

SOME MEMORABLE FIRST LINES

Graham Moore: *The Last Days of Night*:

On the day that he would first meet
Thomas Edison, Paul watched a man burn
alive in the sky above Broadway.

Rachel Kushner: *Telex from Cuba*

It was the first thing I saw when I opened
my eyes that morning.

Gillian Flynn: *Gone Girl*

When I think of my wife, I always think of
her head.

Lydia Millet: *Ghost Lights*

The walls were kittens and puppies.

Michael Chabon: *Telegraph Avenue*

A white boy rode flatfoot on a
skateboard, towed along, hand to shoulder,
by a black boy pedaling a brakeless fixed-
gear bike.

Kent Haruf: *Benediction*

When the test came back the nurse called
them into the examination room and when
the doctor entered the room, he just
looked at them asked them to sit down.

Eliot Pattison: *Bone Mountain*

"Sift the sand to find the seeds of the
universe."

Delia Owens: *Where the Crawdads Sing*

The morning burned so August-hot, the
marsh's moist breath hung the oaks and
pines with fog.

Catherine Lacey: *Nobody is Ever Missing*

There might be people in this world who
can read minds against their will and if
that kind of person exists, I am pretty
sure my husband is one of them.

James McBride: *Deacon King Kong*

Deacon Cuffy Limbkin of Five Ends Baptist
Church became a walking dead man on a
cloudy September afternoon in 1969.

Larry McMurty: *Duane's Depressed*

Two years into his sixties, Duane Moore -
a man who had driven pickups for as long
as he had been licensed to drive - parked
his pickup in his own carport one day and
began to walk wherever he went.

Douglas Stuart: *Shuggie Bain*

The day was flat. That morning his mind
had abandoned him and left his body
wandering down below.

Andy Weir: *The Martian*

I'm pretty much fucked.

John Irving: *The World According to Garp*

Garp's mother, Jenny Fields, was arrested
in Boston in 1942 for wounding a man in a
movie theater.

Tayari Jones: *Silver Sparrow*

My father, James Witherspoon, is a
bigamist.

Ling Ma: *Severance*

The End begins before you are ever aware
of it.

Celeste Ng: *Little Fires Everywhere*

Everyone in Shaker Heights was talking
about it that summer: how Isabelle, the
last of the Richardson children, had finally
gone around the bend and burned the
house down.

Kristin Hannah: *The Nightingale*

If I have learned anything in this long life
of mine, it is this: In love we find out who
we want to be; in war we find out who we
are.