

First Lines I Love

© 2016 by Marian Calabro—Writer, Editor, Corporate Historian
www.mariancalabro.com

*Riffing on famous first lines can help jumpstart your own writing.
Send me some of your favorites via my website.*

It is easy to see the beginnings of things, and harder to see the ends.
--Joan Didion, "Goodbye to All That"

It happened every year, was almost a ritual.
--Stieg Larsson, *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*

If you really want to hear about it, the first thing you'll probably want to know is where I was born, and what my lousy childhood was like, and how my parents were occupied and all before they had me, and all that David Copperfield kind of crap, but I don't feel like going into it, if you want to know the truth.
--J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*

Catastrophism, a geological theory championed by zoologist Georges Cuvier, holds that time lurches forward in sudden disasters.
--Lauren Redniss, *Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie*

I am not at all sure whether I should be telling you this.
--Alexander McCall Smith, "Intimate Accounts" (a short story)

When I was three, I decided not to have children.
--Molly Peacock, *Paradise Piece by Piece*

When I was thirteen years old, a knock came on my door.
--Pat Schneider, *Wake Up Laughing*

At the age of 80 my mother had her last bad fall, and after that her mind wandered free through time.
-- Russell Baker, *Growing Up*

After eight months spent in the obscurity of our mother's womb, my brother, Shiva, and I came into the world in the late afternoon of the twentieth of September in the year of grace 1954.
-- Abraham Verghese, *Cutting for Stone*

First Lieutenant Jimmy Cross carried letters from a girl named Martha, a junior at Mount Sebastian College in New Jersey.
-- Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

I arrived in the Alice at five a.m. with a dog, six dollars and a small suitcase full of inappropriate clothes.
-- Robyn Davidson, *Tracks*

The first time I saw Brenda she asked me to hold her glasses.
-- Philip Roth, *Goodbye, Columbus*

Henry got hit about six a.m.
-- Janet Burroway, *Opening Nights*

The two women were alone in the London flat.
-- Doris Lessing, *The Golden Notebook*