

## “Opening Lines” – A Giveaway Offer

Following are the opening lines to my books and short stories.

But first, the opening line from *Metroland* by Julian Barnes: “The first time I watched my wife committing adultery was in a large movie theater at...” I wish I could have written an attention-grabber like that, but here are the opening lines to my books and stories.

FREE. I’ll send one of my short stories of your choice if you tell me which of these openings was your favorite. Just send your nomination to me through the Contact tab in the top menu of my website at dennisherrick.com

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“Books about the history of the American Southwest have ignored him, or even worse, attacked his character and belittled his importance.”

— *Esteban: The African Slave Who Explored America* (2018)

“Hundreds of miles from the approaching invasion and a few days travel east from Hawikku, a village of Zuni trading partners, a young Tiwa warrior named Poquis relaxed on a high ridge overlooking the valley of the desert river.”

— *Winter of the Metal People* (2017)

“The man knew horrors waited for him in the small town, but he needed to go there for supplies.”

— *War of the Planet Burners* (2016)

“Rick Cornell held his breath for a few seconds as the semi’s long, black exhaust plume drifted over him.”

— *A Brother’s Cold Case* (2014)

### SHORT STORIES

“When I was only six, Dad took me on a boat ride out of the city and over to the Highland. That was what he called the area that rises at the edge of the ocean. But it’s not an island. It’s a countryside of dirt and rocks and plants of all sizes as well as houses built on the ground, and it goes on forever. My first sight of it kind of scared me.”

— *Above the Water* (2018)

“Prairie dogs, birds, and lizards saw him when he topped the hill and crossed the Texas border into New Mexico Territory in early June of 1870. He rode a brown horse with a white flash on its face that he’d named Drifter for all the miles they traveled.”

— *Rustlers Along the Outlaw Trail* (2018)

“Night is slowly blotting out the day. Old Joseph gazes through his window at the wet flakes of snow wobbling down from the darkening sky.”

— The Christmas Shopper (2017)

“The man, his wife, and oldest son crouched behind their house’s open windows, their rifles pointed outward at the Indians in pickup trucks lining the top of the grassy ridge.”

— A Second Chance on Indian Lands (2017)

“JUNE OF 1934 in New Mexico—the U.S. Cavalry had fought its last battle with Indians in a skirmish with Yaqui Indians in Arizona in 1918, and a posse of Utah settlers defeated Utes and Paiutes in 1923 in what became known as The Last Indian Uprising.”

— Shadows of a Lost Time (2016)

“The first time I saw her, she was lying in a hospital bed. Sixty or seventy years old. Hard to tell. The pillow matted her greasy, black hair around her head, her body shook uncontrollably, and her fingers curled into clawed fists. 'It’s you,' she gasped.”

— Sitting Bull Rising from the Grave (2016)

“Willie figured it was his lucky summer day. He chewed the last of a hamburger someone had bought for him. And the owner of an Albuquerque souvenir shop had given him a T-shirt, size small, saying ECCENTRIC RICH GUY.”

— The Gift (2016)

“No one mentioned his real name until his Spanish archenemy angrily revealed it inside a jail cell in 1546. Then it was lost again for nearly four hundred years. Finally the Spaniard’s testimony was translated into English in a 1940 book, naming the earliest Native American hero: Xauían.”

— The Indian Who Defied Coronado (2015)

“Three metal legs had extended to prop the aliens’ machine atop the desert sand, far from any roads or towns. The sun rose and set, again and again, shining against the machine’s metal skin and then leaving it in blackness until its return the next day. The machine had never moved since descending from the sky.”

— Alien Visitors (2014)

“Albuquerque Detective April Histia glanced again at the body of the museum’s security guard near the doorway.”

— To Steal What Is Sacred (2014)

“Somehow I’ve been stuck with the job of explaining what happened. I tried to get out of it by reminding everyone of how opinionated I am—and often wrong.”

— A Link in the Chain (2017)

“My first memory is vague, like peering through fog. I’m a little girl, not quite four, and a policewoman releases my hand and lets me run to my grandpa. I can still see him through a child’s eyes, a kind giant lowering himself to one knee to greet me. He is sobbing.”

— The Final Farewell (2013)

“After the funeral ended, and almost everyone had left, I stood with Ben Jackson under a shade tree in Santa Fe National Cemetery.”

— Woman Without a Name (2013)

“When I open my medicine cabinet door, there it is, beside my toothbrush in my fancy bathroom with its tile floor, hot tub, and two sinks. It’s a bullet from a North Vietnamese AK-47 assault rifle. It stands on a shelf, its copper-coated lead point emerging from a casing of tarnished brass. Unrealized death.”

— The Bullet That Saved Me (2012)

“The riptide’s strength surprised him. It gripped his body like a powerful pair of hands dragging him seaward, pulling him underwater until the pressure knifed into his ears.”

— A Missing Tourist In Mexico (2012)

“They stood by Pioneer Cemetery’s stone wall with a gaping hole between the graves and bones scattered on the ground—five young men from Iowa’s Meskwaki Tribe dressed in bygone time’s fringed buckskins and moccasins. A group of angry citizens faced them.”

— Spirit Journey (2013)

“The note that Zach Vernon tossed on Eddie Valencia’s desk said, *VanSecken is a foreign spy.*”

— It Only Cost Two Teeth (2011)

“The roadrunner cocked its head and stared. The bird studied the odd sight of a human lying twisted and still.”

— The Woman With A Rain Pot (2012)

“Ruben Cherino of the Puaray Pueblo Police looked at the 2x4 boards on the ground at his feet. They were still in a shape like a child’s sand box. For a second it seemed to him that the ancient skull was still there half buried in the sand.”

— The Ancestor (2012)

“Trying to jump-start my brain for the morning shift, I tossed a quarter into the foam cup next to the sheriff’s department coffee machine. I poured a cup of the thickest, vilest coffee in New Mexico. This should do the trick, I thought, grimacing.”

— An Unwilling Patient (2011)

“Metro Editor John-somebody snapped his fingers and motioned me over to his desk. 'Sheriff’s deputies found a man’s body out on the high plateau just west of the National Guard Armory,' he said.”

— Hunting Season (2004)