



“O captain, my captain!”

Movies for Lit-Lovers

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For every tiny thing each of us is passionate about, there exists a “movies” list. Predictably enough, my Google search history comprises of movie lists for lit-nerds. Not famous book adaptations like *Pride and Prejudice* or *The Da Vinci Code* but movies that the writer or reader in us can enjoy over a nice couple of hours on lazy weekends.

Dead Poets Society

Written by Tom Schulman and directed by Peter Weir, *Dead Poets Society* brought to us one of the most inspirational teachers that 90s’ movie-viewers would go on to idolise, in John Keating (played by the brilliant late Robin Williams). By injecting a dose of fun, laughter and rather unconventional teaching methods, Keating inspires the students of his English class to break free of their inhibitions, brighten their drab days and learn poetry the way it’s meant to be learned – from the heart.

We see a shy, young Ethan Hawke break out of his shell as Todd Anderson, a young Robert Sean Leonard (Dr. James Wilson of *House M.D.* fame) striving to find his voice of freedom as Neil Perry and perhaps one of the most overwhelming classroom scenes I’ve ever watched.

Becoming Jane

In every third lover of *Pride and Prejudice* or *Sense and Sensibility*, there lives an ardent Janeite dying to visit the world of the author herself. And that is what this movie does. It portrays the life of one of the finest writers in English Literature.

Director Julian Jarrold takes us back in time to the Regency period and the simple cottage life of a pre-fame Jane Austen, played by Anne Hathaway. We see Austen in her lively 20 in 1795 – a woman who saw beyond the class and gender restraints of her age and believed in the power of love. We see her struggles as a writer and her tragic love story with the Darcy-like Irishman Tom Lefroy, all set against the backdrop of beautiful English



“What value will there be in life, if we are not together?”

countryside. James McAvoy’s twinkly eyes and wicked accent are reasons enough to watch just about any movie, but what makes *Becoming Jane* a truly amazing experience is seeing how the author draws from every character and event in her life and arrives at the first conceptualisation of *Pride and Prejudice* – then titled *First Impressions*.

Finding Neverland

We’ve all grown up listening to the stories of Peter Pan, Tinkerbell and their adventures against the devious Captain Hook.

In *Finding Neverland*, director Mark Forster shows us how playwright J.M. Barrie, by forming a friendship with a family of three young boys and their widowed mother (Kate Winslet), arrives

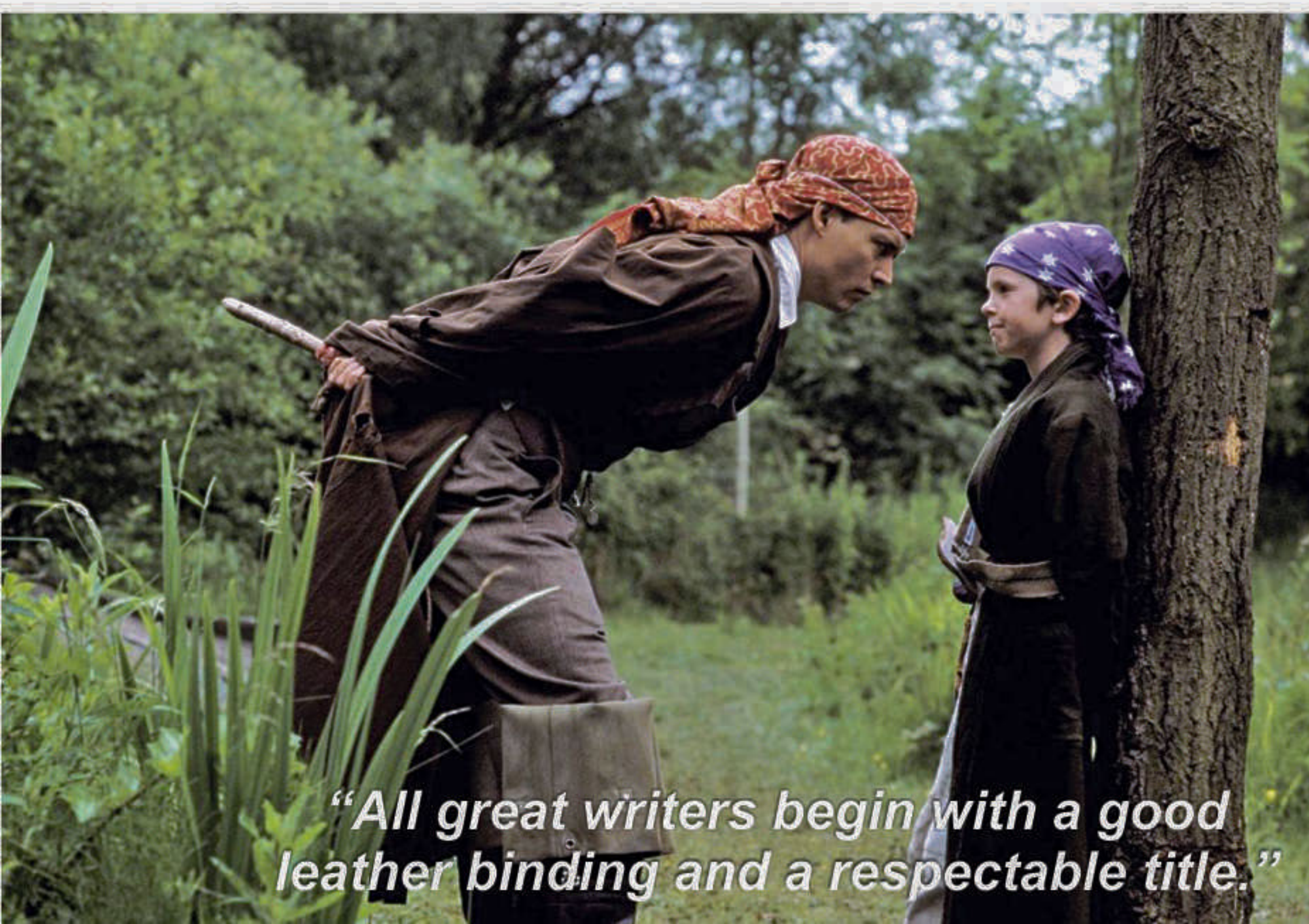
at the story of Peter Pan for one of his plays. Johnny Depp, with the eccentric charisma that’s all his own, finds in the family’s need for some happiness the idea of Neverland and takes us on the whimsical journey of story-writing that runs on in every writer’s mind.

Midnight in Paris

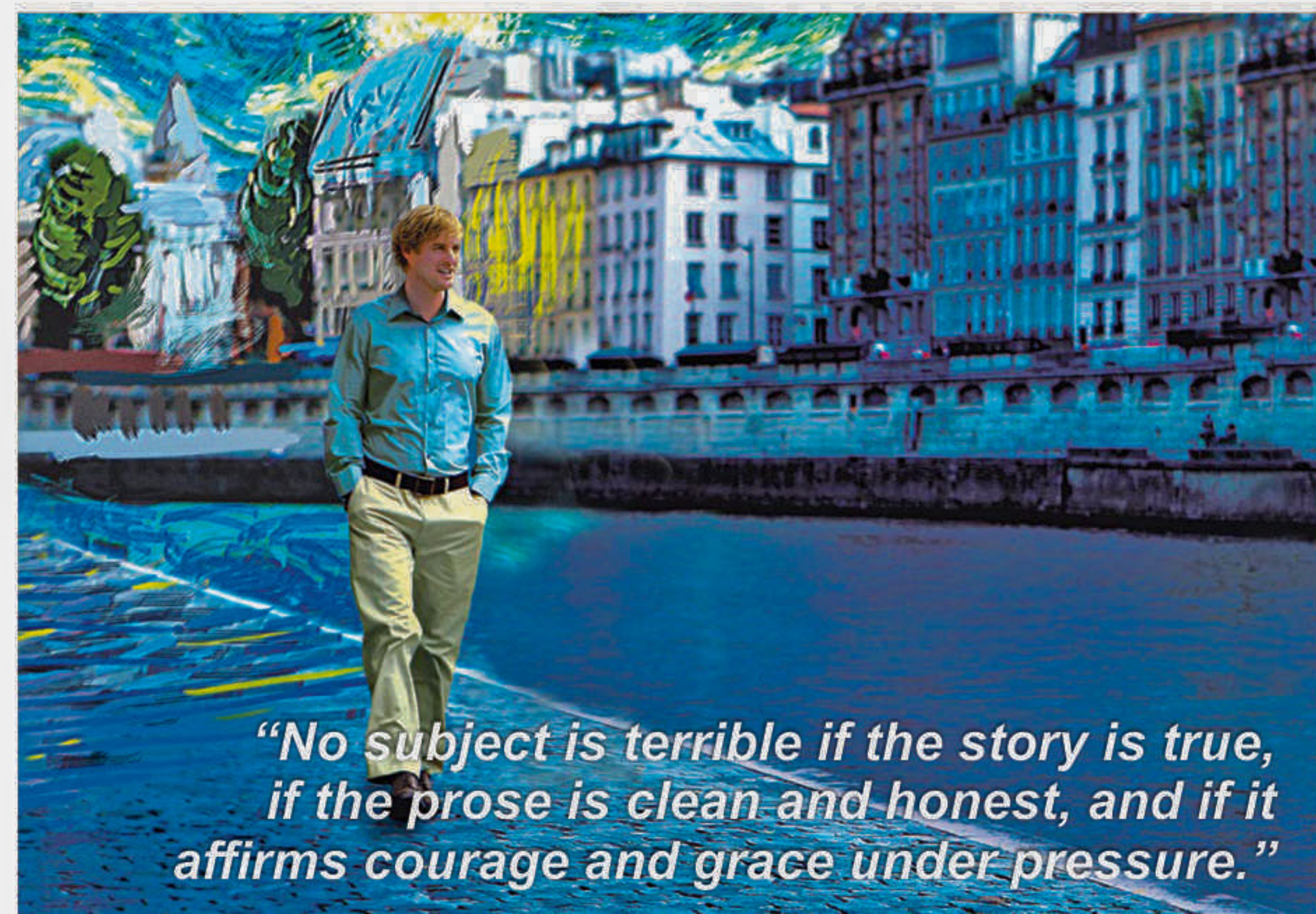
Fast forward a few years and we arrive at my favourite period of all the days gone by – Paris in the 1920s.

Midnight in Paris is almost every writer’s dream come true, literally. On holiday with his fiancée (Rachel McAdams) and his in-laws, Gil Pender (Owen Wilson) visits Paris and sets forth exploring the city he so loves. At the stroke of midnight, however, magic unfolds as it always does. A chance car ride takes him away from the reality he is tired of, towards his literary idols of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein and the magic of Paris in the Golden Age.

Director Woody Allen does an amazing job. The French are made to look undeniably French, the Americans even more so in sharp contrast. The City of Lights is showcased in all its beauty. Above and beyond the cultural minefield, however, the magic in the movie teaches Gil, and us, a thing or two about embracing reality.



“All great writers begin with a good leather binding and a respectable title.”



“No subject is terrible if the story is true, if the prose is clean and honest, and if it affirms courage and grace under pressure.”