauge was for a realist, and a 20 gauge for the few who can shoot as well as they think they can, and a 16 gauge, which is the size in between, for the ones who are alarmed at taking a definite stand on anything. A .410, he said, was for braggarts, but the 28 gauge was for men who are artists in their souls, for the rare talents who can burn the picture of certain fabulous moments at the peak of a covey rise unforgettably into your memory.

Dion Henderson, *Algonquin: The Story of a Great Dog*, 1953

He had already inherited then, without having seen it, the big old bear with one trap-ruined foot that in an area almost a hundred miles square had earned for himself a name, a definite designation like a living man: the long legend of dogs mangled and slain and shotgun and even rifle shots delivered at point-blank range yet with no more effect than so many peas blown through a tube by a child.

William Faulkner, *The Big Woods*, 1955

Hunting

He lay there striped and beautiful, orange-red and black. He was as large as a small horse, and between the ears he was wider than the shoulders of a big man. As I stood there looking at the great gorgeous cat crumpled in death, I was a little sad and half-embarrassed. I'd have his hide tanned and his head mounted. I'd spend the rest of my life with him, yet I hardly knew him.

Jack O'Connor, *"A Tiger Has Killed," Outdoor Life, 1955*

How kind it is that most of us will never know when we have fired our last shot.

Nash Buckingham, *Nash Buckingham Letters to John Bailey, George Bird Evans, 1984*

Hunters cannot have their own way, they must fall in with the wind, and the colours and smells of the landscape.

Isak Dinensen, *Out of Africa, 1938*

Hunters cannot live life totally on purpose. We must live some of it accidentally, honing our skills on the scars of our mistakes. To grasp the adventure, we must also embrace a little danger, accept certain risks. Rockslides, slippery stream-crossings, tangle-footed horses, hypothermia, getting lost. Meeting these challenges and overcoming them, reveling in the adventure, makes us hunters, makes us strong.

Bill Sansom, *"The Lessons Best Learned," Bugle Magazine, March/April 1999*

PASSAGES

Hunting in my experience . . . is a state of mind. All of one's faculties are brought to bear in an effort to become fully incorporated into the landscape.

Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams*, 1991

Hunting is a passion deeply implanted in the human breast.

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, 1838

Hunting is a path, a muddy, brushy, dank, and spoor-written path along which the seeker, if his spirit be right, can truly feel the earth. If he is fortunate, he travels with a true dog and a true friend.

Charles Fergus, *A Rough-Shooting Dog*, 1991

Hunting is like a game of chess; you can play it a million times, yet never play any two games all the way through in exactly the same way.

Archibald Rutledge, *Days Off in Dixie*, 1935

Hunting is magnificent up to the moment the shot is fired. After that it is another matter. It is useless for sportsmen to tell me that they, in particular, hunt right, conserve the game, do not go beyond the limit, and all that sort of thing. I do not believe them and I never met the guide who did. A rifle is made to kill. When a man goes out with one he means to kill. He may keep within the law, but that is not the question. It is a question of spirit, and men who love to hunt are yielding to and always developing the old primitive instinct to kill. The meaning of the spirit of life is not clear to them.

Zane Grey, *Colorado Trails*, 1918

Hunting

Hunting is not incompatible with the deepest and most genuine love of nature. Audubon was something of a hunter; so was the famous Bachman; so were both John Muir and John Burroughs. It has always seemed to me that any man is a better man for being a hunter. This sport confers a certain constant alertness, and develops a certain ruggedness of character that, in these days of too much civilization, is refreshing; moreover, it allies us to the pioneer past. In a deep sense, this great land of ours was won for us by hunters.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

Hunting is one of the last genuine, personal adventures of modern man. Just as game animals are the truest indicators of quality natural environment, so hunting is the truest indicator of quality natural freedom.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

Hunting may be at its best with companions, but it may also be savored for its solitariness.

Ronald Jager, *Eighty Acres: Elegy for a Family Farm*, 1990

Hunts differ in flavor, but the reasons are subtle. The sweetest hunts are stolen. To steal a hunt, either go far into the wilderness where no one has been, or else find some undisturbed place under everybody's nose.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

PASSAGES

I did not mind killing anything, any animal, if I killed it cleanly, they all had to die and my interference with the nightly and the seasonal killing that went on all the time was very minute and I had no guilty feeling at all. We ate the meat and kept the hides and horns.

Ernest Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 1935

I do not hunt for the joy of killing but for the joy of living, and for the inexpressible pleasure of mingling my life, however briefly, with that of a wild creature that I respect, admire, and value.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

I do not know a tougher quarry than the wild American ringneck. Pheasants can heal breaks and survive after losing a foot or an eye. They will run, sneak, sit, flush wild, even wade or swim to evade hunters. They live in wild places, tame places, faraway places and familiar places. Their colors overwhelm my tongue. They have all the makings of a lasting and incurable addiction. For all his hateful tendencies, the ringneck gives me a lot to love.

C. Stanley Mason, *Voices on the Wind*, 2002

I don't believe any mind could, for long, stand the strain of hunting elephant in the forest. Hunting them in open country is exciting enough, but in forest one ages a year every hour.

Ewart Scott Grogan and Arthur Henry Sharp,
From the Cape to Cairo, 1900

I forgot how big a first pheasant is to a boy. It's kind of like an early squirrel. He is a little bit larger than a later lion.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

Hunting

I hear it's gone now. Deaths, quarrels and neglect left it helpless. But I'm not that homesick for the camp or even the hunting – it's the time I weep for; how I felt about being where I was and doing what I was doing. This was one place where I was truly happy. How lucky I am to still hear the groan of the lopsided oarlocks and the tinkle of crystal-thin ice breaking at the bow and see the sky alive with ducks beyond counting. I remember thinking that nothing here should ever change. And it shouldn't have. But it does.

Gene Hill, *Passing a Good Time*, 1996

I live more richly, more miserably, and more wholly during the grouse season than at any other time of the year. There is a mix of pleasure and hurt; for we who shoot know a guilt from knowledge that we kill and yet enjoy it.

George Bird Evans, *An Affair With Grouse*, 1982

I never knew a man that hunted quail that didn't come out of it a little politer by comparison.

Robert Ruark, *Use Enough Gun*, 1966

I never wrote a poem in my life. But if I ever do, it will be about ducks.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *The Last Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1985



I regret a kind of thinking that regards hunting as shameful, if not sinful. I do not admire a concerted attempt to sell the idea that the killing of game is cruel sport, because no game dies a natural death, and preys as naturally upon itself as man upon man. And above all, I deplore a substitution, via movies and television, of the bloody deaths of cops and gangsters and Western bad men as high adventure, notably heroic in the mind. We may have slain innocent rabbits, but we were not taught by sponsors to applaud the wholesale slaughter of people in order to peddle merchandise.

Robert Ruark, *“People Like Us Never Grow Up,”* *Field & Stream*, September 1961.

I see no reason to apologize for being a hunter, particularly in this age. What comparable sweetness, mystery and wonder can be found in the Styrofoam-dished, Saran-wrapped, boneless, skinless chicken breasts at the meat counter of the supermarket?

Jim Fergus, *The Hunter’s Road*, 1992

I suppose the marvelous flight of this prince of the woodlands (grouse) has afforded more just cause for American sportsmen to doubt their ability as marksmen than most of the other game targets put together.

Archibald Rutledge, *Hunter’s Choice*, 1946

I think a hunter more than most people realizes how fragile a hold all living creatures have on life.

Grayson Chesser, Jr., *American Hunter*, 1984

Hunting

I wanted to see the cleaving flight of feathered migrators splitting the wind before me. I wanted to behold the suddenly tightening grip of the winter upon my beloved lakes and marshes – watch the country say its last goodbye to warm wind and drowsy rain before the white blanket of another season gently covered every dry stalk and patient pine. The day was one for moods. The sun was somewhere behind the black, woolly mass overhead. It struck me as I watched the stingy daylight grow that it is not all of duck hunting to hunt ducks.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *More Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1983

If a turkey ever runs away from you, there is no more chance to get him than a homely girl has of making Hollywood.

Archibald Rutledge, *Old Plantation Days*, 1921

If in a single day we smell coffee, dawn, gun oil, powder, a wet dog, woodsmoke, bourbon and the promise of a west wind for a fair tomorrow – and it's possible for us to reek "happy" – that's just what we will do.

Gene Hill, *A Hunter's Fireside Book*, 1972

If there is a heaven it must have thinning aspen gold, and flighting woodcock, and a bird dog.

George Bird Evans, *October Fever*, 1989

If you need to ask why doubles are so preferable as fieldguns, then the explanation will probably fall on deaf ears. Try balance, safety, dependability, choice of choke . . . and joy! After all, 200 years of trial and error produced the excellence of the side-by-side. On the other hand, 100 years of cost reduction in manufacturing produced the mechanical repeaters.

Bob Braden, *Braden on Shooting and Shotguns, a Personal Bias, 1984*

If you properly respect what you are after, and shoot it cleanly and on the animal's terrain, if you imprison in your mind all the wonder of the day from sky to smell to breeze to flowers – then you have not merely killed an animal. You have lent immortality to a beast you have killed because you loved him and wanted him forever so that you could always recapture the day.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy, 1957*

In a hunting trip the days of long monotony of getting to the hunting ground and the days of unrequited toil after it has been reached always far outnumber the red-letter days of success. But it is these times that test the hunter.

Theodore Roosevelt, *The Wilderness Hunter, 1893*

In hunting, man fulfills the demands of his own nature. It is a restorative act by which he demonstrates his elemental bond with the universe. And, it is prompted by love.

Michael McIntosh, “A Letter From Jean,” *Missouri Conservationist, 1977*

Hunting

In my experience, and in that of every other hunter with whom I have ever discussed them, there is only one thing that will stop a charging buffalo; and that is death – either his or yours.

John “Pondoro” Taylor, *African Rifles and Cartridges*, 1948

In still hunting, swear yourself black in the face never to shoot at a dim, moving object in the woods for a deer, unless you have seen that it is a deer. In these days there are quite as many hunters as deer in the woods; and it is a heavy, wearisome job to pack a dead or wounded man ten or twelve miles out to a clearing, let alone that it spoils all the pleasure of the hunt, and is apt to raise hard feelings among his relations.

George Sears (Nessmuk), *Woodcraft*, 1900

It ain't what a turkey looks like, it's how scared he gets that tells you he's really wild.

Lovett Williams, *The Art and Science of Wild Turkey Hunting*, 1989

It is far less cruel to kill a wild deer than it is to poleax a defenseless ox in a stall.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

It is grouse time again. I need no calendar to tell me that. The old drummer has found his log and the staccato beat of his wings is audible in the stillness of the October afternoon. The woodcock have begun their long migration, and the fall ducks are in. The Red Gods are calling and I must go.

Burton L. Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1947

It is humorous to think that a sane business man will forsake his means of livelihood for a week or more, drive any distance up to five hundred miles, buy a nonresident license, chase a bird dog up hill and down dale for a period of days through storm and shine, will swelter, sweat and swear, yet if he is so fortunate as to bag a half dozen grouse, will drive the long way home with sparkling eyes and glowing cheeks, vowing that he has had the happiest experience of his life.

Burton L. Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1947

It is not about guns, and it is not about killing. It is about freedom and unfenced lands and skies where birds that have never been fed by people in city parks migrate by the light of the moon and in the teeth of storms.

Ed Dvorak, Jr., *Gray's Sporting Journal*, September 1997

Just recently an acquaintance took me to task for spending so much time afield. "Did you ever count the cost of your hunting?" he asked. "Of the time you have lost and the money you have spent?" I replied, and truthfully, too, that I had never lost a moment's time in hunting; that I counted only that time lost which I spent in working.

Burton Spiller, *Drummer in the Woods*, 1962

Killing has a place in hunting, if only a small one. I see it as a rite, a sacrifice, an acknowledgment of the sport's origin that gives meaning to what has gone before. But never as an end in itself.

Roderick L. Haig-Brown, *Measure of the Year*, 1950

Hunting

Life is a terrible conflict, a grandiose and atrocious confluence. Hunting submerges man deliberately in that formidable mystery and therefore contains something of religious rite and emotion in which homage is paid to what is divine, transcendent, in the laws of Nature.

Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting*, 1942

Long ago I learned that my hunting is not just for meat, or horns, or recognition. It is a search for what hunting can give me, an effort to win once again that flash of insight that I have had a few times: That swift, sure intuition of how ancient hunters felt and what real hunting – honest-to-God real hunting – is all about. It is a timeless effort to close that magic circle of man, wildness and animal.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

Long live the bleak bitterness of such a morning, of that churlish dawn . . . The duck hunter, probing the secrets of a new day, sees the night retreat, and nothing is so fine as daylight coming and night departing while wings overhead whisper the old and unsolved mystery of migration.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *The Last Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1985

Modesty is the first requisite in a shooting companion.

Havilah Babcock, *Tales of Quails 'n Such*, 1951

Mr. Bernard M. Baruch, the millionaire elder statesman, is fond of saying that there are two things a man cannot abide being kidded about: his prowess with the ladies and his ability to shoot quail.

Robert Ruark, *The Brave Quail*, 1951

My hunt was for something more than game. Perhaps this is true of many big-game hunts, especially ambitious and dangerous ones made by fiercely ambitious men – men who do not know quite where they stand between courage and cowardice, good and evil, wisdom and folly. And the same is true of climbing mountains or flying across wide seas.

Edison Marshall, *The Heart of the Hunter*, 1956

Nobody who loves to hunt feels absolutely hunky-dory when the quarry goes down. The remorse spins out almost before anything and the balancing act ends on one declination or another. I decided that unless I become a vegetarian, I'll get my meat by hunting for it. I feel absolutely unabashed by the argument of other carnivores who get their meat in plastic with blue numbers on it. I've seen slaughterhouses, and anyway, as Sitting Bull said, when the buffalo are gone, we will hunt mice, for we are hunters and we want our freedom.

Thomas McGuane, "The Heart of the Game," *Outside Magazine*, 1977

Not only did turkeys originate Murphy's law, they have rewritten several of its postulates. After what they make go wrong has gone wrong, and then gotten worse, they really get down to work and create trouble.

Tom Kelly, *Tenth Legion*, 1973



Hunting

Now it is pleasant to hunt something that you want very much over a long period of time, being outwitted, outmaneuvered, and failing at the end of each day, but having the hunt and knowing every time you are out that, sooner or later, your luck will change and that you will get the chance that you are seeking. But it is not pleasant to have a time limit by which you must get your kudu or perhaps never get it, nor even see one. It is not the way hunting should be.

Ernest Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 1935

October is a month made for Wisconsin birdhunters, It's a scene filled with golden popple stands, walking ankle deep in leaves on the forest floor and watching grouse thundering out of red dogwood patches. Add a hunting dog, a golden brown cattail marsh and a cornfield, and watch an upland hunter's pulse quicken. Give me October twelve months of the year and I'll know what heaven's all about.

Ken M. Blomberg, *Badger Sportsman*, 1992

Of course you also see them in postcard situations: belly deep in a placid pond, against a backdrop of mountains and sunset, or wading across the upper Kennebec, effortlessly keeping their feet in tumbling water that would knock a man down. Once two of them, a bull and a cow, materialized in a duck marsh as dawn came, and I watched them change from dim, looming silhouettes that looked prehistoric, like something drawn by the flickering illuminations of firelight on the walls of a cave, into things of bulk and substance, the bull wonderfully dark coated and, with his wide sweep of antlers and powerfully humped shoulders, momentarily regal.

Franklin Burroughs, *Of Moose and a Moose Hunter*, 1991

On entering the woods, the turkey hunter becomes different, something else, becomes like the bird he's after, not thoughts but feelings, sensations, undiluted instinct. Come life's end, the turkey hunter still doesn't understand turkeys, but has lived a handful of memorable moments in their world.

Harry Middleton, *The Earth Is Enough*, 1989

One of the first sweet and novel pleasures a man can experience in the wilds of Africa is the almost perfect independence; the next is the almost perfect indifference to all earthly things outside his camp, and that, let people talk as they may, is one of the most exquisite, soul-lulling pleasures a mortal may enjoy.

H.M. Stanley, *quoted by J. Martin Miller, Hunting Big Game in the Wilds of Africa*, 1909

One of the most common and rewarding September spectacles is that of a single dove springing, stalling, darting, and turning as he weaves his way across 80 acres and through the shot patterns of a dozen hunters and then, with the bravado of a bullfighter, drops to earth and calmly eats his morning cereal.

Nord Riley, *How to Shoot the Bird of Peace*, 1966

One thing is certain [about grouse] – his flight is so uncertain that the fellow who tries to swing with him or dwell on him to make a sure kill will never become a successful grouse hunter.

Ray P. Holland, *Shotgunning in the Uplands*, 1944

Hunting

Our importance as hunters lies in the fact that we as individuals, without affiliations to anything or anyone other than the sport, witness and assess the condition of the game and habitat in this country. Our credentials are that we are out there, in nature, when others are not, and that we are out there because we want to be, not because we have to or are paid to be. Our eyes solicit the traceries of spoors on the earth and birds in the sky; our spirits are conscious of ravens and long for the restitution of wolves and bears to the land. We are the wildlife thermometers, poking about in rivers and swamps, in the shadows of forest canopies, under the flashes of desert suns, and the force that drives us is our soul.

Guy de la Valdene, *For A Handful of Feathers*, 1995

Paradoxically hunting is one of the most social of human activities. For no matter how alone the hunter pursues his game, he must return to the firelight to be judged also by his peers on what has and has not been accomplished.

Aaron Pass, *North American Whitetail*, 1983

People who want to sit by the fire on cold, wet days, when the wind blows strong and keen, are not cut out for duck-shooters.

Captain Adam H. Bogardus, *Field, Cover and Trap Shooting*, 1874

Rugged, raspy breathing betrayed his condition. Certainly he couldn't go much farther. But his eyes, small brown embers glowing in a vicious, scarred face – his eyes said something different. Clearly and distinctly, they burned with the intensity of single-purposed hatred. He took a step forward. He intended to kill us.

Art Carter, "I Might Die Today, *Conversations with a Cape Buffalo*," *Sporting Classics*, January 2002

Safaris are rather like snowflakes and women. No two are quite alike.

Peter Hathaway Capstick, *Safari, the Last Adventure*, 1984

Soak it up, go into it softly and thoughtfully, with love and understanding, for another year must pass before you can come this way again.

Gene Hill, *Wingshooter's Autumn*, 1986

Solitary hunting suits anyone who needs religion in his life but not congregations. The vaulting sky over a marsh is higher than the tallest cathedral. The marsh is grander than the greatest temple. The day dawns just for you and the ducks. It is a soul-wrenching experience – a lesson of mortality amid an infinitude of life. Solitary visits to a marsh transfigure mere duck hunters into the most profound embodiment of the sporting fraternity, the wildfowler.

George Reiger, *The Wildfowler's Quest*, 1989

Some men are mere hunters; others are turkey hunters.

Archibald Rutledge, *Those Were the Days*, 1955

Some people ask why men go hunting. They must be the kind of people who seldom get far from highways. What do they know of the tryst a hunting man keeps with the wind and the trees and the sky. Hunting? The means are greater than the end, and every deer hunter knows it.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1967

Hunting

Somehow, the sound of a shotgun tends to cheer one up.

Robert Ruark, *The Honey Badger*, 1965

Suppose the discomforts willingly endured by duck hunters were required of employees in an industrial establishment. There would be one place where a condition of strike would be constant and chronic.

Grover Cleveland, in *"Tallyho!"* compiled by Frances Rodman, *The New York Times Magazine*, 1958

Thanks we ought to give, we shooting folk, for those thrills of expectation; for the packed memories that leap to consciousness at the jingle of the dog bell; for the sparkle of the frost on the alder leaves.

John C. Phillips, *A Sportsman's Second Scrapbook*, 1933

That crafty old whitetail buck above the fireplace is a lot smarter and harder to come by than any Stone sheep or any tiger that ever lived.

Jack O'Connor, *The Art of Hunting Big Game in North America*, 1967

The aloneness of the hunter, and his thoughts of his hunting past, are the very genesis of primitive energy. He is always a young man, then, and making his most daring journeys. He will not think of middle age, and even the responsibility of his family will be dim as he pauses, every sense alert for the sound of what he plans to kill. This reality is the only time that he is fully alive. All the rest is the dreaming time.

Franklin Russell, *The Hunting Animal*, 1983

PASSAGES

The attractions of hunting, its complex allure and its simple charms, its intense sensual and imaginative associations, its deep attachment to the mythos of rural America, all are undoubtedly grounded in universal impulses, and accordingly, the pleasures of hunting have very long roots.

Ronald Yager, *Eighty Acres*, 1990

The best long-range shotgun load to have in one's boat for mallards is a fine retriever.

Nash Buckingham, "Duck Shooting," *Field & Stream*, January, 1947

The buffalo was given one more shot, in the brain, because buffalo don't die until they are killed once more.

Richard Harland, *African Epic*, 2005

The canvasback duck is the closest thing to royalty that we have in this country!

Keith C. Russell, *For Whom the Ducks Toll*, 1984

The deer hunter habitually watches the next bend; the duck hunter watches the skyline; the bird hunter watches the dog; the non-hunter does not watch.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

The duck hunter in his blind and the operatic singer on the stage, despite the disparity of their accoutrements, are doing the same thing. Each is reviving, in play, a drama formerly inherent in daily life. Both are, in the last analysis, esthetic exercises.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

Hunting

The duck hunter, probing the secrets of a new day, sees the night retreat, and nothing is so fine as daylight coming and night departing while wings overhead whisper the old and unsolved mystery of migration.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *The Bluebills Died at Dawn*, 1937

The essence of being a really good hunter is, paradoxically, to love the particular species of game you're after and have enormous respect and consideration for it.

Hugh Fosburgh, *One Man's Pleasure*, 1960

The essence of elephant hunting is discomfort in such lavish proportions that only the wealthy can afford it.

Beryl Markham, *West with the Night*, 1983

The first turkey that ever came to me on the ground did it a long time ago. I sat there with my hands shaking and my breath short and my heart hammering so hard I could not understand why he could not hear it. The last turkey that came to me last spring had exactly the same effect, and the day that this does not happen to me is the day that I quit.

Tom Kelly, *Tenth Legion*, 1973

The gauge of the man is an index to the ability of the man to prove his manhood . . . If it is a 12-gauge, he is so-so. If it is a 16, he is pretty good. If it's a 20 gauge, he is excellent, and if it's a .410 he is bragging.

Robert Ruark, *The Brave Quail*, 1951

The genuine hunter is a flaky intransigent who starts coming unglued at the first turning leaf. To him, autumn isn't just another time of year – it's the reason why the rest of the year exists.

John Madson, *John Madson, Out Home, 1979*

The hunter is not a spectator, he is a player . . . The game judges the hunter's worth purely on his skill. There is not subjective evaluation of achievement – there is no guesswork; you read your worth in your results.

Aaron Pass, *North American Whitetail, 1983*

The hunter is the alert man. But this itself – life as complete alertness – is the attitude in which the animal exists in the jungle.

Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting, 1972*

The hunter learns that reward comes from hard work; he learns from dealing with nature that man must have a deep respect for the great natural laws. He learns also, I think in a far higher degree than any form of standardized amateur athletics can give him, to play the game fairly.

Archibald Rutledge, *Hunting and Home in the Southern Heartland, edited by Jim Casada, 1992*

The hunter who accepts the sporting code of ethics keeps his commandments in the greatest solitude, with no witnesses or audience other than the sharp peaks of the mountain, the roaming cloud, the stern oak, the trembling juniper, and the passing animal.

Jose Ortega y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting, 1947*

Hunting

The most fundamental understanding of hunting's meaning – its essence – is arrived at by a human only at such times as this, when he is made to realize, in no uncertain terms, that in order for him to enjoy the pleasure of red meat again in this lifetime, a fairly large mammalian organism must be located, run down, put to death, and taken apart tout de suite. This is when one truly discovers what this most ancient of sports is all about, when the belly seizes the helm.

Thomas McIntyre, *from the short story "Across the Line," Seasons of the Hunter, 1985*

The next best thing to a good day's hunting is a bad day's hunting . . .

The Duke of Beauport, *Foreword to Sir John Buchanan-Jardine's Hounds of the World, 1937*

The person who can take delight in a sweet tune without wanting to learn it, in a beautiful woman without wanting to possess her, or in a magnificent head of game without wanting to shoot it, has not got a human heart.

Isak Dinesen (Karen Blixen), *Shadows on the Grass, 1961*

The presence of waterfowl meant the onset of change, one season's passage, another's arrival. The old men believed that ducks, like trout, served as testimony to the land's health, its vitality, life's continued endurance. The sounds of ducks on the wing; the message of renewal, revival, diversity. These predictable natural rhythms signaled the earth's trust, which seemed absolute and unconditional.

Harry Middleton, *The Earth is Enough, 1989*

PASSAGES

The primary value of pheasant hunting does not consist of its economic benefit; rather, the value of all lies in its potential to sustain organic realism in our experience of life and death. When we eat, something has died. When we hunt, we strive to retain some measure of connection with the earth whence we came and to which we inexorably return. To hunt is to embrace one's identity as a creature.

C. Stanley Mason, *Voices On The Wind*, 2002

The reason a man picks up a gun and enters the woods each fall will never be found in the number of birds bagged, or discovered in the number of points on a whitetail's rack. After all the words and arguments and psychoanalytic discussions have been made, the truth about hunting remains the same: it is not so much a matter of blood, as it is a matter of soul. And that, perhaps, is the only reason any man would choose to hunt alone; because it is in the sounds and silences of wild solitude where he can still touch that part of his soul that all men once had, but which most men long ago chose to abandon.

Jack Kulpa, *The Solitude Hunter*, 1983

The right to hunt is the most precious of all natural rights of man after the right of love.

Exclaimed by the modern Frenchman Toussel in "History of Live Pigeon Shooting," 1977

The roar of a wounded grizzly bear is nicely designed to try the courage of a man. It's half snarl and half bellow, and it's full of blood and fangs and murderous rage.

Ben East, *Brown Fury of the Mountains*, 1940

Hunting

The sad fact was that Mark Twain was a punk shot and simply couldn't hit the [Valley] quail. "Billy," he declared, "these little blue bats outa hell, or wherever they came from, are the fastest blankety-blank things on wings. Damn it, I missed again – there goes another."

H.L. Betten, *Upland Game Shooting*, 1940

The secret of the whitetail's success is simply his success at keeping secret.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

The tense second before a whopping covey explodes is the most nerve-wracking silence in history.

Havilah Babcock, *I Don't Want to Shoot an Elephant*, 1958

The true trophy hunter is a self-disciplined perfectionist seeking a single animal, the ancient patriarch well past his prime that is often an outcast from his own kind. If successful, he will enshrine the trophy in a place of honor. This is a more noble and fitting end than dying on some lost and lonely edge where the scavengers will pick his bones and his magnificent horns will weather away and be lost forever.

Elgin Gates, *Trophy Hunter in Asia*, 1988

The unskilled shooter, by crippling, often kills more birds than the good shot without knowing it. This is not something to laugh off, like poor card sense or a tin ear for music. If you are going to shoot, you have a sporting responsibility to shoot well – not to kill more but to kill more cleanly.

George Bird Evans, *The Upland Shooting Life*, 1971

The unusual aspect of the buff (Cape buffalo) is that, of the three really big dangerous species, he has no weak spots in his natural defenses. He has the eyesight of a cheetah, the hearing of a hypertensive elephant, and the smelling ability of a bird dog on a damp morning. In bush, he can do anything that you can, including running at four times your speed through cover so dense that it would make a mole claustrophobic.

Peter Hathaway Capstick, *Death in the Dark Continent*, 1983

The way of the hunter is, then, the way finally of passion, a passion that is every bit as old as those hills it carries us through and into our home in the game fields filled with real life.

Thomas McIntyre, *The Way of the Hunter*, 1988

The way to hunt is for as long as you live against as long as there is such and such an animal; just as the way to paint is as long as there is you and colors and canvas, and to write as long as you can live and there is pencil and paper or ink or any machine to do it with, or anything your care to write about, and you feel a fool, and you are a fool, to do it any other way.

Ernest Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 1935

The will to go to a place where there are pa'tridge comes upon a man suddenly, inexplicably. It may happen in the midst of dense traffic. It may happen in the thick of a business conference. Your proper hunting man may have been quite complacent with the world . . . And then, without a word of warning . . . soured on everything, especially hateful toward sweet old ladies and spaniel puppies . . . The remedy is walnut and steel, oiled leather, a baggy canvas jacket, and the stinging smell of nitro hanging in the hazel brush.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *Pa'tridge Fever – Cause and Cure*, 1941

Hunting

Then silence. The kind of silence that only exists after a hunter fires a weapon. Everything pauses, wind seems to calm, birds do not flutter, leaves forget to rustle. It lasts only a moment. A moment of utter stillness. A moment so frozen in briefness it almost does not exist. More sensed than known, it is a moment the hunter cannot turn away from. The bullet has been fired.

Mary Cabela, *Two Hearts in Tanzania*, 2010

There are days when you can't miss and days when you can't hit – and there's often a direct correlation to the number of witnesses to your shots.

M.R. James, *My Place*, 1992

There are two times that are best. One is when you're thirteen years old, walking home with your .22 and three rabbits and meeting the prettiest girl in the seventh grade. The other is the cruel winter evening when you're about done in and you see the kitchen window of home glowing across crusted snow, and you walk down a path of lamplight to where mother is waiting for supper.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

There is a passion for hunting; something deeply implanted in the human breast.

Charles Dickens, *Oliver Twist*, 1837

There is a poignancy, a tinge of sadness intermingled with the exhilaration of a successful hunt, that has the aura of sacredness. Confronting these feelings, the paradoxical counterpoise of life and death, loss in the midst of capture, is fundamental to how and why I am a hunter.

Mary Zeiss Stange, "Winston," *Game Country Magazine*, January/February 1990

PASSAGES

There is another answer to the question of why man hunts. He hunted before he had fire. If he was brave and skillful, his family ate. If not, they starved. He no longer hunts from necessity. He hunts because he is the end product of a thousand generations of hunters. He has inherited the love and enjoyment of it, as the artist has inherited the skills and desires of the primitive man who first drew pictures on the wall of a cave. When he no longer does it, he will be a far weaker man than he is today.

Ben East, *The Ben East Hunting Book*, 1974

There is much mystic nonsense written about hunting but it is something that is much older than religion. Some are hunters and some are not.

Ernest Hemingway, *An African Journal*, 1972

There is no feeling in the world like that of seeing ducks dropping out of a winter sky coming to decoys that you have made with your own hands. Sometimes I can't even shoot, the sight is so beautiful. Carving decoys lets a man understand in a very personal way that there is so much more to hunting ducks than shooting them.

Charles Frank, *Southern Living Magazine*, 1985

There is nothing, I should fancy, like elephant-hunting on foot to keep the blood in good order.

Frederick C. Selous, *A Hunter's Wanderings in Africa*, 1881

There's nowhere else they'd rather be than a dove field. It is probably the closest thing to heaven that a mortal wingshooter can experience on a trial run.

Spivey Guion, *Outdoor Life*, June, 1984

Hunting

This privilege of hunting is about as fine a heritage as we have, and it needs to be passed on unsullied from father to son.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

Those who hunt after the fashion of a philosopher, seeking to live for a while as a child of nature, will be blessed by the wind and the sun and will know a great peace nothing can upset or disturb.

Rutherford G. Montgomery, *High Country*, 1938

Through almost all of human existence, huntable land and huntable wildlife have preceded the hunter. They caused the hunter. But in the future this must be reversed. It is the hunter who must cause huntable land and wildlife, and a world worth being young in.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

Throughout almost all of man's existence, hunting has been one of his main occupations as well as one of his chief pleasures. Hunting has also had a considerable influence on man's physical evolution, and it has certainly shaped his character by the premium it places on quick thinking, endurance and courage.

The Epic of Man, *Time-Life, Inc.*, 1961

To a hunter, September is flush with promise, a moment on the cusp, the first wild card in a brand-new game. What will follow will be a few months of feeling more intensely alive than the rest of the year can seldom manage to give. The highs will be higher, the lowers will be lower, all of them moments of exquisite worth.

Michael McIntosh, *Traveler's Tales*, 1997

PASSAGES

To deny the instinct to hunt is to deny the instinct to exist.

Harry Selby, *People Magazine*, 1983

To go alone after elephants in thick country was tantamount to volunteering for battle, the odds by no means even, but enough to make one think, wonder and daydream.

Edison Marshall, *The Heart Of The Hunter*, 1956

To hunt deer where no stranger's boot track mars the loneliness of a wild and silent forest is nothing short of splendor.

Jerome B. Robinson, *The Deer Book*, 1980

To shoot a grouse is to achieve the impossible, to succeed at what the conscious mind places beyond the limits of physical ability. Here, in this fantastic challenge, lies the unique and compelling appeal of grouse hunting.

Harold F. Blaisdell, "Last Will & Testament," *Field & Stream*, December 1954

Tom went forward cautiously. He reached out and with the muzzle of the musket touched the tiny eye, fringed with pale lashes and brimming with almost human tears. It did not blink. The bull was dead at last. He wanted to shout his triumph, but instead he found himself overwhelmed by a strange, almost religious melancholy. Aboli came to stand beside him, and when their eyes met, Aboli nodded in understanding. "Yes," he said softly. "You have learned what it means to be a true hunter, for you have understood the beauty and the tragedy of what we do."

Wilbur Smith, *Monsoon*, 1999

Hunting

We have half the world against us as hunters so let us not be butchers. Let us not compete for the sake of competition. There is more to hunting than that. The hunt should be a cherished memory, a memory of good clean and honorable hunting, of good companionship and all the other countless aspects of life in the bush.

Tony Dyer, *from Appendix to Out in Africa by Andrew Holmberg, 2000*

We keep our memories in the same places we bury dogs and pals who are no longer with us. We keep these treasures in the vaults that hold the sights of geese pitching into a set of field decoys and quail buzzing out of a brushy corner by a split-rail fence. And when the time comes when it's easier to remember old times than to gather up new ones, it is to this place that we go, you and I, to watch for the last flight at sunset.

Steve Smith, *Picking Your Shots, 1986*

We must hunt so as to jeopardize no living species and in ways that shame neither hunter nor hunted.

John Madson, *John Madson: Out Home, 1979*

We've hunted together before and we've hunted together since, but the talk always takes on a softer, special tone whenever one of us starts a sentence with, "Remember that day in the rain . . ."

Gene Hill, *A Hunter's Fireside Book, 1972*

What better, indeed, can life offer than a duck shooter's happy dreams! Dreaming, we shoot our ducks over and over; good days and bad, they come back to us out of the joyous past.

Roland Clark, *Stray Shots, 1931*

What did a deer ever do to you? Nothing. I'm serious. Why do you have to go and kill them for? I can't explain it talking like this. Why should they die for you? Would you die for a deer? If it came to that.

Thomas McGuane, *Classic & New Essays on Sport*, 1990

What friends I have, what days I treasure most, what places that I think about and smile . . . they are because shotguns are. Without them I would have been empty. They have made my life full.

Gene Hill, *Hill Country – Our World Without Shotguns*, 1981

What he hit is history, What he missed is mystery.

Thomas Hood, *Impromptu. In reference to a guest's shooting stories*

What I miss most is the freedom in hunting. Hunting is one of the last genuine personal adventures of modern man. Just as game animals are the truest indicators of quality natural environment, so hunting is the truest indicator of quality natural freedom.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

When a hunter masters the disciplines of still-hunting, he senses the rhythms of the real world and becomes a part of them. The intensity of concentration required for this kind of hunting can produce a kind of psychedelic "high" of total awareness of the natural world around one. For many, it's an almost mystical experience, from which coming back to camp is a definite "crash." But, mystique aside, still-hunting is the deadliest of all big-buck hunting methods, a sine qua non of the trophy hunter, and an adventure all unto itself.

John H. Wooters, Jr., *Hunting Trophy Deer*, 1977

Hunting

When we eat, something has died. When we hunt, we strive to retain some measure of connection with the earth whence we came and to which we inexorably return. To hunt is to embrace one's identity as a creature.

C. Stanley Mason, *Voices on the Wind*, 2002

When you are fed up with the troublesome present, take your gun, whistle for your dog, and go out to the mountain.

Jose Oretga y Gasset, *Meditations on Hunting*, 1972

When you have shot one bird flying you have shot all birds flying, they are all different and they fly different ways but the sensation is the same and the last one is as good as the first.

Ernest Hemingway, *Fathers and Sons*, 1933

Whitetails aren't often hunted in real wilderness. They are often hunted in the tamest of farmlands. But even in a horse-weed patch at the edge of a cornfield, a deer lends special wildness to the land so that wherever the deer is found, it is truly a wild place. Deer carry wilderness entangled in their antlers; their hoofprints put the stamp of wildness on tame country.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

Who shall say that the hunting spirit, the desire to match one's wits against the wariest of wildfowl, is a lower motive than the softer attractions of a young May moon and a fair companion. At least a safer pursuit.

Aymer Maxwell, "A Fowler's Day in the Herbrides," *Field & Stream*, 1910

With autumn, when the world is brown and the season hesitates between smoky Indian summer and leaden November, there comes to proper hunting men an urge to scuff their feet among the curling sweet fern and poke a load or two at pa-tridge.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *Pa-tridge Fever – Cause and Cure*, 1941

With the peaceful beauty of a June trout stream, with the gentle silence of snow-clad northwoods in winter, with the warm brown fields of October, I have had much to do. But I have never been so caught up and carried away as when hunting ducks.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *The Last Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1985

With whatever proficiency in still-hunting any mortal ever reaches, with all the advantages of snow, ground, wind, and sun in his favor, many a deer will, in the very climax of triumphant assurance, slip through his fingers like the thread of a beautiful dream.

Theodore S. Van Dyke, *The Still-Hunter*, 1904

Women never look so well as when one comes in wet and dirty from hunting.

Robert Smith Surtees, *Mr. Sponge's Sporting Tour*, 1853

Yet I do not fish or hunt solely to kill and eat . . . Nor do I hunt to help manage local game populations. I hunt for a complex web of reasons; to learn about myself and the place I inhabit, to be nourished by the land and participate in its rhythms, to answer a call for which I have no name.

Tovar Cerulli, *Northern Woodlands Magazine*, 2006

Hunting

You will rarely find a dedicated quail shot who is not a pretty nice guy. He has to be a nice guy, because he is performing for the benefit of the dogs, himself and his companions, and all are expert in the detection of fraudulent behavior in the field.

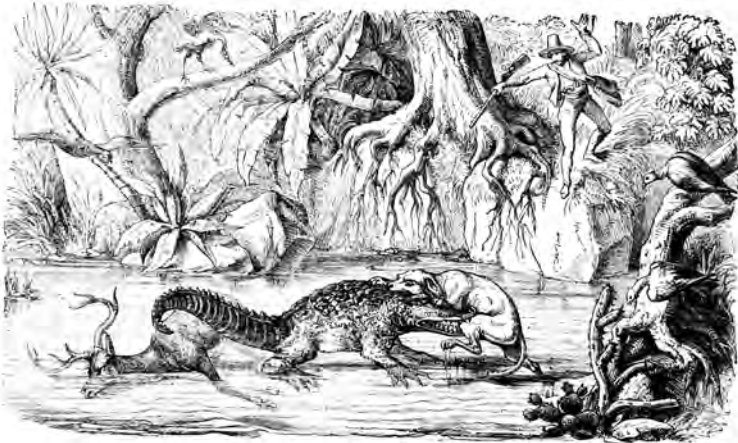
Robert Ruark, *“The Brave Quail,”* *Field & Stream*, 1951

You’ll know you’re in goat country when it takes both arms and both legs to climb and you can spit down on sheep.

Patrick Stephens, *“A Rocky Mountain High,”* *Game Country*, 1990

Your heart grows tired of waiting, and suddenly – but only sportsmen will understand me – suddenly in the deep stillness there comes a special kind of whirr and swish, you hear the measured stroke of swift wings – and the woodcock, with his long beak drooping gracefully down, comes swimming out from a dark birch-tree to meet your fire.

Ivan Turgenev, *A Sportsman’s Notebook*, 1850





Nature



Nature

A knowing man could live well in the forest.

Louis L'Amour, *Down the Long Hills*, 1968

A river is like a man's life. It starts as a tiny, noisy thing, full of unchanneled strength and energy, a thing of unending movement. As it grows older and stronger it slows down a bit and begins to do important things, using its strength to dig canyons and fertilize floodplains with its silt. A few rivers, like a few men, do great things, carving monuments that are a wonder to the world. And also like some men, a few rivers create sorrow and disaster, bursting out of their channels with vicious strength to flood the fragile dwellings of men. But most rivers, like most men, pass quickly and are forgotten, having barely scratched the surface in their brief moment of time.

Steve Raymond, *The Year of the Angler*, 1983

Above came a swift whisper of wings, and as the loons saw us they called wildly in alarm, and took their laughing with them into the gathering dusk. Then came the answers we had been waiting for, and the shores echoed and re-echoed until they seemed to throb with the music. This was the symbol of the lake country, the sound that more than any other typifies the rocks and waters and forests of the wilderness.

Sigurd Olson, *Listening Point*, 1958

Adoration is as alien to wild nature as blasphemy. Nature transcends love, goodness, malevolence or evil. It is simply a primordial force – shining, aloof and brooding, a vast sweep of power too awful to be imbued with human emotions, virtues or mischiefs. It is as presumptuous to adore nature as it is to kick a redwood.

John Madson, *Stories From Under the Sky*, 1998

Africa is mystic; it is wild, it is a sweltering inferno; it is a photographer's paradise, a hunter's Valhalla, an escapist's Utopia. It is what you will, and it withstands all interpretations. It is the last vestige of a dead world or the cradle of a shiny new one. To a lot of people, as to myself, it is just "home." It is all these things but one thing – it is never dull.

Beryl Markham, *West With The Night*, 1942

All but beauty will pass – beauty will never die. No, not even when the earth and the sun have died will beauty perish. It will live on in the stars.

William Robinson Leigh, *Frontiers of Enchantment*, 1940

And how many little boys will never be startled by the explosion of their first covey of quail; or puzzled by all the other mysterious and wonderful things a little boy encounters in the woods. And the sad part is that they won't even know what they are missing.

Eddie Finlay, *Down the Creek*, 1967

Animals have these advantages over man: they never hear the clock strike, they die without any idea of death, they have no theologians to instruct them, their last moments are not disturbed by unwelcome and unpleasant ceremonies, their funerals cost them nothing, and no one starts lawsuits over their wills.

Voltaire (1694-1778)

Nature

Back of all the chaos which we call life, beyond the realms of unmeasurable and unfathomable space, in which millions of celestial bodies move with unflinching accuracy, there is some definite and perfect plan. You may call it what you will – coincidence – nature – God. Neither your opinion nor mine can alter a single sequence of it. It is inexorable. When its fitful shadow hovers malignantly close, we shudder at its harshness; and yet it is always just.

Burton L. Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1972

But for a little while, this is the place for us – a good place, too – a place of good omen, a place of beginning things – and of ending things I never thought would end.

Beryl Markham, *West with the Night*, 1942

But the soul of Africa, its integrity, the slow inexorable pulse of its life, is its own and of such singular rhythm that no outsider, unless steeped from childhood in its endless, even beat, can ever hope to experience it, except only as a bystander might experience a Masai war dance knowing nothing of its music nor the meaning of its steps.

Beryl Markham, *West With the Night*, 1942

But the truth, to my way of seeing it, is that those who love the bits and pieces of being there – the sweetness of a singing lark, the way one whitetail can suddenly fill up a clearing, the fearsomeness of a sudden storm and the almost unbelievable sense of relief when we've gotten out of a very sticky situation – have to have a sense of the magic of it all, a belief in the intangible and unknowable, and no small degree of unquestioning wonder.

Gene Hill, *A Listening Walk and Other Stories*, 1985

But there are no words that can tell the hidden spirit of the wilderness, that can reveal its mystery, its melancholy and its charm. There is delight in the hardy life of the open, in long rides rifle in hand, in the thrill of the fight with dangerous game. Apart from this, yet mingled with it, is the strong attraction of the silent places, of the large tropic moons, and the splendor of the new stars; where the wanderer sees the awful glory of sunrise and sunset in the wide waste spaces of the earth, unworn of man, and changed only by the slow change of the ages through time everlasting.

Theodore Roosevelt, *African Game Trails*, 1910

Change and Evolution! They are Nature's first laws; nothing may stagnate and still endure; but let us see to it that the changes are healthy, that the evolution proceeds on the right lines, that in our artificial development we do not so try to improve upon Nature as to mar her fair works.

Lt. Col. J. Stevenson-Hamilton, *The Low-Veld: Its Wild Life and its People*, 1929

Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The wind will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves.

Edwin Way Teale, *The Wilderness World of John Muir*, 1954

Death and life are looked on as but transformations; the myriad creation is all of a kind; there is a kinship through all.

Huai Nan Tzu, *2nd Century B.C., Of All Things Most Yielding*, 1972

Nature

Each breath we take contains hundreds of thousands of the inert, pervasive argon atoms that were actually breathed in his lifetime by the Buddha, and indeed contains parts of the snorts, sighs, bellows, shrieks of all creatures that ever existed, or will ever exist. These atoms flow backward and forward in such useful but artificial constructs as time and space, in the same universal rhythms, universal breath, as the tides and stars, joining both the living and the dead in that energy which animates the universe. What is changeless and immortal is not individual body mind, but rather that Mind which is shared with all of existence, that stillness, that incipience which never ceases because it never becomes but simply IS.

Carl Sagan, *Broca's Brain*, 1979

Elephants . . . have an average intelligence comparable to our own. Of course they are less agile and physically less adaptable than ourselves – Nature having developed their bodies in one direction and their brains in another, while human beings, on the other hand, drew from Mr. Darwin's lottery of evolution both the winning ticket and the stub to match it. This, I suppose, is why we are so wonderful and can make movies and electric razors and wireless sets – and guns with which to shoot the elephant, the hare, clay pigeons, and each other.

Beryl Markham, *West With the Night*, 1942

Every countryside proclaims the fact that we have, today, less control in the field of conservation than in any other contact with surrounding nature. We patrol the air and the ether, but we do not keep filth out of our creeks and rivers. We stand guard over works of art, but species representing the work of eons are stolen from under our noses.

Aldo Leopold, *Game Management*, 1933

PASSAGES

Every living thing is a survivor on a kind of extended emergency bivouac.

Annie Dillard, *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, 1974

Everybody knows that the autumn landscape in the northwoods is the land, plus a red maple, plus a ruffed grouse. In terms of conventional physics, the grouse represents only a millionth of either the mass or the energy of an acre. Yet, subtract the grouse and the whole thing is dead.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and cheer and give strength to body and soul alike.

John Muir, *John of the Mountains*, 1938

Except for a chilling rustle of leaves, the woods' silence runs unbroken. A white sky sharply defines dark, twisted trunks just below the ridge, as half asleep I wait. Unnoticed daylight has waned to dusk. Like a small pawn gone astray, I remain. Carefully I watch until stars prick the sky. Regretful and empty-handed I head home, wondering if someone is watching.

Katherine E. Shield, *the age 14, writing about a winter deer hunt with her father in a school English paper.*

Familiarity with nature never breeds contempt to a contemplative mind and heart. The more one learns, the more he expects surprises, and the more he develops awareness of the inscrutable.

Archibald Rutledge, *The Woods and Wild Things I Remember*, 1970

Nature

First they will notice that their steps are a little softer. Then they will begin to see some things they hadn't noticed before. Sounds will identify themselves more quickly. They will sense a shifting wind and feel a darkening of the clouded sun. They are becoming part of the woods, not just men walking through it. What they were yesterday is nothing; what they were a thousand years ago is everything.

Gene Hill, *A Listening Walk*, 1985

For the animal shall not be measured by man. In a world older and more complete than ours they move finished and complete, gifted with extensions of the senses we have lost or never attained, living by voices we shall never hear. They are brethren, they are not underlings; they are other nations, caught with ourselves in the net of life and time, fellow prisoners of the splendour and travail of the earth.

George Calef, *Caribou and the Barren Land*, 1981

Forever old and forever new, a sunrise is always and never the same.

Havilah Babcock, *The Best of Babcock*, 1974

God started his show a good many million years before he had any men for an audience – a sad waste of both actors and music . . . And it is just barely possible that God himself likes to hear birds sing and see flowers grow.

Aldo Leopold, as cited by *Marybeth Lorbiecki* in *A Fierce Green Fire*, 1996

Here is your country – do not let anyone take it or its glory away from you. Do not let selfish men or greedy interests skim your country of its beauty, its riches or its romance. The world and the future and your very children shall judge you accordingly as you deal with this sacred trust.

Theodore Roosevelt, 1913

Hotels perched high up amongst the Swiss Alps, railways through the Rocky Mountains, or steamboats on the Zambesi are all very good and useful things, no doubt, but they destroy the poetry of their surroundings.

Frederick Courteney Selous, *Sport and Travel*, 1900

How does a man save a special piece of land, a stretch of landscape still touched by wildness? By becoming part of it, knowing it, letting it get under his skin, completely.

Harry Middleton, *On the Spine of Time*, 1991

I cannot explain why a red rivulet is not a brook. Neither can I, by logical deduction, prove that a thicket without the potential roar of a quail covey is only a thorny place. Yet every outdoorsman knows that this is true. That wildlife is merely something to shoot at or to look at is the grossest of fallacies. It often represents the difference between rich country and mere land.

Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac*, 1949

I climb K'un-llun, and look in all directions; my heart rises all a-flutter, I am agitated and distraught. Dusk is coming, but I am too sad to think of return. Of the far shore only are my thoughts; I lie awake and yearn.

Unknown Chinese author, circa 400 B.C.

Nature

I come to my solitary woodland walk as the homesick go home . . . I get away a mile or two from the town into the stillness and solitude of nature with rocks, trees, weeds, snow about me . . . It is as if I always met in those places some grand, serene, immortal, infinitely encouraging, though invisible, companion, and walked with him.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

I don't know if you've ever been lucky enough to smell a salt mud marsh on a fresh summer's day, but this here Chanel No. 5 I read about can't smell near as good as just plain channel with the wind blowing off the marshes, fetching the smell of mud with a little bit of cedars and cypress that line a sound mixed up in sun and grass and plain old mud full of sandfiddler holes, oyster beds, and rotting clams. I never thought too much about a marsh, but it's really the richest piece of real estate in the world.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

I don't know why a spaniel sheds hair on the carpet in the middle of winter when logic says he needs all the hair he can get at that time of year. I don't know what we would do if God didn't make the sky, whether it would just be all white or whether there would be any world at all. In these and a thousand other things I don't know, I begin to evolve past comprehension to admiration, thence to humility. And in this evolution another finger relaxes in modern man's white-knuckle grip on the world.

Stanley Mason, *Voices on the Wind*, 2003

I have a home all to myself; it is nature.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, January 3, 1853

PASSAGES

I have never yet seen a river that I could not love. Moving water, even in a pipeline or a flume, has a fascinating vitality. It has power and grace and associations. It has a thousand colors and a thousand shapes, yet it follows laws so definite that the tiniest streamlet is an exact replica of a great river.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *A River Never Sleeps*, 1946

I have the impression that the American sportsman is puzzled; he doesn't understand what is happening to him. Bigger and better gadgets are good for industry, so why not for outdoor recreation? It has not dawned on him that outdoor recreations are essentially primitive, atavistic; that their value is a contrast-value; that excessive mechanization destroys contrast by moving the factory to the woods or to the marsh.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

I love Nature partly because she is not man, but a retreat from him.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, 1853

I love this decaying autumn. Yellow leaves tumble in wind and rain, spots of white sway over rivers and lakes. You cannot get to those lakes and rivers; it is hard labor to transplant trees. Silently a pair of wild ducks come flying; all this becomes a painting.

Su Tung-Po, 1037-1101 A.D. *Published in Of All Things Most Yielding*, 1975

I never go to rivers to kill hecatombs of trout or, actually, any trout; I go to unkill parts of myself that otherwise might die.

Nick Lyons, *Fishing Widows*, 1974

Nature

I put the geese and ducks on the ice next to the lone king salmon and it all looked pretty good. I left the next morning because you couldn't stay in a place like that by yourself for more than a day or two. It was just too perfect and clean and lovely. You could lose your soul if you stayed too long.

Ron Rau, *Tales from Gray's*, 1986

I started out as a boy bent over a spring. Then I climbed mountains. I became a conservationist. Then I saw what we were all doing, and I wanted to stop us from doing worse. Now I want to restore what once was, not for an old man's memories, but for a baby's smile.

David Bower, *Let the Mountains Talk, Let the Rivers Run*, 1995

If man had originally inhabited a world as blankly uniform as a high rise housing development, as featureless as a parking lot, as destitute of life as an automated factory, it is doubtful he would have had a sufficiently varied sensory experience to retain images, mold language or acquire ideas.

Lewis Mumford, *Technics and Human Development*, 1967

In a sense, every sportsman has pioneer blood in him, and the frontiers are always beckoning and calling him on to adventure. Take your pharmacy away, and give me a morning in the mountains.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

PASSAGES

In all of modern America, there is no more lost, plaintive, old-time sound than the booming of the native prairie chicken. And when it is gone, it shall be gone forever. All our television will not bring it back, and none of our spacecraft can take us to where it vanished. It is the last fading voice of the prairie wilderness, echoing after the lost clouds of curlews and plovers, crying farewell.

John Madson, *Where the Sky Began*, 1982

In all this wide lovely country, in all these diverse climates, birds and animals live and move, find their own food, escape their enemies, love briefly and violently like the deer or long and tenderly like the quail, guard and cherish their young, and finally die, usually horribly, for Nature, lovely though she is, has no love for the awkward, the slow, the old and the weak.

Jack O'Connor, *Outdoor Life*, 1960

It appears to be a law that you cannot have a deep sympathy with both man and nature. Those qualities which bring you near to the one, estrange you from the other.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, 1853

It is warm behind the driftwood now, for the wind has gone with the geese. So would I – if I were the wind.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

It's a curious sensation when nature looks back.

William Least Heat Moon, *Blue Highways*, 1982

Like music and art, love of nature is a common language that can transcend political or social boundaries.

President Jimmy Carter, *An Outdoor Journal*, 1988

Nature

Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

Chief Seattle, *of the Puget Sound tribes, 1853*

Man is a complex being. He makes deserts bloom and oceans die.

Unknown author

Mother Nature is a cruel, calculating old bitch who will kill you given half the chance.

Don Zaidle, *American Man-Killers, 1997*

My home is the prairie. Mine is a land where the sky comes down all around and the hills are far, far beyond . . . This is a country of a thousand ballads, but the best songs are sung by prairie chickens with the first soft winds of spring, by meadowlarks when fields are green with wheat and barley, or by wild geese honking their farewells in October.

H. Albert Hochbaum, *Wings Over the Prairie, 1994*

My love affair with nature is so deep that I am not satisfied with being a mere onlooker, or nature tourist. I crave a more real and meaningful relationship. The spicy teas and tasty delicacies I prepare from wild ingredients are the bread and wine in which I have communion and fellowship with nature, and with the Author of that nature.

Euell Gibbons, *Stalking the Healthful Herbs, 1966*

Nature conceals her mystery by means of her essential grandeur, not by her cunning.

Albert Einstein, *1920*

PASSAGES

Nature does not care whether the hunter slay the beast or the beast the hunter. She will make good compost of them both, and her ends are prospered whichever succeeds. John Burroughs, cited in

John Burroughs, *An American Naturalist* by Edward J. Renehan, Jr., 1992

Nature gives to every time and season a beauty of its own.

Charles Dickens, *Great Expectations*, 1860

Nature is but another name for health, and the seasons are but different states of health.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, August 23, 1853

Nature is not so poor as to possess one of anything.

John Muir, *Studies in the Sierra*, 1950

No need this night for the pills and nostrums with which tired businessmen are wont to regale themselves. Here in the profound silence of the mountains, Nature prescribes her own peerless treatment. Exercise in the keen air brings lusty appetites, and long hours of deep sleep have already started to recharge the rundown human batteries. Even before the northern lights come to illuminate the heavens like distant colored searchlights, the camp is quiet. Tomorrow – always a day of promise – the trail leads upward into the clouds; into the domain of the snow-white mountain sheep.

Frank Dufresne, *Alaska's Animals & Fishes*, 1946

Nature

Now, being in Africa, I was hungry for more of it, the changes of the seasons, the rains with no need to travel, the discomforts that you paid to make it real, the names of the trees, of the small animals, and all the birds, to know the language and have time to be in it and to move slowly. I had loved country all my life; the country was always better than the people. I could only care about people a very few at a time.

Ernest Hemingway, *Green Hills of Africa*, 1935

Of all natural sounds ever heard upon this earth the swelling clangor of a wild goose flock has more of the gypsy power to swell the heart and the wing man's imagination than any other. It is music as old and sad as autumn, and as young and light and martial as spring – this crying from the sky of forgotten things – this diminishing voice of a fading world once keen and salty with the sharp flavor of adventure. It is wishful and bold. Perhaps this sound has a deeper significance than we remember, perhaps it was this same high, free trumpeting across the sky that first stirred man's imagination and led him out upon the dim, bitter, bloody path to immortality.

Col. Harold P. Sheldon, *Tranquility*, 1936

On our right the tawny plain stretched away, a bowl of sunlight, to the Tana River and beyond; you felt that you could walk straight on across it to the rim of the world.

Elsbeth Huxley, *The Flame Trees of Thika*, 1962

PASSAGES

One day in May when bees went singing by and, in the distance, ruffed grouse drummed, I stood enraptured by the vastness of the cloudless sky, the music of a trout stream running swiftly over stones, and all the fragrance of the Adirondack spring.

Dana Lamb, *Beneath the Rising Mist*, 1979

One of my keenest joys is derived from taking a bright and likeable young boy into the woods. I do not know whether it is the lingering effect of those glorious days with Dad which have softened my spirit, or whether I have, happily, not outgrown my boyish characteristics.

Burton Spiller, *Grouse Feathers*, 1935

Picture show white man crazy. Cut down trees. Make big teepee. Plow hill. Water wash. Wind blow soil. Grass gone. Windows gone. Whole place gone. Buck gone. Squaw gone. Papoose too. No chuck-away. No pigs, no corn. No plow. No hay. No pony. Indian no plow land. Great Spirit make grass. Keep grass. Buffalo eat grass. Indian eat buffalo. Hide make teepee; make moccasin. Indian no make terrace. All time eat. No hunt job. No hitchhike. No ask relief. No shoot pig. No build dam. No give damn. Indian waste nothing. Indian not work. White man crazy.

Prize-winning photo caption written by a Native American, The Tennessee Conservationist, 1962

Pythons are also sluggish and disinclined to get out of your way. But they'll usually bark or growl at you if they see you coming directly toward them. The bark is not like a dog's, but I don't know how otherwise to describe it.

John Taylor, *Pondoro, Last of the Ivory Hunters*, 1955

Nature

Rivers move freely in mind and memory, rivers that I have known and many that I have only heard of, read about, visited through the books and the stories of other anglers. I have generously stirred all these rivers into my imagination. Even if I never experience any of them first hand, if I never fish the wild rivers of Alaska or Idaho, New Zealand or Labrador, it is important that such rivers, such wild country, exists. There is solace even in the dream of such places, such water, such fish. There is more than a touch of magic in wildness: just the possibility of it nourishes the spirit.

Harry Middleton, *Rivers of Memory*, 1993

Suddenly, in the soft twilight stillness, he took alarm. A great roaring sounded in the distance. All the bears in the scrub, meeting at the river, might make such a roaring. It was the wind.

Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, *The Yearling*, 1938

The cities are for money but the high-up hills are purely for the soul.

Louis L'Amour, *Galloway*, 1970

The closer one lives to nature, the less he is affected by the chances and changes of life.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937



PASSAGES

The distance between mountain boulder and the seashore's grain of sand is but a fleck of time. There is an urgent need for the sensible protection and management of wilderness as well as wildness, all manner of diverse habitats taken as a whole rather than isolated bits of nature that we fence off as though they are murals in some stunning gallery of art, places we make into solemn and solitary symbols of the earth's wild past.

Harry Middleton, *On The Spine of Time*, 1991

The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth.

Chief Seattle, *19th-century report to Congress*

The end of the human race will be that it will eventually die of civilization.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *quoted by Edmund Ware Smith, The One-Eyed Poacher and the Maine Woods*, 1955

The environment is everything that isn't me.

Albert Einstein, *What I Believe*, 1930

The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant: "What good is it?"

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

The life of the chase, whether of fish or game, and the wilder shores where our quarry lives require of us a rhythm, a consciousness, a concentration of energies so removed from our everyday lives as to suggest we are different people in the outdoors, though we are not. What we call recreation gives us a fuller not different life, bringing us parts of ourselves too often neglected or forgotten, re-creating the whole person we were born to be.

Nick Lyons, *Field & Stream*, 1994

Nature

The man-ape arouses in you a psychological reaction no other animal produces. It is impossible to escape a creepy suspicion that here is a creation higher than the brutes; a survivor, by some mad trick of nature, from the dim dawn of history – somewhere back beyond the glacial age. He seems a Neanderthal man – a remote kinsman, whom you instinctively hesitate to slay because it would seem too much like murder.

William R. Leigh, *Frontiers of Enchantment*, 1938

The morning was one of God's own, done by hand, just to show what He could do.

Agnes Herbert, *Two Dianas in Somaliland*, 1908

The only solid piece of scientific truth about which I feel totally confident is that we are profoundly ignorant about nature . . .

Lewis Thomas, *The Medus and the Snail*, 1979

The sun was trembling now on the edge of the ridge. It was alive, almost fluid and pulsating, and as I watched it sink I thought that I could feel the earth turning from it, actually feel its rotation. Over all was the silence of the wilderness, that sense of oneness which comes only where there are no distracting sights or sounds, when we listen with inward ears and see with inward eyes, when we feel and are aware with our entire being rather than our senses. I thought as I sat there of the ancient admonition, "Be still and know that I am God," and knew that without stillness there can be no knowing, without divorcement from outside influences man cannot know what the spirit means.

Sigurd F. Olson, *The Singing Wilderness*, 1956

PASSAGES

The thing about wild animals is that they are uncorrupted. They do no disillusion, switch allegiance. They are a respite from our deliberations and machinations. They reach back a long way, two million years or more, and even if we were unaware of their presence, it would have no effect on them. No bias. They would simply get on with it. Because they are unadulterated life. Wild animals are a glimpse, caught in a brief lightning flash, of another life, a connection of something pure that most of us are unaware of.

Keith Meadows, *Sometimes When It Rains*, 2000

The true sites for human dwellings are unimproved.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, May 25, 1851

The voice of nature is always encouraging.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

The way I look at it, security and happiness are one and the same thing. On a stormy night when the trees thrash in the high winds that claw at the eaves, I sit listening to the murmuring of the fire in the big stove, at peace with myself and the world. Give me food to keep me strong, wood to keep me warm, good friends to talk to me, fine books to read, and I have all I need.

John J. Rowlands, *Cache Lake Country*, 1947

The white man's dead forget the country of their birth when they go to walk among the stars. Our dead never forget this beautiful earth, for it is the mother of the red man. We are part of the earth, and it is part of us.

Chief Seattle, *in a speech to government officials*, December, 1853

Nature

The whites too shall pass – sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed and you will one night suffocate in your own waste.

Chief Seattle, *in a letter to President Franklin Pierce, 1855*

The woods reward the humble, those who accede to the rhythms of nature rather than impose upon it the loud step and hurried cadence of the workaday world.

Wayne van Zwoll, *The Complete Book of the .22, 2004*

The world is a great book of which those who never leave home have read but one page.

Sir Richard Burton, *from Hunting the Dangerous Game of Africa by John Kingsley-Heath, 1998*

Then he saw the bear. It did not emerge, appear; it was just there, immobile, fixed in the green and windless noon's hot dappling, not as big as he had dreamed it but big as he had expected, bigger, dimensionless against the dappled obscurity, looking at him. Then it moved. It crossed the glade without haste, walking for an instant into the sun's full glare and out of it, and stopped again and looked back at him across one shoulder. Then it was gone. It didn't walk into the woods. It faded, sank back into the wilderness without motion as he had watched a fish, a huge old bass, sink back into the dark depths of its pool and vanish without even any movement of its fins.

William Faulkner, *The Bear, 1946*

PASSAGES

There are few moments more peaceful than the sweet, sad hour between sunshine and coyote songs, when stillness drifts across the prairie like a gathering shadow.

Michael McIntosh, *Traveler's Tales*, 1997

There are no friendships like those that are made under canvas and in the open field.

Horace Kephart, *Camping and Woodcraft*, 1917

There is a cleanliness, a breadth and sweep and strength in the north, a purifying realization that one is living close to the fundamental elements of life. Yes, the north has a spell.

Eric Severeid, *Canoeing With the Cree*, 1935

There is a curious, almost inaudible sound which lingers adjacent to all great rivers, for none however deep or slow shall be soundless.

Edmund Ware Smith, *A Tomato Can Chronicle*, 1937

There is much confusion between land and country. Land is the place where corn, gullies and mortgages grow. Country is the personality of the land, the collective harmony of its soil, life and weather.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

There's a time when a boy can lay his belly on the ground and feel the heartbeats of the earth coming up to him through the grass roots . . . That's his time to smell the par-fume of the wild flowers, to hear the wind singing wild in his ears, to hurt with the want of knowing what's on the yonder side of the next ridge. The Almighty, he never meant for a boy to miss them things when that time comes.

Fred Gipson, *Hound-Dog Man*, 1947

Nature

They came to an old clearing, with its log cabin long since a mere heap of brown mold under a wild tangle of raspberry vines, but with a neglected plot of flowers growing beside the worn stone slab that had been the doorstep of this primitive home – a vernal monument to some pioneer mistress long since forgotten and lost from the dusty records of mankind, but still remembered for her love of beauty by her lilies in this quiet, remote place.

Col. Harold P. Sheldon, *Tranquility*, 1936

Time is probably more generous and healing to an angler than to any other individual. The wind, the sun, the open, the colors and smells, the loneliness of the sea or the solitude of the stream work some kind of magic.

Zane Grey, *The Giant of the South Seas*, 1930

To glimpse one's own true nature is a kind of homecoming, to a place East of the Sun, West of the Moon – the homegoing that needs no home, like that waterfall on the upper Suli Gad that turns to mist before touching the earth and rises once again in the sky.

Peter Matthiessen, *The Snow Leopard*, 1978

To hunt means to have the land around you like clothing. To engage in a wordless dialogue with it, one so absorbing that you cease to talk with your human companions. It means to release yourself from rational images of what something "means" and to be concerned only that it "is." And then to recognize that things exist insofar as they can be related to other things. These relationships – fresh drops of moisture on top of rocks at a river crossing and a raven's distant voice – become patterns. The patterns are always in motion.

Barry Lopez, *Arctic Dreams*, 1986

To pollute a spring or a river, to exterminate a bird or beast, should be treated as moral offenses and as social crimes; while all who profess religion, or sincerely believe in the Deity, should, one would have thought, have placed this among the first of their forbidden sins, since to deface or destroy that which has been brought into existence for the use and enjoyment, the education and elevation of the human race, is a direct denial of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator, about which they so loudly and persistently prate and preach.

Alfred Russell Wallace, *the father of the theory of biogeography and co-discoverer, with Charles Darwin, of the principles of natural selection, circa 1875*

To the little child is given the key of happiness, and the key, likewise, of wisdom. He trails his fingers in cool water, and it is enough to make him laugh and sing with the gladness of living. He breathes the spring wind, or watches snowflakes falling, or stares at the patterned lichen on a stone, and his heart is set singing with the glory and the wonder of the world.

Alan Devoe, *Down to Earth, 1940*

Too often have I turned to the earth for some kind of dramatic statement. What is here is here and yet we search for the eccentric, the bizarre. We dissect and analyze, probe and examine, slide the earth under a microscope's lens, hoping to find a code for miracles. Meanwhile, the sun shines and rivers rush and trout rise, and every hour of every day there is a real magic show of light and shadow and the dance of time. Nature is a grand balancing act, life in pursuit of a homeostasis it never quite achieves because its energy is always probing it further on, tipping the balance, first one way, then the other.

Harry Middleton, *On the Spine of Time, 1991*

Nature

Towards August and September, any man who has once been in the woods will begin to feel stirring within him a restless craving for the forest – an intense desire to escape from civilization, a yearning to kick off his boots, and with them all the restraints, social and material, of ordinary life, and to revel once again in the luxury of moccasins, loose garments, absolute freedom of mind and body, and a complete escape from all the petty moral bondages and physical bandages of society.

The Earl of Dunraven, *Canadian Nights*, 1964

We can't grasp the thought that money is entitlement to do something awful. Financial ability does not carry certification that it's a good idea. Oceans and bays and wetlands – what we call nature – belong to all of us, not just to those who can afford a very expensive window to look through at what is left after the builders saw through.

Editorial in the Philadelphia Daily News, 1988

We cannot measure nature by our own lifetimes, although we can use our lifetimes to celebrate the astonishing life its changing holds.

Ruth Rudner, “Yellowstone a Year Later,” *Wall Street Journal*, 1989

We do not go into the woods to rough it; we go to smooth it. We get it rough enough at home.

Nessmuk (George Washington Sears), as quoted in *Ann and Myron Sutton's The Appalachian Trail*, 1967

PASSAGES

Weather truly is the director of nature's play, not only each spring but also through the endless course of evolution. Plant and animal populations are restrengthened year after year – indeed, millennium after millennium – by spring storms and other natural forces. Only the strong earn roles on summer's stage; only they may set life in motion toward generations to come.

Richard E. Olendorff, *Golden Eagle Country*, 1975

What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.

Chief Seattle, *of the Puget Sound tribes*, 1853

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world and am free.

Wendell Berry, *Openings*, 1968

When he stands tall like a man, he looks very dangerous and fierce, but he does so only to see better.

Andy Russell, *Grizzly Country*, 1972

When I hear of the destruction of a species, I feel just as if all the works of some great writer just perished.

Theodore Roosevelt, 1899

Nature

When I'm fishing and hunting with the right attitude, I reenter the woods and rivers with a moment-by-moment sense of the glories of creation, of the natural world as a living fabric of existence, so that I'm both young again but also 70,000 years old.

Jim Harrison, *Field & Stream*, February, 2003

When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.

John Muir, *My First Summer in Sierra*, 1911

When you see a bear, the spot where you see it becomes instantly different from every place else you've ever seen. Bears make you pay attention. They keep the mountains from turning into a blur. A woods with a bear in it is real to a man walking through it in a way that a woods with no bear is not.

Ian Frazier, *Points to Ponder*, *Reader's Digest*, 1988

When? I don't know. But it seems like a sure thing when evening falls on a thousand brown hills and over them blows a mystery, the work of which I can clearly see, even if I cannot quite behold its face. It tells a story that moves forward in roundabout ways, carried on the breeze toward a blessed conclusion. I hear the story and am beckoned to roam its wild pages, though I do not understand all the words. So I go on walking, hunting, listening.

C. Stanley Mason, *Voices in the Wind*, 2002

Whoever even once in his life has caught a perch or seen thrushes migrate in the autumn, when on clear, cool days they sweep in flocks over the village, will never really be a townsman and to the day of his death will have a longing for the open.

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov, *Gooseberries*, 1903

Wild creatures appear to have the fortunate power suddenly to recover their poise, swiftly to regain their equanimity, without delay to shake off the fears that beset them. And I profoundly envy them this virtue. What's past with them is past – immediately, definitely. I wish I were like them in this – and that all of us were.

Archibald Rutledge, *The Woods and Wild Things I Remember*, 1970

Winter is coming – soon every lake will be sealed in ice. Overhead, bluebills speed through the dusk toward an end that cannot be known; a part of me flies away with them as they disappear in the dark. I look up to thank my lucky star, aware that every star is providential, their ancient light a silent benediction for those of us who keep these stolen hours.

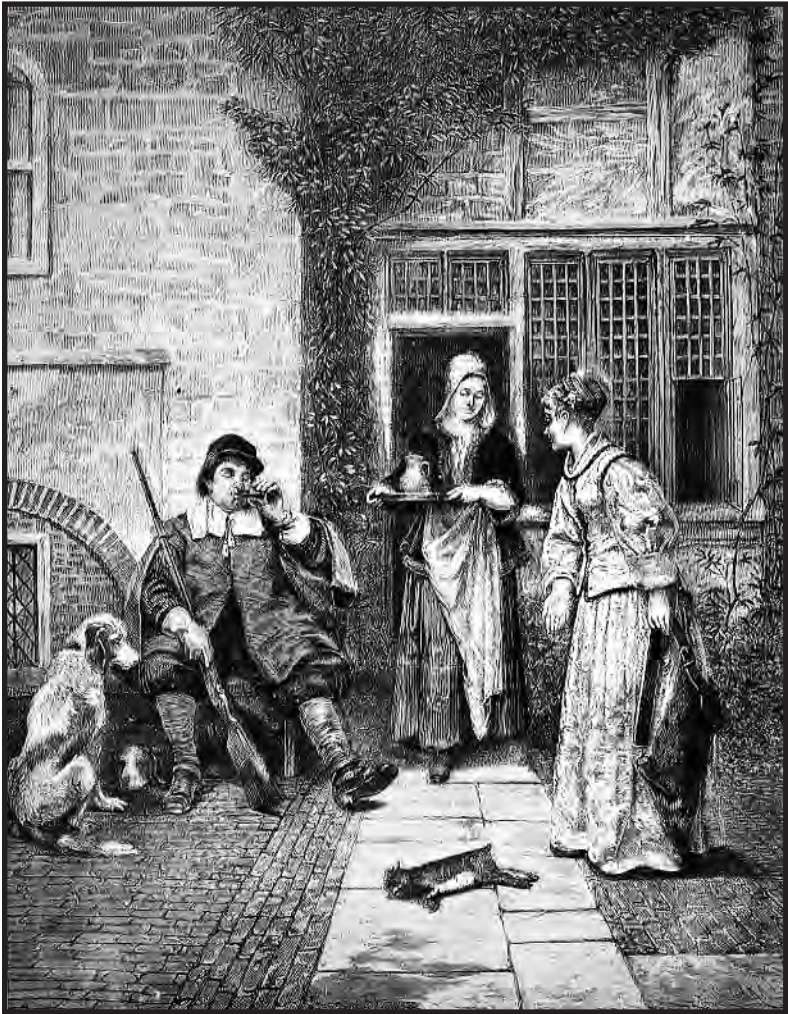
Jack Kulpa, *When the Wild Calls*, 2004

Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth.

Isaiah 5:8

Nature





Poetry

PASSAGES



Poetry

A haze on the far horizon,
The infinite, tender sky,
The ripe rich tint of the cornfields,
And the wild geese sailing high –
And all over upland and lowland
The charm of golden-rod –
Some of us call it Autumn,
And others call it God.

William Herbert Carruth, *Each in His Own Tongue*, 1906

Ah, when to the heart of man was it ever less than a treason
to go with the drift of things,
to yield with a grace to reason, and
bow and accept the end of a love or a season.

Robert Frost, *Reluctance*, 1913

Arm'd, cap-a-pie, with basket, bags and rods,
The angler early to the river plods;
At night his looks the woeful truth announce –
The luggage half-a-ton; the fish an ounce.

G.P.R. Pulman, *The Vade Mecum of Fly-Fishing for Trout*, 1851

But the poor dog, in life the foremost friend,
The first to welcome, the foremost to defend.

Lord Byron, *Complete Works*, 1898

Come live, with me, and be my love,
And we will, some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines, and silver hooks.

John Donne, *The Bait*, 1633

PASSAGES

Do you know the world's white rooftree – do you know
that windy rift
Where the baffling mountain eddies chop and change?
Do you know the long day's patience, belly down on
frozen drift,
While the head of heads is feeding out of range?
It is there that I am going, where the boulders and snow lie,
With a trusty, nimble tracker that I know.
I have sworn an oath, to keep it on the Horns of Ovis Poli,
For the Red Gods call me out, and I must go.

Rudyard Kipling, *The Feet of the Young Men*, 1897

I pray that I may live to fish until my dying day, and
When it comes to my last cast, then I most humbly pray:
When in the Lord's great landing net I lay peacefully asleep.
That in his mercy I be judged big enough to keep.

Author unknown, *poem in memory of Louis Mrace*,
February 7, 2004

Move along these shades
In gentleness of heart; with gentle hand
Touch – for there is a spirit in the woods.

William Wordsworth, *Nutting: VI Poems of the
Imagination*, 1800

See how the well-taught pointer leads the way;
The scent grows warm; he stops, he springs the prey;
The flutt'ring coveys from the stubble rise,
And on the swift wing divide the sounding skies;
The scatt'ring lead pursues the certain sight,
And death in thunder overtakes their flight.

Lord William Lennox, *Merrie England – Its Sports
and Pastimes*, 1857

Poetry

Something lost behind the ranges,
Lost and waiting for you. Go!

Rudyard Kipling, *The Explorer*, 1903

The chess-board is the world,
The pieces are the phenomena of the universe,
The rules of the game are what we call the laws of Nature.
The player on the other side is hidden from us.

Thomas Henry Huxley, *A Liberal Education*, 1868

The hunter crouches in his blind
Neath camouflage of every kind.
He conjures up a quacking noise
To lend allure to his decoys.
This grown-up man, with pluck and luck,
Is hoping to outwit a duck.

Ogden Nash, 1957

The pleasant'st angling is to see the fish
Cut with her golden oars the silver stream,
And greedily devour the treacherous bait . . .

William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, 1599

The sun was warm but the wind was chill.
You know how it is with an April day
When the sun is out and the wind is still,
You're one month on in the middle of May.
But if you so much as dare to speak,
A cloud comes over the sunlit arch,
A wind comes off a frozen peak,
And you're two months back in the middle of March.

Robert Frost, *Two Tramps in Mud Time*, 1894

PASSAGES

The wonder of the world, the beauty and the power,
The shape of things, their colours, lights, and shades;
These I saw. Look ye also while life lasts.

Words on a gravestone in Cumberland, England

There's a land where the mountains are nameless,
And the rivers all run God knows where;
There are lives erring and aimless,
And deaths that just hang by a hair;
There are hardships that nobody reckons;
There are valleys unpeopled and still;
There's a land – Oh it beckons and beckons,
And I want to go back – and I will.

Robert Service, *The Spirit of the Yukon, 1907*

Tiger! Tiger! Burning bright,
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

William Blake, 1794

Too well we know along the leaden way
Crowd griefs and cares – an endless train –
Moving with muffled sound and sad refrain.
O friend, turn thy steps hitherward a while,
Wander o'er meadows green, and in their smile
Forget the weary echoes of the old, old strain.

R. J. Brasher, *Sniping on the South Side of Long Island, 1890*

Poetry

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost, *The Road Not Taken*, 1916

*Venator sequitur fugientia; cepta relinquit; semper et
inventis ulteriora petit.*

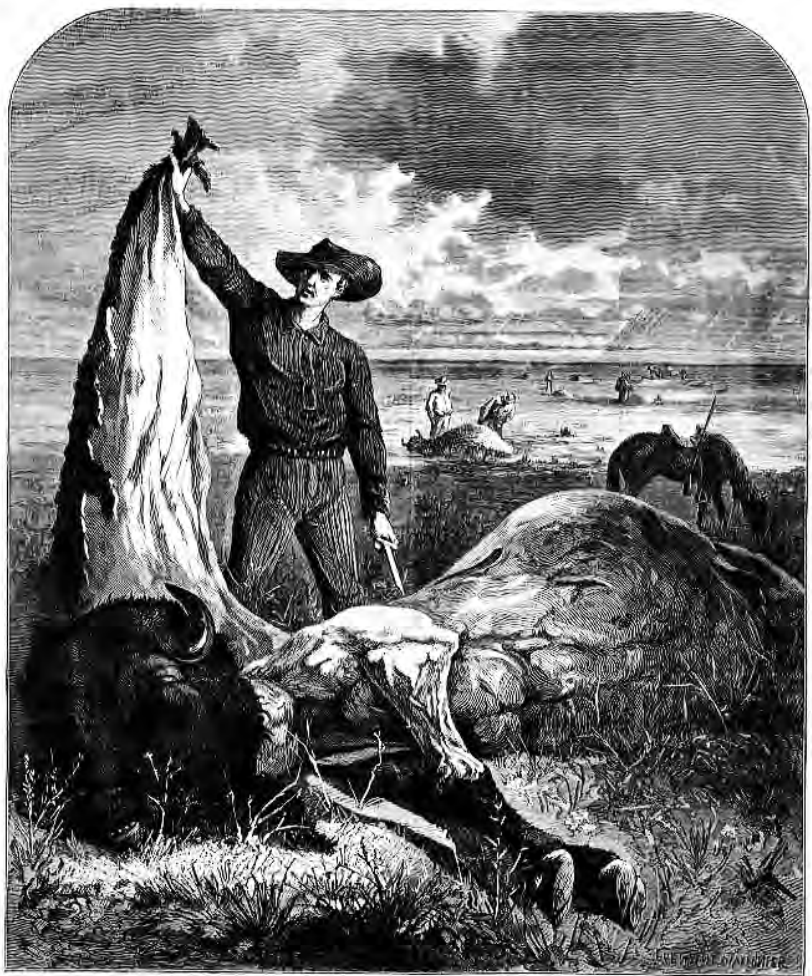
The Hunter follows the trail of his quarry. . .
forever seeking that which is beyond what he has found.

Publius Ovidius, *Roman Poet BC43 - AD18*

When you come to the end of the long, long trail,
And your hunting and trapping days are gone,
When your step grows weak and your sinews fail,
And it's time to answer the great last call;
It isn't the size of the cabin you've built,
Nor what you have won in pelts or fame,
The thing that counts is the right to say
"I have kept the faith – I have played the game."

Albert M. Ahern, *Fur Facts*, 1922





Viewpoint



Viewpoint

A boy has got to grow up to be a man some day. You can delay the process, but you can't protect the boy from manhood forever. The best and easiest way is to expose the boy to people who are already men, good and bad, drunk and sober, lazy and industrious. It is really, after all, up to the boy, when all is said and done, and there are a lot of boys who never get to be men, and a lot of men who never quit being boys.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

A firearm is basically a simple thing. It's unique in all of the world in that it produces the largest reward for the least amount of effort, pulling the trigger.

Charley Dickey, *Opening Shots & Parting Lines*, 1983

A grown man walking in the rain with a sodden bird dog at his heel who can smile at you and say with the kind of conviction that brings the warmth out in the open, "I'd rather be here, doing this, right now, than anything else in the world," is the man who has discovered that the wealth of the world is not something that is merely bought and sold.

Gene Hill, *A Hunter's Fireside Book*, 1972

A gun is like a cigar and many other things; if a man becomes accustomed to the best, he will never be quite satisfied with anything else.

Charles C. Norris, *Eastern Upland Shooting*, 1946

PASSAGES

A half-million years of experience in outwitting beasts on mountains and plains, in heat and cold, in light and darkness, gave our ancestors the equipment that we still desperately need if we are to slay the dragon that roams the earth today, marry the princess of outer space, and live happily ever after in the deer-filled glades of a world in which everyone is young and beautiful forever.

Carlton S. Coon, *The Story of Man*, 1954

A man may not care for golf and still be human, but the man who does not like to see, hunt, photograph or otherwise outwit birds or animals is not normal. He is supercivilized and I for one do not know how to deal with him. Babes do not tremble when they are shown a golf ball, but I should not like to own the boy whose hair does not lift his hat when he sees his first deer.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1949

A map in the hands of a pilot is a testimony to the faith in other men . . . Here is a valley, there a swamp, and there a desert; and here is a river that some courageous soul, like a pencil in the hand of God, first traced with bleeding feet.

Beryl Markham, *West With The Night*, 1942

A mountain is the best medicine for a troubled mind. Seldom does man ponder his own insignificance. He thinks he is master of all things. He thinks the world is his without bonds. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Only when he tramps the mountains alone, communing with nature, observing other insignificant creatures about him, to come and go as he will, does he awaken to his own short-lived presence on earth.

Finis Mitchell, *Wind River Trails*, 1975

Viewpoint

A sportsman . . . is a gentleman first. But a sportsman, basically, is a man who kills what he needs, whether it's a fish or a bird or an animal, or what he wants for a special reason, but he never kills anything just to kill it. And he tries to preserve the very same thing that he kills a little bit of from time to time.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

“A sporting liar,” the Old Man once said, “is a truthful man turned dishonest by circumstance beyond his control. There is no real malice in him, and he is unique among all brands of liars, because with practice and careful handling his lies eventually become unshakable truth.”

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man's Boy Grows Older*, 1961

A true journey, no matter how long the travel takes, has no end.

William Least, *Heat Moon, Blue Highways*, 1982

A walk in game country is an escape from domestication, a fork in the path between that which brings meaning to life and that which is meant to be life. We yearn to flee the egg-factory high-rises of the gateless pens that we call cities, to stalk the realms of wildness and shed the mundane in an effort to grab life in its grandest state.

Chris Dorsey, *Game Days*, 1994

Although making a fire should be one of our most satisfying acts, it's become unremarkable for most of us – like breathing. For me, fire building is a heart and hand-warming art. Without fail, a budding fire's first wisps of nostril-biting smoke liberate visions of our prehistoric ancestors worshipfully urging flames from flint-struck sparks.

George Erickson, *True North*, 2002

PASSAGES

Although no books can take the place of experience, I believe that a wide reading of the literature of any sport will produce a background which experience itself cannot replace. Reading will not only furnish a certain amount of valuable knowledge, but will lead to much inquiry and cause the reader to ponder on many things which he otherwise would probably never think of.

Eugene Connett, III, *Fishing a Trout Stream*, 1934

Although some misguided souls try to make them so, hunting and fishing are not competitive sports and, harmless bantering by companions aside, are degraded by serious attempts at scorekeeping.

Charles Mohr, *Hunting Africa: Kenya*, 1992

America is a better place because of her hunters; and when I recall that there are some ten million of these, I take confidence from the thought that if she is ever attacked, there will be one army ready to defend her; and it will be an army that possesses the essential qualification of knowing how to shoot. As a grizzled old sharpshooter of the '60s, fighting in the Valley of Virginia, remarked to a beginner: "You shoots at 'em; me, I shoots 'em."

Archibald Rutledge, *Hunter's Choice*, 1946

And yet autumn will come with its lovingly crafted death for all things, and I will inhale deeply when the cool air comes and dream of the histories that follow me into another season.

Philip Lee Williams, *The Heart of a Distant Forest*, 1984

Viewpoint

Anybody who says woods are quiet is crazy. You can learn how to listen. The Tower of Babel was a study period alongside of woods in the early morning.

Robert Ruark, *“The Old Man and The Boy,” Field & Stream, 1953*

As long as the people of your culture are convinced that the world belongs to them and that their divinely appointed destiny is to conquer and rule it, then they are of course going to go on acting the way they’ve been acting for the past ten thousand years. They’re going to go on treating the world as if it were a piece of human property and they’re going to go on conquering it as if it were an adversary. You can’t change these things with laws. You must change people’s minds. And you can’t just root out a harmful complex of ideas and leave a void behind; you have to give people something that is as meaningful as what they’ve lost – something that makes better sense than the old horror of Man Supreme, wiping out everything on this planet that doesn’t serve his needs directly or indirectly.

Daniel Quinn, *Ishmael, 1992*

As long as there are little boys and little ducks, we have two valuable resources. The ducks will grow and so will the boys. The important thing is to help the ducks and geese grow and keep the boys interested.

Paul S. Bernsen, *The North American Waterfowler, 1972*

As they drove on and the day warmed, the man rolled down the window of the truck and found that the air outside smelled like memories.

Robert Holthausen, *A High, Lonesome Call, 2001*

Best of all he loved the Fall. The leaves yellow on the cottonwoods floating on the trout streams and above the hills. The high blue windless skies . . . Now he will be part of them forever.

Ernest Hemingway, *Memorial to a friend killed in a hunting accident*, 1956

Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations. Books, the oldest and the best, stand naturally and rightfully on the shelves of every cottage. They have no cause of their own to plead, but while they enlighten and sustain the reader, his common sense will not refuse them.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

Boyhood improves with age, and the more remote it is the nicer boyhood seems to become.

Havilah Babcock, *The Best of Babcock*, 1974

But whatever its ups and downs, being a boy is something I'd like to try again, especially being a country boy. It ought to be against the law to let a boy grow up in a city.

Havilah Babcock, *Jaybirds Go to Hell on Friday*, 1964

Don't let anybody tell you that getting old happens in the autumn of your life. It happens in March.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

Don't mourn for me when I go. I've fished some of the greatest waters and hunted some of the most magical places. I turned ink into gold through my writings and I finally found the woman I love. I'll have had a grand life.

Peter Capstick, 1996

Viewpoint

Equipment replaces expertise, arcane information supersedes understanding, and in the end nobody really has a feeling for what they are doing, only for the prestige of having done it. The emotion is drained away, and without emotion, hunting and fishing are nothing but stylized butchery.

Terry Wieland, *Sporting Classics*, March/April 1991

Finish each day and be done with it . . . You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it well and serenely.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1803-1882

Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty, teeth and keystone under independence. The church, the plow, the prairie wagon and citizen's firearms are indelibly related.

George Washington, *from his address to the second session of the First Congress*, 1790

Good fires make good friends.

Gene Hill, *A Hunter's Fireside Book*, 1972

Hope is that feathered thing that perches on the branches of the soul.

Emily Dickinson, *Beloved Collections*, *Hope*, 1861

"I ain't going to leave you much," he had said, when it got bad toward the end. All of a sudden the sun came out in my head. Who was kidding whom? Croesus was a beggar alongside me. I had had fifteen years of the Old Man, and nearly everything he knew he'd taught me.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man's Boy Grows Older*, 1961

I am glad to live, glad in my own cunning and strength, glad that I am a doer of things, a doer of things for myself. Of what other reason to live than that? Why should I live if I delight not in myself and the things I do? And it is because I delight and am glad that I go forth to hunt and fish, and it is because I go forth to hunt and fish that I grow cunning and strong. The man who stays in the lodge by the fire grows not cunning and strong. He is not made happy in the eating of my kill, nor is living to him a delight. He does not live.

Jack London, *"In the Forests of the North,"* a short story from *Children of the Frost*, 1902

I devoutly believe that a healthy man's work should be the most important thing in his life, but I believe just as strongly that no man's keenest interest should be limited to the narrow specialization of his work. If it is, he is something less than a man, living something less than a life.

Roderick Haig-Brown, *Fisherman's Spring*, 1951

I discovered that writing was a mighty fine thing. It enables you to make men stand on their hind legs and cast a shadow.

William Faulkner, *The Best American Short Stories*, 1943

I dislike paths, and the people who walk in them. I don't want to see things that other people have already worn out by looking at them.

Havilah Babcock, *Tales of Quails 'n Such*, 1951

Viewpoint

I do not hunt anymore because we no longer relish the meat, but I have little use for do-gooders who don't have the slightest knowledge of animal economics or game management. I have seen these people interfere, through the ballot box or by political pressure, with professional game management and always with disastrous results for the animals. The person who thinks starvation is an easy death is a damn fool, and the one that would insist that wild animals be fed so that they may proliferate forever is a bigger fool. However, if man doesn't curb his own overbreeding, and soon, all else will be academic.

Charles E. Brooks, *The Living River*, 1979

I have experienced such simple joy in the trivial matters of fishing and sport formerly as might inspire the muse of Homer or Shakespeare.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journals*, 1906

I have gone to the wilderness and no, not conquered it, but melted into it as no one can who merely looks at it through plate glass. We will eat its bounty through the winter, every bite containing the tang of wilderness, and that bounty will be tonic against the long, dark days.

Dan Aadland, *A Montana Memoir*, 1998

I have tried unsuccessfully, throughout the years to save time, kill time and beat time – all to no avail. Realizing at last my wasted effort, I now merely mark the flight of time, counting each year a milestone reached on the chancy road of life.

Roland Clark, *Pot Luck*, 1945

I know now that anticipation, like a coin, has two sides, and one of them can be painful.

Tom Kelly, *The Season*, 1996

I learned early that richness of life is found in adventure.

William O. Douglas, *Of Men and Mountains*, 1950

I love the quest and the conquest, and all the traditions and trappings of the sporting life. Nothing else has so completely captured my soul.

Mike Gaddis, "Taking a Life," *Audubon Magazine*, November, 1990

I love to tinker with gear. It's almost as much fun as using it. Shipshape is the phrase. And it has to be done continuously, otherwise order will be replaced by disorder, and possibly mild-to-acute chaos.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *Stories of the Old Duck Hunters and Other Drivel*, 1967

I once had a friend whose ambition in life was to acquire experiences worth owning. His argument was that they constitute the only real wealth in this world. An experience that is really worth having and owning, he would point out, does not have to be insured. It is never subject to any tax, and your executor will never have to account for it. And your heirs will relish their recollection of your tale of it.

Dudley Cammett Lunt, *Thousand Acre Marsh*, 1959

Viewpoint

I soon came to the conclusion that fishing was not my sport and hunting was even more lacerating to the spirit. Yet fishermen and hunters are the most pitying, the most gentle and understanding people in the world, and I suspect anyone who isn't one or the other.

William Alexander Percy, *Lanterns on the Levee*, 1941

I suppose there is nothing more tragic about the death of an elephant than there is about the death of a Hereford steer – certainly not in the eyes of the steer. The only difference is that the steer has neither the ability nor the chance to outwit the gentleman who wields the slaughterhouse snickersnee, while the elephant has both of these to pit against the hunter.

Beryl Markham, *West with the Night*, 1972

I've always had a wide-eyed fascination for nature's honest fury. It's frightfully straightforward and merciless, and it makes man admit his true stature – insignificant, frail, powerless.

David Hagerbaumer, *The Bottoms – Armistice Day Storm*, 1987

If hunting is an ancient, obsolete and outmoded way to live, then I will lie down on the blessed earth, let the wet moss saturate my body, open my eyes to the heaven beyond those boughs and shout aloud my gratitude for the gift of birth in a time before hunting vanishes from the realms of human experience.

Richard Nelson, *Heart & Blood – Living with Deer in America*, 1997

If pushed to even dizzier heights of perfection, you will ultimately conclude that double triggers, straight grips, and splinter forepieces are vastly superior to the alternatives invariably chosen by the uninitiated and unwashed – namely single triggers, pistol grips, (Heaven forbid) beaver-tailed forepieces. This latter combination surely gave rise to the term “Ugly American.”

Robert Braden, *Braden on Shooting and Shotguns*, 1985

If someone who has never owned a gun or a rod should ask me what I have gotten out of nearly fifty years of fishing and hunting, the very nature of the question would prompt me to say, “Nothing.” It would be practically impossible to explain to such a person what the practice of these sports in boyhood means to a man in later life. He never could even guess that sitting by a pond, waiting for a bite, or watching a woodchuck hole could lay the foundation for patience and perseverance; that a full creel or the legal limit of birds developed restraint, nor would he see that endless miles in pure air and bright sunshine meant health and strength for a better manhood.

Austin D. Haight, *The Biography of a Sportsman*, 1939

If the sentimentalist were right, hunting would develop in men a cruelty of character. But I have found that it inculcates patience, demands discipline and iron nerve, and develops a serenity of spirit that makes for long life and long love of life.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

Viewpoint

If you have learned nothing else from hunting, you have learned patience and stubbornness and concentration on what you really want at the expense of what there is to shoot. You have learned that man can as easily be debased as ennobled by a sport, and that optimism is the vital ingredient of any sort of chase, from girls to greater kudu.

Robert Ruark, *Use Enough Gun*, 1966

If you hunt or fish a couple of weeks in a row without reading newspapers or watching television, a certain not altogether deserved grace can reenter your life.

Jim Harrison, *Off to the Side*, 2002

In a genuine, but not necessarily literal sense, I believe in omens, in sacred places, and in the functional ability of certain forms of ritual and ceremony to become woven into the fabric of real events. I believe that when you attain a certain depth of intimacy in your relationship with the land, particularly as a direct participant in the web of its life, you establish a connection between that intimacy and what is commonly referred to as your luck.

Reg Darling, *Coyote Soul, Raven Heart*, 2005

In all forms of sport I have ever followed, blank days outnumbered days of success, in a ratio which made success the sweeter.

Lord Tweedsmuir, *Always a Countryman*, 1953

In my book a pioneer is a man who turned all the grass upside down, strung bob-wire over the dust that was left, poisoned the water and cut down the trees, killed the Indian who owned the land, and called it progress. If I had my way, the land here would be like God made it, and none of you sons of bitches would be here at all. Artist Charlie Russell, addressing a group of civic boosters from Great Falls, Montana.

William Kittredge, *in his introduction to Montana Spaces, 1988*

In no other sport is the line between success and failure so closely drawn; of course it is that which makes it so fascinating. At the end of a long day's hunt, one chance may be given . . . In your action in that single golden second rests the success or failure of, perhaps a season's trip. You may have traveled thousands of miles, spent hundreds of dollars, and had just one shot at the "head of heads."

Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, *Across Mongolian Plains, 1921*

In the grey time after light has come and before the sun has risen . . . It is the hour of the pearl – the interval between day and night when time stops and examines itself.

John Steinbeck, Cannery Row, 1945

In the hunting world, skill should never be equated with the number of hangings in the trophy room. We have squirrel hunters in this country who are much more skillful than many who are widely mentioned in the record books.

William Negley, *Archer in Africa, 1989*

Viewpoint

In the long run men hit only what they aim at.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

In the school of the woods there is no graduation day.

Horace Kephart, *Camping and Woodcraft*, 1916

In the woods we return to reason and faith.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, *quoted in Edmund Ware Smith's Up River and Down*, 1965

It all adds up to this, an ancient Roman inscription in a ruined forum near Timgad, Algeria: "To bathe, to talk, to laugh, to hunt – this is to live."

John Madson, *Going Out More*, 1979

It has always been my belief that one of the things that makes hunting and fishing so special is that on any given day things can happen to you that you will remember for the rest of your days. Very few things in everyday life are like that.

Lamar Underwood, *The Greatest Hunting Stories Ever Told*, 2000

It has always seemed to me that if more fathers were woodsmen, and would teach their sons to be likewise, most of the so-called father-and-son problems would vanish.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

It has been said that the love of the chase is an inherent delight in mind – a relic of an instinctive passion.

Charles Darwin, *Diary of the Voyage of H.M.S. Beagle*, 1839

PASSAGES

It is between bites that the lukewarm angler loses heart. It is between birds that the mildly interested watcher gives up. The true devoteé possesses an enthusiasm that burns so fiercely it carries him over the uneventful between-times when nothing is happening.

Edwin Way Teale, *Circle of the Seasons*, 1953

It is likely, and appropriate, that a coyote will use the bones of the last man as a scent post. Beyond that, it's just as likely that the bones of the last coyote will be picked clean by Crow . . . And at the end, when Crow follows the long procession of species out of a world grown cold under its dying sun, he'll exit laughing.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

It is my fixed conviction that if a parent can give his children a passionate and wholesome devotion to the outdoors, the fact that he cannot leave each of them a fortune does not really matter so much.

Archibald Rutledge, *An American Hunter*, 1937

It is one of the blessings of wilderness life that it shows us how few things we need in order to be perfectly happy.

Horace Kephart, *Camping and Woodcraft*, 1916

It is our nature to embrace obsessions so heartily that we crush them beyond recognition.

Jim Dean, "Our Natural Heritage," *Wildlife in North Carolina magazine*, April, 1998

Viewpoint

It is the end of a family when they begin to sell the land. Out of the land we came and into it we must go, and if you will hold your land you can live.

Pearl S. Buck, *The Good Earth*, 1931

It seems to me that we have been losing, and are losing, a great deal of this simplicity of approach to man's natural instincts in a baffling world of nauseating cant and hypocrisy and contrived complications. We have so much steam heat and air conditioning that we have forgotten wood fires and fresh air.

Robert Ruark, *The Lost Classics of Robert Ruark*, 1995

It was then that my manhood came to the fore and I uttered what I thought were words of wisdom. "Whenever," I spoke solemnly, "whenever a man engages in any activity, be it the building of a house, the painting of a picture, or perchance the shooting of a mallard, if that activity makes him less of a menace to his fellow men, then it is justifiable and worth the sacrifice."

Sigurd Olson, *The Collected Works of Sigurd F. Olson*, 1990

It would be less than honest to maintain that all hunters are upright gentlemen, or even true sportsmen. But I'll bet that if all boys were taught the joys of hunting and appreciation of the out-of-doors, half our psychiatrists, social workers, policemen and prison guards would be out of work when the next generation takes over.

Ned Smith, *Gone for the Day*, 1971

It would seem that common-sense should teach any man of ordinary intelligence so simple a thing as laying a quantity of wood together in such a way as to make it burn to the best advantage; but, strange as it may seem, the great majority of men, when they undertake to make a camp-fire, proceed as if they wanted a smoke instead of a fire.

G.O. Shields, *Camping and Camp Outfits*, 1890

Just because man no longer understands his place in the universe, don't let him assume all God's creatures have become equally confused and trivial.

Bill Tarrant, *Hey Pup, Fetch It Up*, 1997

Keep working hard, save your money, and you will probably turn out to be the richest people in the graveyard.

Woodie Wheaton, *well-known registered Maine guide, (1909-1990)*

Last campfires never die. And you and I on separate ways to life's December, will always dream by this last fire and have this mountain to remember.

Clarke E. Schurman, *chief guide on Mount Rainier from 1939-1942*

Laws that forbid the carrying of arms . . . disarm only those who are neither inclined or determined to commit crimes. Such laws make things worse for the assaulted and better for the assailants; they serve rather to encourage than to prevent homicides, for an unarmed man may be attacked with greater confidence than an armed man.

Thomas Jefferson, *Commonplace Diary*, 1774

Viewpoint

Let the most absent-minded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries – stand that man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region.

Herman Melville, *Moby Dick*, 1851

Lie low, go slow, and keep cool. More men are killed by overwork than the importance of this world justifies.

Rudyard Kipling, *The Phantom Rickshaw*, 1895

Like all Americans, I like big things; big prairies, big forests and mountains, big wheat-fields, railroads, and herds of cattle too; big factories, steamboats, and everything else. But we must keep steadily in mind that no people were ever yet benefited by riches if their prosperity corrupted their virtues . . . each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune. Here we are not ruled over by others, as is the case in Europe; here we rule ourselves . . .

Theodore Roosevelt, in *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, Edmund Morris, 1979

Living dangerously is twice blessed – it blesses the moment with elation; it blesses the after-day with warm memories. If a man has trodden unknown trails and landed on lost beaches, when old age comes the domestic hearth is a campfire where old dramas are relived.

Major P.J. Pretorius, *Jungle Man*, 1948

Love all God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand in it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything you will perceive the divine mystery in things.

Fyodor Dostoevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, 1880

Man with all his noble qualities . . . with his godlike intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system. . . still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin.

Charles Robert Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 1871

Many a cold night he would sit in the big room near the fireplace and wipe the rods again and again with a clean, soft T-shirt, or rub a thin layer of oil into the aging wood and steel of the L.C. Smith. His movements were slow, almost dreamlike, and you could see the fire reflected in his bright eyes and you knew he was someplace else.

Harry Middleton, *The Earth is Enough*, 1989

Men are easily inspired by human ideas, but they forget them again just as quickly. Only nature is eternal, unless we senselessly destroy it. In fifty years' time nobody will be interested in the results of the conferences which fill today's headlines. But when, fifty years from now, a lion walks into the red dawn and roars resoundingly, it will mean something to people and quicken their hearts whether they are bolshevists or democrats, or whether they speak English, German, Russian or Swahili. They will stand in quiet awe as, for the first time in their lives, they watch twenty thousand zebras wander across the endless plains.

Bernhard and Michael Grzimek, *Serengeti Shall Not Die*, 1961

Men may be raised differently, under different philosophies, with different needs and different values. But hunting and fishing are only less universal than hunger and love and death.

Russell Chatham, *Dark Waters*, 1991

Viewpoint

My own hunting and fishing are largely misunderstood activities cataloged under the banal notion of “macho,” whereas I tend to view them as a continuation of my birthright.

Jim Harrison, *Just Before Dark*, 1991

No profit grows where no pleasure is taken.

William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 1594

Non-game wildlife is year by year being decimated in numbers and restricted in distribution by the identical economic trends - such as clean farming, close grazing and drainage - which are decimating and restricting game. The fact that game is legally shot while other wildlife is only illegally shot in no way alters the deadly truth of the principle that it cannot nest in a cornstalk.

Aldo Leopold, *Game Management*, 1933

Nowhere more than in the shooting field can a man show himself so much an ass, or prove himself so much a gentleman.

George Bird Evans, *An Affair with Grouse*, 1982

All animals kill to survive, and we are animals. The lion kills the baboon; the baboon kills fat grasshoppers. The elephant tears up living trees, dragging their precious roots from the dirt they love. The hungry antelope's shadow passes over the startled grass. And we, even if we had no meat or even grass to gnaw, still boil our water to kill the invisible creatures that would like to kill us first. And swallow quinine pills. The death of something living is the price of our own survival, and we pay it again and again. We have no choice. It is the one solemn promise every life on earth is born and bound to keep.

Barbara Kingsolver, *The Poisonwood Bible*, 1998

PASSAGES

One man watching a (wolf) pack consuming a buffalo carcass says the feast “is one of those sharp-toned entertainments, which could be compared to an old-fashioned tea party composed of snappish octogenarians, paralytic and generally debilitated characters of both sexes, with a fair sprinkling of shriveled virginity and a few used up celibates of the masculine gender. Each is guzzling to his heart’s content and growling and finding fault with his neighbor.”

Leon F. Whitney, *Dog Psychology*, 1964

One’s own heart is the best place to store the few things of life that really matter.

Rudyard Kipling, *Rudyard Kipling Selected Works*, 1994

Our greatest trophies are not things, but times.

Gene Hill, *Hill Country*, 1974

Probably the only true reason for the sudden spate of crazy record-shattering prices in every field of antique buying is one that seems too simplistic to credit – nothing more than a belated realization that the past is the only thing that any of us can possess irrevocably.

Arnold Gingrich, *The Joys of Trout*, 1973

Prudence advises us always to lay hold of time by the forelock, and to remember that “a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”

Thomas Bewick, *The Fables of Aesop*, 1818

Viewpoint

Remember what you have seen because everything you have forgotten returns with the circling winds.

William Least, *Heat Moon, Blue Highways*, 1982

Remember when time was cheap? The songs we sang about it told us that we had time on our hands, that time stood still, that tomorrow would be time enough. And now we find it was not so. Suddenly times to come have become times past, and we must hoard it and spend it as cautiously as the tag ends of a small inheritance . . . which is what it really was all along – except no one told us.

Gene Hill, *Mostly Tailfeathers*, 1971

Rich is a little whisky to drink and some food to eat and a roof over your head and a fish pole and a boat and a gun and a dollar for a box of shells.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

“Rich,” the Old Man said dreamily, “is not baying after what you can’t have. Rich is having the time to do what you want to do. Rich is a little whisky to drink and some food to eat and a roof over your head and a fish pole and a boat and a gun and a dollar for a box of shells. Rich is not owing any money to anybody, and not spending what you haven’t got.”

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man’s Boy Grows Older*, 1957

Savage man seems to find a delight in precarious possession. A great part of the pleasure of the chase lies in the uncertainty of the pursuit.

Oliver Goldsmith, 1760, *quoted in Gene Nunnery’s I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes Unto the Hills*, 1986

Tell me, if you can, of anything that's finer than an evening in camp with a rare old friend and a dog after one's heart.

Nash Buckingham, *Mark Right!*, 1966

That's why, whenever people ask me what they can do to help protect wildlife, I always answer, "Buy a hunting license." And if they say, "But I don't hunt," I reply, "Then you'd better buy a duck stamp, too."

Rick Hacker, *The Muzzleloading Hunter*, 1981

The ability to tell a good story may be dying, but if it is, it's because the ability to listen died first.

George Reiger, "Grayson Chesser, *Decoy Maker*," *Field & Stream*, 1984

The best thing about hunting and fishing is that you don't have to actually do it to enjoy it. You can go to bed every night thinking how much fun you had twenty years ago, and it all comes back as clear as moonlight.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

The land is our mother and our enemy, our father and our spiritual guide. It was here first, before us. It will be here after us. It is the only real clue to our existence.

Gary Cook, *The Tennesseans*, 1993

The man who cannot enjoy his leisure is ignorant, though his degrees exhaust the alphabet, and the man who does enjoy his leisure is to some extent educated, though he has never seen the inside of a school.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac*, 1966

Viewpoint

The mere size of the bag indicates little as to a man's prowess as a hunter, and almost nothing as to the interest or value of his achievement.

Theodore Roosevelt, *African Game Trails*, 1909

The Old Man used to say that the best part of hunting and fishing was the thinking about going and the talking about it after you got back.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

The only reason I ever played golf in the first place was so I could afford to hunt and fish.

Sam Snead, (1912-2002)

The real hunter is probably as free as it's possible for modern man to be in this teeming technocracy of ours. Not because he sheds civilized codes and restraints when he goes into the woods, becoming an animal, but because he can project himself out of and beyond himself and be wholly absorbed in a quieter, deeper and older world.

John Madson, *Out Home*, 1979

The reason why domestic animal and plant species are not in danger of becoming extinct is that they are somebody's property, and it is in the owner's interest to protect them from being rustled or poached and to ensure that they breed as big a surplus as possible. Where game animals are "owned," the same principles apply. Game animals at risk of being over-exploited are those which have no owners and are therefore free-for-all.

H.R.H. Prince Philip, *article in The Shooting Life*, December 1987

PASSAGES

The sacred groves, springs, mountains, forests, and caves that were integral parts of the religious life of hunters and gatherers have become foreign lands to adherents of modern religions. As a result, our lives have become unbalanced, because all these places are reservoirs of spirit. Hunters know this. This is why special places call out to them and they respond to magical sentiments that we have nearly lost our language to describe.

James A. Swan, *In Defense of Hunting*, 1995

The trouble is that so few . . . will admit they're scared. They don't or won't realize that there is nothing to be ashamed of in being frightened – it's perfectly natural, and there must be something wrong with the man who can honestly say he has never been afraid when first facing death, whether from bullets, bombs, or a wounded elephant, buffalo, or lion.

John Taylor, *Pondoro: Last of the Ivory Hunters*, 1955

The wild ram embodies the mystery and the magic of the mountains, the rocky canyons, the gray slide rock, the icy, dancing rills fed by snowbank and glacier, the sweet clean air of the high places. And the sense of being alone on the top of the world with the eagles, the marmots and the wild sheep themselves.

Jack O'Connor, *Outdoor Life*, March 1960

The wildlife of today is not ours to dispose of as we please. We have it in trust. We must account for it to those who come after.

King George V, 1935

Viewpoint

There are still those who shy at this prospect of a man-made game crop as artificial and therefore repugnant. This attitude shows good taste but poor insight. Every head of wildlife still alive in this country is already artificialized, in that its existence is conditioned by economic forces. Game management merely proposes that their impact shall not remain wholly fortuitous. The hope of the future lies not in curbing the influence of human occupancy – it is already too late for that – but in creating a better understanding of the extent of that influence and a new ethic for its governance.

Aldo Leopold, *Handbook on Game Management, 1933*

There is no more terrible thing than to live and have one's being under The shadow of a man-eater.

Jim Corbett, *Man-Eaters of Kumaon, 1946*

There is value in any experience that exercises those ethical restraints collectively called sportsmanship.

Aldo Leopold, *A Sand County Almanac, 1949*

There was a Russian school of acting which once maintained stoutly that a good tragic actor had to suffer. The same thing must be true of all hunters, and most fishermen. The free lunch is tasteless on the tongue. The value of a trophy is computed directly in terms of personal investment in its acquisition.

Robert Ruark, *Use Enough Gun, 1966*

PASSAGES

There's no such thing as too many paintings and prints. Or bronzes of Labradors and pointers and Brittannies and setters. Or glasses with pintails and canvasbacks and salmon and trout flies. Or pictures of you and Charlie with old Duke and a limit of bobwhites, or a pair of muleys, or a half-dozen Canadas, or about a yard of rainbows. Or old decoys and duck calls. There are never too many memories of days past or too many dreams of good times to come.

Gene Hill, *A Listening Walk*, 1995

This year will go down in history. For the first time, a civilized nation has full gun registration! Our streets will be safer, our police more efficient, and the world will follow our lead into the future.

Adolph Hitler, 1935

To brag a little, to lose well, to crow gently if in luck. . . to pay up, to own up, to shut up if beaten. . . are the virtues of a good sportsman.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, (1809-1894)

Trust in the Lord and keep the matches dry.

Oscar H. Adkinson, *The National Sportsman*, 1920

We are drifting faster than we even dream toward a sterility in wild life of the marsh and upland, from which there will be no returning. The pace must slacken! How truly has it been said that "as a nation allows itself to lapse into a condition of sophistication, irresponsibility, materialism and other resultants of luxury and wealth, it loses its place in the sun. Slowly it is supplanted by other nations, hardier, more vigorous and more moral."

Nash Buckingham, *De Shootinest Gent'man*, 1934

Viewpoint

We don't know one millionth of one percent about anything.

Thomas Edison, *Life*, 1932

We no longer recognize silence for what it is, what it does, or why it is necessary. We think of it as a pause in the din, instead of what was there before bedlam. Carlyle observed that "Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves." Without silence there can be no dreaming; without dreams, there is no greatness.

Jack Kulpa, *True North*, 2002

We think of hunting and fishing as escapes, and they are. They are escapes from a society of escapism: from pervasive complacency, from media pitched to the lowest common denominator, from trivialization of thought, from the politics of blandness, from gladiators, celebrities, entertainment, scandals, the life synthetic. A hunter chasing a pheasant feels everything except anomie.

Datus C. Proper, *Pheasants of the Mind*, 1990

We, one and all, are seeking happiness in this world. I suggest that a man with a horse, a dog, a rod and gun, and, in front, those indescribably open spaces, is as near Heaven as anyone can wish in this world of ours.

Lewis Carey, *My Gun and I*, 1933

What if I made a bunch of money and die before I can spend it to buy the free time to fish and hunt?

Jim Harrison, *Field & Stream*, February, 2003

PASSAGES

When somebody makes my ears ring, I am a little dubious about him thereafter. I figure that if he came that close he might come closer. Might as well shoot me as scare me to death.

Havilah Babcock, *Good Bird Hunters Go to Heaven*, 1950

When the trees are gone, man will also be gone, for without them we cannot live.

Louis L'Amour, *The Lonesome Gods*, 1983

When you hunt and fish you collect times, places and minor events that last a lifetime and the fellow beside you collects his own, which may be completely different.

Charles F. Waterman, *Times and Places, Home and Away*, 1988

While the years may change the color of a hunter's hair, and perhaps the sprightliness of his step, they cannot touch the fiber of his heart.

Archibald Rutledge, *Those Were the Days*, 1955

Writing . . . is the process of capturing what the eye saw, what the ear heard, what the nose smelled, the fingers felt, the tongue tasted, and, most importantly, what the mind and heart experienced. The shooting man who, at end of day, doesn't bring those things back is impoverished; the shooting writer who doesn't offer that to his reader is just a hack.

George Bird Evans, *Men Who Shot*, 1983

Yes, it was long ago, but what else have we but memories. For all life is divided into two parts: anticipation and memory, and if we remember richly, we must have lived richly.

Louis L'Amour, *Off the Mangrove Coast*, 2000

Viewpoint

You are as relaxed, physically and mentally, as you will ever be. The river has reached out like an old friend and made a place for you. You pack a leisurely pipe, and the water about you is lit for a minute, the match hisses in the river and the babbling mystery of the night deepens.

Gordon MacQuarrie, *Stories of the Old Duck Hunters*, 1985

You show me a man who has a house, badly in need of paint, a closet full of shotguns and rifles, walls covered with prints of bird dogs and sporting scenes but no furniture and an untrimmed lawn filled with retrievers, and I'll show you a man who spent his life dreaming – with very few regrets.

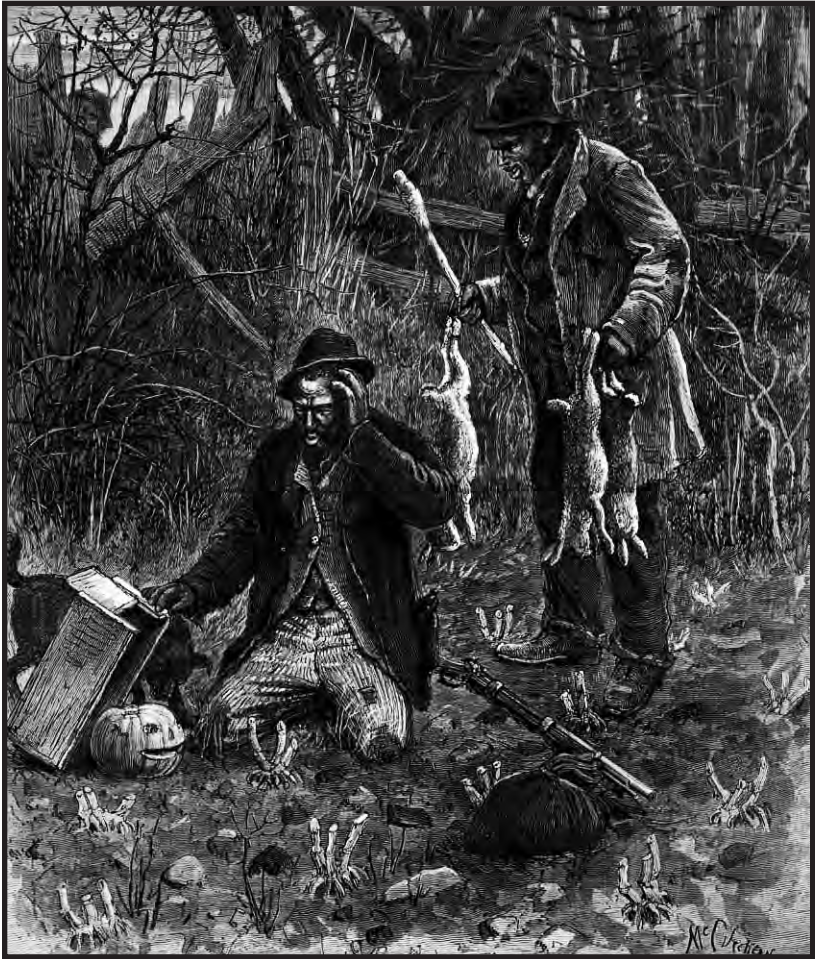
Gene Hill, *Mostly Tailfeathers*, 1971

You take a dog and you train him right, then leave him alone and you got a good dog. The same applies to boys. Spoil a dog early, and no amount of hollering will cure him. That also applies to boys.

Robert Ruark, *The Old Man and the Boy*, 1957

Wingshooters are rugged individualists, and the matching of the two personalities gives a man the choice of only a very few hunting companions who happen to provide that cordial fit of tastes and desires which is so enjoyable. If you find companions who know and fit your little ways, cleave to them. In the cold, often wet, days of exertion and alternate moments of exultation and despair, old pals develop an understanding and affection approaching the bond of matrimony.

G. Grouse, *Partridge Shootin'*, 1949



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