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1st Place: "The Art of Storytelling" Literature Collection

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For as long as I can remember I have loved books. More importantly, I have always loved the stories within books. Humankind has the unique capability of creating a narrative that resonates with others, and books give us the capacity to distribute those narratives across the world. Books are the purest of globetrotters, and cross boundaries that many times people themselves cannot; they can propagate messages of kindness, foster feelings of fear, and even inspire. Their stories even transcend time.

Being a self-professed bibliophile, I naturally began to “collect” books. However, I will freely admit that my collection neither started nor followed any set parameters. I simply followed my own set of rules to attain what mattered to me (and what was within my own financial range at the time). Somehow, there is always room for a new book, and certainly if that book is right up my alley. That said, the collection that follows simply includes those books that I will never see fit to take off my shelf. Some others in my house may go, but these will stay with me. True, perhaps only a handful carry any true value, whether age-wise or monetarily, but they are valuable to me, and represent my own literary “character,” if you will.

My overall collection can be cleanly divided into four “mini” collections: Classical Literature, Myths, and Fairy Tales; Modern Literature; Sherlock Holmes; and Poetry and Plays. All in all, it is undoubtedly an eclectic collection, with eclectic origins — I acquired all of these books from an array of bookstores, used book sales, travel experiences, and academic studies. The stories immortalized within these books are reflected in and enhanced by the stories of their acquisition, and though the overall monetary and/or curatorial value may not be as high as expected from a bona-fide book collection, their value to me is infinite — wherein lies the true worth of books and stories to humanity: it’s all about how the narrative affects you.



As mentioned in my essay, the following bibliographic representation of my collection has been subdivided into mini-collections.

Ancient Literature, Mythology, and Fairy Tales

- 1) Anonymous. *The Arabian Nights*. Trans. Antoine Galland. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 2007.

In my mini-collection of global tales, this represents the Middle East, providing the sole base of folk tales from the region.

- 2) Brothers Grimm. *Brothers Grimm: 101 Fairy Tales*. San Diego: Canterbury Classics/Baker & Taylor Publishing Group, 2012.

This book was purchased on a whim, as I wanted to familiarize myself with more “modern” stories (I typically gravitate toward ancient literature). Also, being a Disney fan and knowing that several Disney stories are re-interpreted Grimm fairy tales, it was natural that I have a copy.

- 3) Bulfinch, Thomas. *Bulfinch’s Mythology*. San Diego: Canterbury Classics, 2014.

Bulfinch’s collection/interpretation of myths is recognized in similar circles as Edith Hamilton’s *Mythology*, and has garnered almost as much respect as well. I love mythology, so the more sources of interpretation, the better. This is also a collectible edition (despite its recent publication date), being part of a series of classic stories reprinted in grand fashion.

- 4) Hamilton, Edith. *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*. New York: Warner Books, 1999.

This book was my high-school copy, and still has my underlines, highlights, and dog-ears. It is not purely sentimental, however, as Hamilton’s rendering of myths is widely recognized.

- 5) Harvey, Sir Paul (ed.). *The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature*. London: Oxford University Press, 1937.

I found this book at a book sale for less than \$1. I thoroughly appreciated its antique nature, as well as its content. Albeit outdated, it serves as a fitting component of my ancient literature collection. Endearingly, it contains an inscription on the inside flap as well, detailing its previous owner.

- 6) Homer. *The Iliad*. Franklin Center: Franklin Mint Corporation, 1975.

I found this at the Chapman University book sale, and of course I had to purchase it. The gilded pages and beautiful covers add a great aesthetic value to my collection. This, *The Aeneid*, and the *Odyssey* from the same collection provide a consistent collector’s-edition set in this collection.

- 7) Homer. *Iliad*. Trans. Samuel Butler. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1995.

I purchased this while on a summer camp field trip, and it was one of the first books to become part of my collection. I read it cover to cover, twice, within the several months after I had purchased it.

- 8) Homer. *The Odyssey*. Franklin Center: Franklin Mint Corporation, 1975.

Being from the same collection as *The Iliad* and *Virgil's Aeneid* (line 16), this completes an aesthetically-consistent “Trojan War” set in my collection, as my other editions of these works are not from the same publishers.

- 9) Homer. *Odyssey*. Trans. Samuel Butler. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1993.

Like the identical version of *The Iliad* above (line 7), I purchased this while on a field trip and immediately began to read it (yes, I read them “backwards”). It was obviously another of the first assets in this collection.

- 10) Lawall, Sarah, and Maynard Mack, et al, editors. *The Norton Anthology of World Literature (Second Edition), Volume A: Beginnings to A.D. 100*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2002.

Although this book was meant for a class, I kept it (naturally) due to its sweeping collection of ancient literature, from Egyptian to Mesopotamian to Chinese. It's a great consolidator of ancient work and myth, as well as provides wider representative value.

- 11) Louys, Pierre. *Aphrodite [Ancient Manners]*. New York: Three Sirens Press, 1932 illustrated edition.

Despite its modern composition, I felt this work's topic and protagonist firmly set it within this sub-collection. Being published in 1932, it provides value as an antique in addition to being an interesting treatise on ancient Greek manners and behavior.

- 12) Ovid. *The Art of Love*. Trans. James Michie. New York: The Modern Library, 2002.

I thoroughly enjoy Ovid, and so I purchased this book to add to my other Ovid piece (below). It's also an interesting read in and of itself.

- 13) Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. A.D. Melville. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986.

This was also sourced from a class, and formed the basis for one of my best papers. However, while reading, I fell in love with the stories and their transcendence. It also adds another author to my list of ancient authors and topics.

- 14) Shorter, Alan W. *The Egyptian Gods*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1937. Reprint 1978.

Ancient Egypt is by far the ancient empire I am most interested in. Their mythology is rich and transcendent, adding to the personal value of this work. It's a shame this is not the original first edition and solely a reprint, but it adds another element - and country - to the representative aspect of my collection.

- 15) Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin Classics, 2006.

This was my first copy of *The Aeneid*, purchased well after I had purchased Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad*. I had purchased it to round out my collection spanning the Trojan War, but sadly could not find the same edition as the other tales.

- 16) Virgil. *The Aeneid*. Franklin Center: Franklin Mint Corporation, 1975.

As mentioned above, I did not have a consistent set of the pieces surrounding the Trojan War, so when I found this as well as identical Franklin Library Collection editions of Homer's *Odyssey* and *Iliad* (lines 6 and 8) at Chapman, I purchased it.

- 17) Williams, Paul (trans.) and Alexei Orleansky. *Russian Fairy Tales: Palekh Painting*. St. Petersburg, Ivan Fiordorov Printing Co., 2000.

While on a family vacation in Eastern Europe, I became fascinated with the Russian art of Palekh painting, characterized by vibrant, rich colors on a dark background and a distinctive art style. Being a lover of folk tales and mythology, when I found this little children's book in a store, I purchased it. Beyond its nostalgic and aesthetic value, it also serves representative purpose, as I did not have any pieces from Eastern Europe.

Modern Literature (Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries)

- 18) Abrams, M.H, Stephen Greenblat, et al, editors. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature (Seventh Edition), Volume II: Romantic Period, Victorian Age, and the Twentieth Century*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000.

My foray into British Literature actually began fairly recently, when I delved into Sherlock Holmes. This volume provides representative value, with its wide array of included authors.

- 19) Christie, Agatha. *Hallowe'en Party*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1969.

I acquired this book from my local library's used book store. It was in a giveaway box, and I picked it up for free. Later, while researching it, I realized that it is the first edition, printed in the United States in 1969. It still has the slipcover, but sadly is not in all that great of condition. It also has an inscription in the inside, which adds to its charm.

- 20) Conrad, Joseph. *The Heart of Darkness and The Secret Sharer*. New York: Bantam Classics, 2004.

This small novel is the very same edition I read in high school, complete with my highlights, underlines, and notes. *Heart* remains one of my favorite stories, so I'm glad I was able to keep this edition.

- 21) Dziemianowicz, Stefan, editor. *Penny Dreadfuls: Sensational Tales of Terror*. New York: Fall River Press, 2014.

Though this is a very recent publication, it contains a very good set of horror stories from the Victorian Era, including *The String of Pearls* (*Sweeney Todd The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*), *Frankenstein*, *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, and others.

- 22) Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22: 50th Anniversary Edition*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011.

I first read *Catch* in high school, and immediately fell in love with Yossarian's tale. When I saw this 50th anniversary reprint, I jumped at the opportunity to replace my battered, tired copy with it, especially with its custom cover.

- 23) Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein (unabridged)*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994.

Even though I have a compilation of texts that include this novel (line 21), I appreciate having the novel by itself as well, especially since the compilation has the original 1818 edition and this book is the final edition.

24) Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. New York: Bantam Books, 1981.

Much like the *Frankenstein* situation, this is a more recent publication of Stoker's classic, and as such is my note-ridden copy. The other edition I have (line 25) is the more important of my two copies.

25) Stoker, Bram. *Dracula*. New York: The Modern Library, undated.

This, as mentioned above, is an important piece in my collection due to its antique nature. Though there is no specific publication date appearing in it, I estimate it was published sometime in the early-mid 1900s, due to binding similarities apparent between this and my other early-mid twentieth-century books. It is a hardcover and still has the slipcover with minimal wear.

26) Verne, Jules. *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*. New York: Sterling Publishing Co., Inc., 2006 illustrated edition.

As evidenced, I enjoy classic stories. I acquired this from Chapman University's book sale, and though it may not be inherently valuable (as with most of my collection), it is valuable to me in that it represents a great story by an iconic author, is in great condition for a 10 year old book, and contains illustrations from the original publication.

Sherlock Holmes Collection

27) Baring-Gould, William. *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street: A Life of the World's First Consulting Detective*. New York: Bramhall House, 1962.

This book, apart from its vintage publication date, contains various Holmes stories told from Holmes' perspective (rather than Watson's) as well as essays which, when combined, endeavor to paint a "pseudo-autobiographical" portrait of the great detective. It provides a nice counterpoint to the other pieces in this mini-collection.

28) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Race Point Publishing, 2013 collector's edition with slip case.

My boyfriend bought this for me for Christmas, so it carries much sentimental value on that point. It also is a comprehensive collection of the entire Holmes canon, complete with fabric herringbone binding and a heavy-duty slipcase. As imagined, it remains on the shelf untouched.

29) Conan Coyle, Sir Arthur. *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*. Pleasantville: The Reader's Digest Association, Inc., 1988.

This publication of one of the Holmes canon segments was part of Reader's Digest World's Best Reading selection, picked up at my library's used book store. It is excellent condition, with a minor tear on a title page, and comes complete with the original editor's notes.

30) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *The Original Illustrated Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Book Sales, Inc., 2009.

I picked this up from Border's Books shortly before they went out of business. It is a hardcover edition with the Holmes canon supplemented with replications of the illustrations as originally published in *The Strand* magazine.

- 31) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories (Volume I)*. New York: Bantam Classics, 2003.

This paperback serves as my go-to edition to read the Holmes canon. It contains the first two novels *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Sign of the Four* as well as the story collection *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

- 32) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories (Volume II)*. New York: Bantam Classics, 2003.

This is the second of the two paperback volumes of the Holmes canon. It begins with *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, one of my favorite Holmes tales, and also includes *The Valley of Fear* and the collection of stories in *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*.

- 33) Dziemianowicz, Stefan, editor. *The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes: A Collection of Victorian Detective Tales*. New York: Fall River Press, 2015.

I purchased this in order to round out my Holmes collection. By containing detective stories from the likes of Edgar Allen Poe (the true father of detective novels) and other authors, it provides both a nice backdrop for the emergence of Holmes as well as a reflection of his popularity.

- 34) Riggs, Ransom. *The Sherlock Holmes Handbook: The Methods and Mysteries of the World's Greatest Detective*. Philadelphia: Quirk Books, 2009.

This is, granted, a young adult book. However, it contains a fair amount of information surrounding Holmes as a character and a detective. By being in my mini-collection it adds a little to the expansive representation and popularity of Holmes as a character.

Poetry and Plays

- 35) Alighieri, Dante. *Divine Comedy*. New York: Fall River Press, 2008.

As will be evidenced here, I have a real affinity for Dante's epic poem. I enjoy having several copies of varying repute and aesthetic. This is the most recent publication of those I have, but interestingly is the only Henry Wadsworth Longfellow translation in my collection. It also contains several of the Gustave Dore illustrations.

- 36) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy*. Franklin Center: Franklin Mint Corporation, 1977.

Upon researching this volume, I found that this edition sells for several hundred dollars. Interesting, when I purchased it for \$5. With its gilt pages, satin ribbon, and beautiful hardcover design, it is the most aesthetically-pleasing in my *Divine Comedy* collection. However, it is not a Longfellow translation, but *does* contain some Dore illustrations.

- 37) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Inferno*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Classics, 2004.

This edition is a simple, lightweight paperback, first used in my college days. It marks my first foray into Dante's Hell, and is what drew me to this story, which remains one of my absolute favorites to this day. The illustrations are also very poignant, and are drawn by Stephen Gammel, the same illustrator who did the *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark* series (before it was retracted and his "grotesque" illustrations removed because of angry parents). The book is also full of my markings and notes, and the verse is impeccable and haunting. It will never leave my shelf.

- 38) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Purgatorio*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Classics, 2004.

Having purchased *Inferno* and loved it as much as I did, I soon purchased the others in the story. These are those that I always read. Therefore, this edition helps round out my Mandelbaum translation/Gammel illustration set.

- 39) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri: Paradiso*. Trans. Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Classics, 2004.

As with the item above, this is simply to round out my Mandelbaum set and is the copy I will always pick up and read due to its portability.

- 40) Donne, John. *Complete Poetry and Selected Prose*. Bloomsbury: The Nonesuch Press, 1929.

I always remember that my high school AP Literature teacher and I both loved our John Donne pieces, and I was excited to purchase a copy of his prose for myself (see line 41). I purchased this copy later at a used book sale, and was absolutely giddy over its antique and comprehensive nature. I try to keep it safe with my other antique books.

- 41) Donne, John. *The Complete Poetry and Selected Prose of John Donne*. Ed. Charles M. Coffin. New York: The Modern Library, 2001.

This is the more modern publication of the item above, and is the copy I first found and often read. Donne poetry has always been a favorite, so a chance to have a large selection in one place was immediately appealing.

- 42) von Goethe, Johann Wolfgang. *Faust*. Franklin Center: Franklin Mint Corporation, 1979.

I will admit, I only nominally know this story, and have not read this copy yet. I purchased it for \$5, and it is another member of my Franklin Library nano-collection. The cover design, gilt pages, and satin bookmark give it its aesthetic value, and its monetary value surely helps, but I purchased and added it to my collection for the story value, and am excited to delve into it further.

- 43) Milton, John. *Paradise Lost and Other Poems*. New York: New American Library, 2003.

I have always been fascinated with Milton's ideas in this epic work, so to have a readable copy of it was an easy next step. Not much for monetary or aesthetic value, this edition is simply for convenience.

- 44) Milton, John. *Poems by Milton, Vol. II*. ed. R.C. Browne. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1877.

This is the real valuable edition of my Milton pieces, being an antique. I originally purchased it from a used book sale because it was Milton and published in the late 1800s. It was only later that I realized it contains the entire *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained* stories as well as a selection of other poems.

- 45) Nathan, George Jean, editor. *World's Great Plays*. Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1944.

This is a nice old book containing great plays, spanning from *Lysistrata* to more modern tellings. Granted, some of my favorite plays are not included, but by being an antique and a compendium of plays, this book holds some value in my collection.

46) Shakespeare, William. *Shakespeare's Tragedies*. London: Everyman's Library, undated.

I purchased this on the side of the road in London for a whopping 3 pounds. I had it appraised, as I could not find a publication date anywhere within it, and it was estimated to be from the early 1900s. Its delicate pages and panel art prove it to be in excellent condition, and it contains every Shakespearean tragedy written. I have always loved Shakespeare, and his tragedies are some of my favorite stories, so a chance to have not only a compendium, but an antique one makes it very valuable to my collection.

47) Zangwill, Israel. *Italian Fantasies*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910.

In my view, the sole value this book adds is the fact that it is an antique. It is comprised of essays and stories about Italian culture and, well, fantasies. I have an intense affinity for Italy, so when I found this at a used book sale I decided I couldn't leave without it. It is in great condition, only needing minor repairs.

Book Collection Wishlist

- 1) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy*. Trans. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (First edition). 1867.

As this is arguably the most recognized English translation of Dante's work, it would be a welcome addition to my copies, which are all from less-notable translators or are academic editions. The copies I have are essentially not valuable, and as this is one of my favorite stories in all literature, to have an antique, "famous" version would make me far more proud of my collection.

- 2) Alighieri, Dante. *The Divine Comedy: Inferno*. 1880s Cassel and Company edition illustrated by Gustave Dorè.

Inferno is my favorite part of the Divine Comedy, so having an antique and notable edition complete with illustrations would help me enjoy my collection even more.

- 3) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *A Study in Scarlet*. Ward Locke and Co., 1887 first edition.

Study marks the debut of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson. Similar to first-appearance value in a comic book collection, having a first edition of Holmes' debut would add great value to my collection.

- 4) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, in *The Strand*. Original publication, Vol XXII, 1901.

Hound is one of my favorite stories in the Holmes canon and, similar to the above case with Dante, having an antique, first-print copy would add great value to my somewhat amateur collection.

- 5) Conan Doyle, Sir Arthur. *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, in *The Strand*. Original publication, Vol XXIII, 1902.

The above entry for *Hound* only contains the first nine chapters in the novel, so naturally the next edition of *The Strand* would complete the narrative, and complete my nano-collection of *Hound of the Baskervilles*.

- 6) Milton, John. *Poems by Milton, Vol. I*. ed. R.C. Browne. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1877.

As I already have the second volume in this set, I would like to find the first in order to complete it. It was nowhere to be found when I purchased Volume II, and it would be nice to have a complete set.