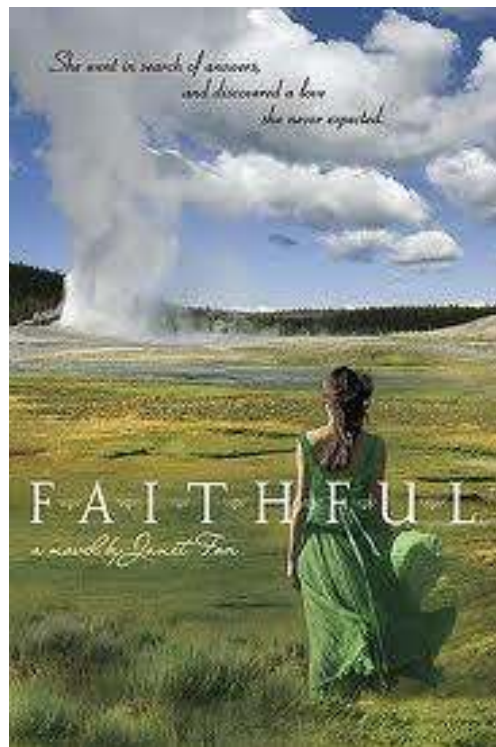


A Discussion Guide and Journal Prompts for

# *Faithful*

Written by Janet Fox



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Guide Created by Debbie Gonzales

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*The format of this guide follows a 6 section course of study. Each section is comprised of discussion questions for designated chapter groupings followed by a series of Personal Journal Prompts inspired by the novel's chapter headings.*


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## Reading Assignment Bookmarks

Listed on these bookmarks are the designated chapter groupings and a space allotted for a **Target Completion Dates**. A suggested format for a group or individual novel study is to assign weekly **Target Completion Dates** for students to finish reading prior to the weekly book discussion session.

Procedure:

- Print book marks on cardstock – one per student in novel study group.
- Trim the edges of bookmark.
- Give to student with the directions to:
  - Write their name on it.
  - Copy Target Completion Dates in designated space below assigned chapters to be read.
  - Keep the bookmark in the book for reference through the course of novel study.



Name:

Chapters 1 through 6  
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Chapters 7 through 13  
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Chapters 14 through 20  
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Chapters 21 through 27  
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Chapters 28 through 35  
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Chapters 36 through 41  
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Name:

Chapters 1 through 6  
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Chapters 7 through 13  
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Chapters 21 through 27  
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Name:

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Chapters 14 through 20  
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Chapters 21 through 27  
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Chapters 28 through 35  
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Chapters 36 through 41  
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## Discussion Questions for Chapters 1 through 6

*...but I couldn't give Ghost my crop and set him off at a cantor. I urged his into a fast trot instead and even then it saw it in the faces we passed: the raised eyebrows, the surprise, the disapproval (3).*

1. Why couldn't Maggie let Ghost lope freely in a cantor? Why did she 'urge' Ghost to trot instead?
2. What is the 'it' Maggie recognized in the faces she passed? Who do the 'faces' belong to?
3. Ghost is an interesting name for a horse. Do you think this name might be significant to Maggie's story? How so?

*"I need my debut, a really fine debut, with everything done exactly right, to make them want me. I want to prove to them that..." I didn't finish my sentence, but what came to mind was, "that I'm not like Mama" (19).*

1. A debut is a young woman's formal entrance into society. Maggie says that she needs hers to be 'really fine'. What does that mean?
2. Who is the 'them' that Maggie hopes will want her?
3. What do you think will happen if her debut is not *really fine*?
4. Why does she not want to be like her mother?
5. Do you think her wish to be different than Mama has something to do with desiring to please *them*? Why should she care?

*For friendship, I had none better than Kitty (21).*

*"...of course, they'll fall in love with me first. Boys like to dominate. But I can only love one at a time, so surely there will be someone left for you." [Kitty] batted her eyes (23).*

1. A friend is someone who is attached to another by affection or esteem, bonded by kindness and warm regard. Do Kitty's words express a feeling of kindness and warm regard for Maggie? Explain.
2. Kitty says that 'boys like to dominate'.
  - a. Do you think Kitty likes to be dominated?
  - b. To be controlled?
  - c. To surrender her personal power in efforts to please another person?
  - d. Is this what Maggie wants? If so, why?
3. What does Kitty's eye-batting say about her character?
4. Do you like Kitty? Why or why not?

*"Maggie on the Cliff Walk?" Kitty's eyebrows arched in surprise.*

*"Mama takes the outside when it's steep. I try not to look" (29).*

1. How does Maggie feel about being in high places? Why won't she look?

2. Mama assumes the most dangerous position when the going gets steep. By taking the outside, Mama willfully risks her own life. What does this action say about Mama's feelings for Maggie?
3. Who does Maggie turn to when things get too steep to handle?
4. Could the steep treachery of the Cliff Walk be a metaphor for the worrisome, pre-debut climb into high society? What would happen if Maggie fell? What if she doesn't make it?

*My grandfather's voice thundered through the house. "What? What did that cad of a father tell her?"*

*"...I can't stand this. History is repeating itself. He's doing it all over again. She'll never find a suitable husband. They'll never accept her" (31).*

1. Maggie's maternal grandfather refers to her father as a 'cad'. What does that mean? What does this accusation say about their feelings for Papa?
2. What do you think taking a trip to Montana has to do with history repeating itself? What history? Whose history?
3. Why does this trip jeopardize Maggie's finding a suitable husband?
4. Who will never accept her?
5. Do you consider Maggie's grandparents to be dominating? Controlling?
6. Do you think that they, perhaps, treated Mama in the same way?
7. How would you react to someone asserting their control over your life in a way similar to this?

*A semi-circle of space opened around me, and I knew I could not escape. I was involved; it was my mama there on the floor... "Scandalous"... "Unacceptable". Edward stepped father away from me and I could feel the distance between us gape (50).*

1. In this compelling scene Maggie is trapped, unable to escape. What are some of the situations from which she would like to escape?
  - a. Regarding her mother's influence?
  - b. Regarding the threat of not being to have a proper debut?
  - c. Regarding the societal expectation of females?
2. What was the crowd referring to with their judgmental comments?
  - a. Who or what was 'scandalous'?
  - b. How could Maggie's mother's distress be judged as 'unacceptable'?
3. Consider Edward's reaction to the scene.
  - a. What does his response say about his character?
  - b. His relationship to Maggie?
4. What would you do if you were Maggie? Her father? Edward? Kitty?

## Discussion Questions for Chapters 7 through 13

*“Jim!” Uncle John waved like a madman. People turned and stared. I shrank in my seat (57).*

1. Why was Uncle Jim waving like a ‘madman’? Is that a normal reaction when a person sees a long, lost relative?
2. Why did Maggie shrink in her seat? Wasn’t she glad to see Uncle Jim?
3. Why did she care if people ‘turned and stared’?
4. How is this crowd scene different than when her mother broke down at the party?
5. Do you think Maggie is pretentious? How so?

*[Tom] pointed at my book. “What do you think?”*

*... “It’s very popular.”*

*“That’s important? (58)”*

1. Tom asks Maggie, directly, for her opinion regarding the book she is reading. What does this say about his character?
2. Consider Maggie’s response. What does it say about her character?
3. Is it important to evaluate the worth of something in light of popularity? Explain.
4. Is it important to evaluate a person’s worth in light of popularity? Explain.

*“Nice meeting you, Margaret Bennet of Newport, Rhode Island, world traveler. Maybe we’ll cross paths again in the Park.” He started to turn away, then turned back to me... “Just a thought – watch out for highway robbers when you take the Tour.” And with that, he broke into an outright grin (61).*

1. Was Tom being sincere in his welcoming comments? Sarcastic? What words reveal his intent?
2. Do you think his warning regarding highway robbers was based on genuine concern? Explain your answer.
3. Why would the thought of Maggie being threatened by robbers cause Tom to grin so broadly?
4. What kind of person is Tom? What are the characteristics of his nature that have created your perception of him? Be specific.

*The bear stood on its hind legs. I felt its call as if it were a wild thing. The taste of fear rose into my mouth but still wanted to see the bear (68).*

1. Based on Maggie’s character, do you think her response to the bear’s presence is odd? How so?
2. How can the bear’s presence call to her? What does she mean by that statement?
3. Could the bear’s presence serve as a metaphor for some aspect(s) of Maggie’s life? Explain.
4. Do you feel that this scene might serve as a defining moment for Maggie’s developing character? If so, how?

*My imagination told me that everything here was deadly. Toxic fumes, hidden magma...Yellowstone was a place of death...It smelled noxious, like rotten eggs (86).*

1. If Maggie's imagination is telling her that Yellowstone was a hideous place, is it, in fact, true?
  - a. Does her perception have something to do with her judgment?
  - b. Could her present emotional state have something to do with her perception? How so?
2. Do Maggie's perception of Yellowstone and her quest to find her mother share any significance? Explain.
3. Is death always a bad thing?

*...Mama had given me a way to see. She had given me art (99).*

1. What does Maggie see through her mother's art work?
2. How does her mother's artistic expression influence Maggie's life?
3. An artist requires inspiration and inhibition to freely create. Does Maggie's desired way of life allow for these attributes?

*Here was the ideal husband. He was rich and single. Never mind his age; younger girls than I had married older men than Graybull ...Oh, I might find a suitable husband after all (103).*

1. Upon her own freewill, Maggie is seriously considering George Graybull as a suitor. What do you think about this prospect?
  - a. In what ways would George Graybull serve as a good husband for Maggie?
  - b. Are there ways that this choice might not suit her best interests?
2. Can you see how, being that Maggie is being influenced by the societal norms of the early 1900's, marrying Graybull can be considered a good thing?
  - a. List Maggie's benefits in this union.
  - b. List Maggie's losses in this union.
3. What's at stake if Maggie marries Graybull?
4. Is this was she really wants?
5. Do you think Maggie knows what she wants? If so, what is it?

## Discussion Questions for Chapters 14 to 20

*I laughed. I surprised myself, and actually laughed, open-mouthed in a way I hadn't done in years (110).*

1. Why would engaging in a good, hearty laugh be surprising to Maggie?
2. What caused Maggie's out-of-character, uninhibited response?
3. Does the fact that she hadn't laughed in this way in 'years', does this mean she hasn't been truly happy in years?
4. What does it mean to be 'happy'?

*"He's an architect, right? So maybe you could study architecture."*

*"No! Don't be ridiculous! ...Women don't do that sort of thing."*

*"Why not? (111)"*

1. The exclamation marks following Maggie's response to Tom's suggestion express an emotional response of shock or surprise. Is Tom's suggestion provocative? Shocking? Outlandish?
2. Considering the story's historical setting, what does the fact that Tom made such a contemporary suggestion regarding the role of women in society say about his character?
3. Can you see how Tom's influence might be somewhat unsettling to Maggie?

*Mrs. Gale wasn't a tourist taking pictures for her own pleasure...she worked. She, a woman who seemed of means and social standing was employed (119).*

1. Explain why Maggie's observation regarding Mrs. Gale seemed odd to her.
2. What does Maggie mean by the comment 'seemed of means'? Of 'social standing'?
3. Why is this important to Maggie? Is it important to you? Why or why not?

*Tom Rowland, who was nothing like Edward Tyson – or George Graybull. It was all so confusing (122).*

1. Compare the character traits of Tom Rowland, Edward Tyson, and George Graybull. In what ways are these three men similar?
2. Contrast the character traits of the three men. In what ways are they alike?
3. State a positive attribute for each of the men. In what way(s) would each be a beneficial suitor for Maggie?
4. State a detrimental attribute for each of the men. In what way(s) would their influence be harmful for Maggie?



*I had options. Kula did not (135).*

1. Is this statement entirely true?
2. List the options available to Kula? What limitations are placed upon her?
3. List the options available to Maggie? What limitations are placed upon her?
4. Which girl possesses true freedom of choice?

*Believe in yourself. Take chances. Find true love, no matter where, and hold onto it (152).*

1. How can Maggie take chances when her existence is prescribed by societal norms?
2. What sorts of chances do you think she'd like to take?
3. What is true love, really?
4. Is Maggie free to find 'true love'?

*...the doe stumbled into the sinter, ...dying before she could finish her scream of pain.*

*Both the fawn and I watched this happen, frozen, panting (153).*

1. Could this horrific scene serve as a metaphor for Maggie's emotional issues regarding her mother's absence?
2. Note that the doe fell off of the ledge, tumbling toward a torturous death. The fawn and Maggie witnessed her agony, fully aware of her struggle. Do you think Maggie is aware of her mother's emotional struggle?
3. How does Maggie respond when her mother broke down during the social event? How is Maggie's response then similar to that of her and the fawn in this scene?
4. Earlier Maggie commented that 'Yellowstone was a place of death (86)'. Do you think her witnessing this tragedy of nature is intended to prepare her for the inevitable?
5. In what ways are Maggie and the fawn similar? How are they different?

## Discussion Questions for Chapters 21 to 27

*I stared at the papers in my hand. Grandpapa was suing to become my guardian. And Edward was ready to ride to my rescue. It was everything I wanted, everything I'd hoped for...I should be rejoicing and yet I was not (160).*

1. Why wasn't Maggie rejoicing? What had changed?
2. What would Maggie gain if she complied with her grandfather's wishes? What would be lost?

*"Even here in the wilderness, we try to maintain a sense of decorum. (161)"*

1. What message is being implied in this statement?
2. Who was demonstrating uncivilized demeanor – Maggie or Mrs. Gale? How so?

*Tom looked from me to Kula. "Kula, this is Maggie. She's living here with her pa."*

*"I know who she is." Kula put the sack into Tom's wagon, not taking her eyes off me (163).*

1. Why do you think Tom shifted his gaze between the girls before speaking?
2. Why do you think Kula kept her gaze locked on Maggie while unloading the sack into Tom's wagon?
3. What is your impression of Kula? What role do you think she will play in the story?

*"It's beyond the confines of society. (170)"*

1. What does 'confines' mean?
2. Why does Mrs. Gale find living 'beyond the confines of society' to be appealing?
3. Do you think this is something that would ever appeal to Maggie?
4. How can this attitude be beneficial for Maggie? How can it be a detriment?

*My back stiffened with resolve. I felt a shock of joy as I refused to yield to the orders of this man. "No."*

1. What is happening to Maggie? What is giving her the courage to confront danger in such a resolute manner?

2. Maggie stated that she felt a 'shock of joy' when she refused to turn over the cameo. Why? How could she find joy in such a perilous situation?
3. Do you think her new found inner strength originates from the cameo? Could it be a sort of magic charm serving to avert evil or to bring about good fortune? Or is it coming from somewhere inside her? Explain your answer.

*"I think [Yellowstone] is the most fantastic place on earth." I meant it, and knew [Tom ] was a part of the reason why.*

*His smile broadened to a grin. "Then we share a great love. (194)"*

1. Gone is Maggie's noxious fume and rotten egg impression of Yellowstone. Why is this so?
2. Could Tom's comment regarding 'sharing a great love' serve as the foreshadowing things to come?

*"George Graybull is a powerful man, Margaret. He can make or break people...He has an interest in you. It means everything to me that you return that interest, at least a little. (200)"*

1. Is Maggie's father thinking only of his well-being? Could he be thinking of Maggie's best interests, as well? How so?
2. Earlier Maggie commented that Graybull was the 'ideal husband'. Now that Graybull is interested in her, Maggie has changed her mind about him. Why the change of heart?
3. Compare and contrast George Graybull and Tom Rowland.
  - a. Consider ways that each man could be good for her.
  - b. Consider ways that each man would be a detriment to her.
4. Which man would you choose if you were Maggie? Explain your answer.

## Discussion Questions for Chapters 28 to 35

*But here was one thing no one could order me to do. A new freedom, like an open door, blew in and I unhooked the corset and threw it on the bed (202).*

1. Was this an act of defiance? How so?
2. Was this an act of liberation? How so?
3. Was this an act of self-acceptance? How so?

*"I'd please him well; get him to give me everything I wanted. I'd never lift a finger again...I'd get him to dress me fine," she said, and nodded her head at the dress. "I'd do anything for a man who'd take care of me right. Lie, steal, anything. (211)"*

1. Why did Maggie find Kula's statement to be shocking?
2. Wasn't this the notion regarding men and marriage Maggie's initial intention? What changed?
3. What does the line 'lie, steal, anything' say about Kula's character?

*"You'd help me, that's all. Be my companion. Not a slave. A help, that's all."*

*... I figured Tom would be proud of me for giving [Kula] a decent job, for accepting her, even if we could never be equals (216).*

1. Was Maggie's decision to employ Kula an altruistic act?
2. Is Maggie really 'accepting' Kula, or is she using her? Why?
3. What does Maggie mean by saying that the two could never be equals?
4. What does it mean to be an 'equal'?
5. What about Kitty?
  - a. Were Kitty and Maggie 'equals'?
  - b. Do you think that Kitty might have been using Maggie for personal gain in some way?

*Mrs. Gale set up the camera and asked me to shoot the picture. I waited until one bear turned its head toward me, then captured it (246).*

1. Both Graybull and Maggie desire to 'capture' bears.
  - a. In what ways is their intent to do so similar?
  - b. In what ways does their intent differ?

2. In this scene, the bear faces Maggie full on, as did the highway robber. Do you think the bear and the robber could symbolic of something similar?
3. In what ways is Mrs. Gale like Maggie's mother? In what ways is she different?

*But I froze. I couldn't move; I could barely breathe. I pushed my cheek against the rock, pressed my entire body into the rock, hanging onto the rope with all my strength (255).*

1. Compare this scene to that of the dying doe and her fawn on page 153. Are there similarities? Are there differences?
2. Maggie mentions that she held onto the rope with all of her 'strength'. In what ways has Maggie developed strength?
3. Consider the use of height and ledges in this novel. Do you think this theme is significant? How so?

*"Grizzlies." I recalled those flat, black eyes. "I think bears are my talisman. Maybe they like me (264)."*

1. A talisman is a charm thought to avert evil or to bring about fortune.
  - a. How do bears avert danger for Maggie?
  - b. Do they bring about good fortune?
2. Do you think bears 'like' Maggie? If so, why?
3. What about the cameo? Does it serve as a talisman for Maggie? If so, in what ways?
4. What about Yellowstone, itself? How does it serve as a talisman for Maggie?
5. Is Mrs. Gale a talisman of sorts? How so?
6. Do you believe that Maggie's personal growth is largely due to the influence of talisman?

## Discussion Questions for Chapters 28 to 35

*“An extra pair of hands would be most useful,” Papa said. “Tom can accompany Margaret while I’m working. (274-5)”*

1. Why do you think Maggie’s father is allowing her to join Tom on this excursion?
  - a. Has he had a change of heart regarding her future?
  - b. Is he allowing for her to enjoy herself one more time before marrying Graybull?
2. Do you think Papa loves Maggie? Is allowing for her to join Tom on this excursion an expression of his love for her, in some way?
3. Is Papa coming to terms with the death of his beloved wife?

*Then the bear opened its mouth and gave a roar, shaking its head from side to side. Drops of saliva sprayed the air around its terrible mouth (281).*

1. Is this bear serving as Maggie’s talisman?
  - a. Is it warding off evil? How so?
  - b. Does this bear ‘like her’?
  - c. Is it bringing about good fortune? How so?
2. Later in the scene Maggie hears herself screaming.
  - a. Can you recall other instances when screaming occurred in the story?
  - b. Her mother?
  - c. The doe?
  - d. Mrs. Gale?
  - e. Do you think screaming might be symbolic of finding one’s voice?

*The blood from the gash on his arm was flowing freely, and I reached under my skirt to my petticoat, tearing a strip of cloth. I bound his arm, but it needed fastening. My hand went to my throat. The cameo was still there. I pinned the cameo to the bandage, making it fast (287).*

1. In effort to care for her injured father, Maggie tore her clothing. By doing so, how is this act sacrificial?
2. Earlier Maggie deemed the cameo to be her talisman.
  - a. How is this piece of jewelry warding off evil?
  - b. How is it bringing about good fortune?
3. Consider the metaphorical and symbolic significance of this scene.
4. Mother’s cameo is holding the family together. How so? Physically? Emotionally? Spiritually?

*I leaned my head against the mare's shoulder. She reminded me how much I missed Ghost. Lovely Ghost. The mare turned, nudging me with her nose. I knew what I had to do, but I wasn't sure that I could (289).*

1. Which 'Lovely Ghost' is Maggie truly missing? Her horse or her mother? Explain your answer.
2. On page 3 Maggie 'urged' Ghost to trot.
  - a. Could the mare's nudging be symbolic in some way?
  - b. How so?
3. Could the mare be a talisman?
4. What is it that Maggie must do?
5. From where will she call upon strength to fulfill her calling? Her destiny? Her truth?

*I looked back at Kula. Feeling dizzy. Nat knew Mama. Even though my uncle remembered the story, I was not ready to accept what Nat Baker seemed to be telling me. "What?"*

*"Your pa and uncle had it all wrong," said Kula (294).*

1. Had Kula known this secret all along? Had Tom? Had Papa?
2. Recall the highway robbery scene. Did the cameo serve as Maggie's talisman at that time?
3. What do you think about Nat Baker? Can a criminal have redeeming traits? How so?

*I led Kula, Nat, and a group of Nat's men back through the woods toward Papa (298).*

1. Consider this scene carefully. Maggie is leading her newly found half-sister, her mother's past love, and a band of renegades to save her father.
  - a. What or who is the bond that all of these people share?
  - b. Why is Kula willing to help?
  - c. Why would Nat be willing to help?
2. Who is demonstrating leadership? Character? Courage? Forgiveness? Tenacity? How so?

*"Who do you want to be, then, Maggie Bennet?"*

*Who did I want to be? "I am my mother's daughter," I said. "My sister's friend (305)."*

1. How does this statement compare with Maggie's earlier desires?
2. In the statement above, can you see how Maggie has come to terms with who she really is? How so? Explain your answer.
3. Does she *need* Tom to become fulfilled as a person? How so?

## Personal Journal Prompts Instruction

Author Janet Fox has thoughtfully scripted quotations as chapter headings, each introducing the theme of each chapter, thus inviting the reader to consider the protagonist's emotional transformation. In this section of the guide, you are invited to use journaling techniques to better understand Maggie's quest, and – perhaps – your own.

With a spiral notebook and pen in hand, you are invited to ponder upon the intention presented in the chapter heading quotations featured on page 17.

- What do these quotes mean? In relation to the story? To you?
- Consider key words or phrases. Expound upon them.
- Consider the historical references of each quote. Is the intent of the quote limited to that isolated time in history or is it timeless? How so?
- What is the quote's real inner message?
- Can you relate to its message? How so?

Read the following quotes closely. Choose one or more to copy at the top of a page. In it, are there words that spark your imagination? Is there a phrase that speaks to your emotional core? If so, write about it. Express your position, opinions, or emotions on the page. Write freely for 10 to 20 minutes.

Be brave! Be honest! Be true to yourself!

Who knows? In doing so, you might discover your true desires!

...like Maggie did.



## Personal Journal Prompts

*Suddenly, shaken with weeping, she bowed her face upon the hands that held her own...The outward signs of life's most poignant and most beautiful moments are generally very simple and austere.*  
– Ward, 1903 (45)

*But hush! What are our poor words in the presence of these nobler secrets of the wrestling and mounting spirit (54)?*  
– Ward, 1903 (54)

*I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived.*  
–Thoreau, 1854 (63)

*“It isn’t a question of any beauty,” said Maggie; “it’s only a question of the quantity of truth...that’s a thing by itself, yes. But there are also such things, all the same, as good questions of faith.”*  
– James, 1904 (108)

*So I lost her. So I saw her afterwards, in my sleep at school – a silent presence near my bed – looking at me with the same intent face – holding up the baby in her arms.*  
– Dickens, 1850 (154)

*She was so evidently the victim of civilization which had produced her that the links of her bracelet seemed like manacles chaining her to her fate.*  
–Wharton, 1905 (201)

*Why stop with only these chapter heading quotes? Review all of the chapter headings to discover the one that speaks to your inner truth!*

## Acknowledgments

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*Simple Saturday*

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