

NOTES FROM: *The Alchemist*, by Paulo Coelho

SUMMARY: Like many people, I remember exactly where I was when I read *The Alchemist* for the first time. I was working as a bouncer in Halifax, Canada, on a Sunday night when there was hardly anyone at the bar. Reading *The Alchemist* on my phone, I barely looked up the whole night (I was great at my job), and nearly finished it before last call. As it happened, I ended up finishing it in my car, in my driveway at home the same night I started it.

The book is a future classic about a shepherd boy, Santiago, who leaves behind his home and everything he knows in order to go live his “personal legend,” and search for a treasure that he believes is buried far away. On his way from Andalusia to Egypt, he meets a king, an alchemist, all manner of people – good, bad, indifferent – who draw him closer to or further away from his treasure and make him question how badly he wants to realize his personal legend at all.

As Paulo Coelho says, the moment you really, *really* want something, the whole universe conspires in helping you achieve it. But it’s not going to be just *handed* to you. You’ll be made to *suffer* for your personal legend, to *prove* how badly you want to realize it, and to question the deepest beliefs you’ve ever held.

Everyone who’s ever suffered and sacrificed for a big goal will see themselves in Santiago. In my own life, help has come to me from *so many* unexpected sources, but, like Santiago, it wasn’t until I mapped out unexplored territories within myself that the universe started to rearrange itself and to reveal to me the outlines of my very own personal legend.

“And, when you want something, all the universe conspires in helping you to achieve it.”

“Those who genuinely wish us well want us to be happy and will accompany us as we give up everything for our dreams.”

“It's the possibility of having a dream come true that makes life interesting.”

“Everybody seems to know how other people should lead their lives, but no idea about how to live their own.”

“Books tell their incredible stories at the times when you want to hear them.”

“There is one great truth on this planet: Whoever you are and whatever it is that you do, when you really want something, it's because that desire originated in the soul of the universe.”

“When each day is the same, it's because people don't recognize the good things that happen in their lives every day that the sun rises.”

"I am always nearby when someone wants to realize their personal legend."

“When you can't go back, you can only think about the best way of moving forward.”

“The universe needs no explanation as it moves through endless time.”

“The secret is here in the present. If you pay attention to the present, you can improve upon it. And, if you improve on the present, what comes later will also be better.”

“Every day is here to be lived or to mark our departure from the world.”

“Love is the language of the world.”

“No reason is needed for loving.”

“The world we live in will become better or worse depending on whether we become better or worse. That's where love comes in. Because when we love, we strive to become better than we are.”

“When we love, we always strive to become better than we are. When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too.”

“I don't live in either my past or my future. I'm interested only in the present. If you can concentrate always on the present, you'll be a happy man. Life will be a party for you, a grand festival, because life is the moment we're living now.”

“When you possess great treasures within you, and try to tell people about them, seldom are you believed.”

“Anyone who interferes with the personal legend of someone else will never discover his own.”

“Dying in the midst of pursuing your personal legend is better than dying like those endless millions who never even discover what their personal legend is.”

“The world is just the visible aspect of God.”

“We are travelers on a cosmic journey, stardust, swirling and dancing in the eddies and whirlpools of infinity. Life is eternal. We have stopped for a moment to encounter each other, to meet, to love, to share. This is a precious moment. It is a little parenthesis in eternity.”