The Everlasting Influence of L.M. Montgomery

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My response to L.M. Montgomery explores the ideas of how Montgomery has impacted readers of all ages. Montgomery inspires readers to persevere through difficult life moments. She influences readers' outlook on life and encourages them to take a step into the unknown and follow their dreams.

L.M. Montgomery and her work remind me to be courageous, to find that hidden small, but powerful, spark within and give it the strength to guide me along my journey in life; a lighthouse that never leaves me stranded on the stormy sea that life can be. Montgomery inspires us all to persevere through even the most difficult and treacherous moments of life and to love and cherish every bit of our world that we call home. Montgomery has helped many young women to believe in not only themselves, but also their dreams, so that they may find again the women they are deep down and the amazing people they were always destined to be. Our stories are just beginning.

Here is my favourite quotation from the last chapter of *Anne of Green Gables*: "'Dear old world,' she murmured, 'you are very lovely, and I am glad to be alive in you'" (363). In the final chapter of the story, Anne has recently lost Matthew Cuthbert, an older father-figure in her life who was very important to her. Despite the pain over this loss that lingers, she finds a way to push on, be happy, and feel eternally grateful for the world surrounding her. She does not let the ugliness of life consume her spirit.

I have grown up in a world so full of rapidly changing technology, I sometimes forget to pause and ponder over the many wonderful things I have been blessed with. Sometimes it is difficult to love the world when I reflect on all of the current negative events, or as I grieve over the recent losses of my grandfather and great-grandmother. A seemingly simple quotation from Montgomery has me looking deeper into myself and remembering who I am.

In this excerpt from the last chapter of *Emily of New Moon*, Mr. Carpenter encourages Emily to keep on writing:

> "Tell me this—if you knew you would be poor as a church mouse all your life—if you knew you'd never have a line published—would you still go on writing—would you?"
> "Of course I would," said Emily disdainfully. "Why, I have to write—I can't help it by times—I've just got to."
> "Oh—then I'd waste my breath giving advice at all. If it's in you to climb you must—there are those who must lift their eyes to the hills—they can't breathe properly in the valleys. God help them if there's some weakness in them that prevents their climbing. You don't understand a word I'm saying—yet. But go on—climb!" (408–09)

In this final part of the novel, Montgomery tells us that no matter how many obstacles interrupt our paths, we must always try to continue fulfilling our dreams. Montgomery's own journey to success was not easy, yet we can follow her example by maintaining perseverance. I can relate to this excerpt from *Emily of New Moon* in the ways that I am the same age as Emily was, and like Emily, there are moments when I feel drawn to write and find myself giving in to the voice calling inside. For example, I usually sacrifice my recess breaks at school to work on my fantasy book. Although I have a passion for writing stories, sometimes I find myself doubting their potential. I worry about what the future will bring and the challenges I will face. But when I read the work of Montgomery, like this excerpt from *Emily of New Moon*, I find the willpower to continue writing and trusting in myself.

The final paragraph of *The Story Girl* represents the idea from L.M. Montgomery of loving the world and being grateful for all that life gives us:

> Our summer was over. It had been a beautiful one. We had known the sweetness of common joys, the delight of dawns, the dream and glamour of noontides, the long, purple peace of carefree nights. We had had the pleasure of bird song, of silver rain on greening fields, of storm among the trees, of blossoming meadows, and of the converse of whispering leaves. We had had brotherhood with wind and star, with books and tales, and hearth fires of autumn. Ours had been the little, loving tasks of every day, blithe companionship, shared thoughts, and adventuring. Rich were we in the memory of those opulent months that had gone from us—richer than we then knew or suspected. And before us was the dream of spring. It is always safe to dream of spring. For it is sure to come; and if it be not just as we have pictured it, it will be infinitely sweeter. (320)

This paragraph from *The Story Girl* represents the idea of being grateful for the small gifts that life presents us and simply the thought of treasuring the ability to be alive. Montgomery loved nature and all of its glories deeply. In much of her work, she inspires us to feel the same and influences our overall outlook on the world. Ever since I began reading Montgomery's work, I have found the way I view the world has changed. I appreciate nature even more than I did before and remind myself to constantly be grateful for the little things that life has given us. I try to be more open to grasping opportunities when they present themselves rather than turning away from them as I have in the past.

I first picked up a borrowed, abridged copy of *Anne of Green Gables* when I was seven or eight years old. Now, I am a young woman with a budding passion to write and a deep love of reading who has read over eighteen of Montgomery's books. Even a single short story or poem written by her delivers a genuine, utterly moving message that has the potential to change a reader forever. Her own life story inspires me to write. Not for fame, but to inspire others in some lasting way—like she did.



Sunrise over the King Orchard, painting by Ciara Wareing, 2024. Inspired by *The Story Girl* by L.M. Montgomery. The sunrise represents the dawn of a new frame of mind.

Artist Statement: *Sunrise over the King Orchard* is inspired by *The Story Girl* by L.M. Montgomery. It shows the Story Girl gazing over the King orchard as the sky is lit up in a warm sunrise of orange and yellow hues. I used acrylic paint and canvas paper as the media to create my artwork. The painting displays the idea that L.M. Montgomery has changed her readers' outlook on the world. The sunrise represents the dawn of a new frame of mind. My art piece will also represent the idea that L.M. Montgomery's work has inspired her readers to be grateful for nature and the world around us.

Bio: Ciara Wareing is a Canadian fourteen-year-old writer and artist bursting with creativity. From a young age, she found that through books and art she could escape to a wondrous realm called the imagination. The discovery of L.M. Montgomery and the author's work helped elevate Ciara's creativity and imagination to a new extent. Ciara enjoys writing short stories and has written her first book, *The Path of the North*, to be part of a three-book fantasy series, *Mirror of Magic*. She is now working on the sequel, *The Return of Dragons*, and brainstorming ideas for the third novel. Ciara also enjoys taking part in other arts such as drawing, painting with watercolours and acrylics, and knitting. She carries a deep love of nature, art, books, and anything L.M. Montgomery. Ciara has also visited Prince Edward Island three times on family vacations and saw how the landscape deeply resonated with L.M. Montgomery.

"Dear old world, you are very lovely, and I am glad to be alive in you."—*Anne of Green Gables*

Article Info

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Banner Image: Submitted by author-artist.