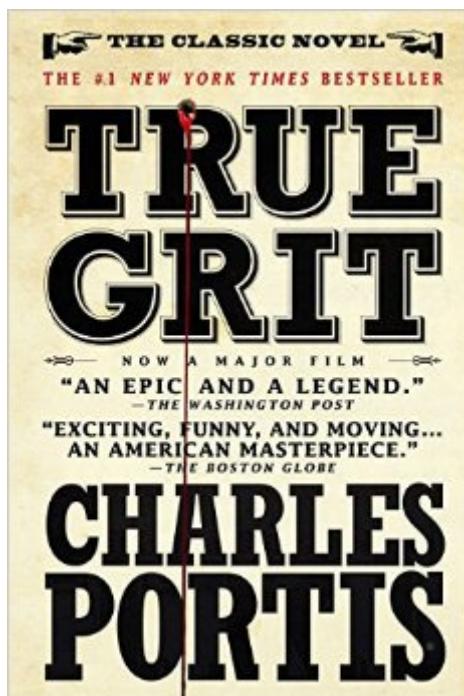


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# True Grit: A Novel



## Synopsis

Charles Portis has long been acclaimed as one of America's foremost comic writers. *True Grit* is his most famous novel--first published in 1968, and the basis for the movie of the same name starring John Wayne. It tells the story of Mattie Ross, who is just fourteen years of age when a coward going by the name of Tom Chaney shoots her father down in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and robs him of his life, his horse, and \$150 in cash money. Mattie leaves home to avenge her father's blood. With the one-eyed Rooster Cogburn, the meanest available U.S. Marshal, by her side, Mattie pursues the homicide into Indian Territory. *True Grit* is eccentric, cool, straight, and unflinching, like Mattie herself. From a writer of true cult status, this is an American classic through and through. This new edition, with a smart new package and an afterword by acclaimed author Donna Tartt, will bring this masterpiece to an even broader audience.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Tom Wolfe, who worked with Portis as a reporter at the "New York Herald-Tribune" in the early 1960s called him the original laconic cutup. A generation of novelists since then have simply regarded him as a writers] writer and have made his name a sort of secret password. Soon, they'll no longer have him to themselves." --"Rolling Stone" "An epic and a legend." --"The Washington Post" "Like Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn" and Thomas Berger's "Little Big Man", Charles Portis's "True Grit" captures the naive elegance of the American voice." -- Jonathan Lethem "An instant classic. Read it and have the most fun you've had reading a novel in years, maybe decades." --"Newsday" "Skillfully constructed, a comic tour de force." --"The New York Times Book Review"

"Charles Portis details the savagery of the 1870s frontier through an astonishing narrative voice: that of the 14-year-old Mattie Ross, a flinty, skeptical, Bible-thumping scourge." --"Wall Street Journal" "I loved that book. Charles Portis got a real Mark Twain feeling, the cynicism and the humor. I tried to buy the book myself." --John Wayne

Charles Portis lives in Arkansas, where he was born and educated. He served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War, was the London bureau chief of the New York Herald-Tribune, and was a writer for *The New Yorker*.

There are adventure stories that just stick with you. This one is just that. I never knew *True Grit* was a real honest to goodness book. I saw the first movie that was made and figure that was all there was to it. ~ Then the second movie came out and it was warm hearted, non-stop adventures, Pleasant to watch....they said it was based on the book....BOOK?! ....I made a click on one click and purchased my Kindle copy of *True Grit* ...and I began to read. It is a fairly fast read. If I hadn't seen the movies first I am sure I wouldn't have been able to put it down. I was so happy that they stayed pretty much with the dialogue of the book. The story was always moving, not a slack or a dull page. The characters were somewhat believable. Sometimes the movies swayed my impression of them but turning the page I was back on track. There are some real classic phrase in this novel. Matties, "stay seated trash," will forever echo in thoughts. Yes, this is a classic novel, one that I may read again down the road.....Relive the adventures and experiences of this courageous 14 year old girl ...who is the one with *True Grit*.

Never been a fan of first-person narratives, but with '*True Grit*', Charles Portis hooks you from the first sentence, really liked this classic read and liked the movie version with Jeff Bridges better. I liked the setting being 1870, right after the Civil War, taking place in Arkansas and Indian Territory and how can you not like the storyteller Mattie Ross. She's a testament to the fact that you had tough gritty women in the Old West. Mattie sets out to make sure that the murder of her father faces justice, then sets out on the vengeance trail meeting two wily characters to help her and cleverly plays them into letting her accompany them on the trail. Although Mattie narrates the story, Portis is still able to bring the story alive, with US Marshall Rooster Cogburn who works out of Fort Smith and a Texas Ranger LaBeouf. Without these two wily lawmen, *True Grit* wouldn't have been that great of a read for me and guess I now have a favorite first-person book that love.

Don't think there would be many who aren't familiar with the story of young Mattie Ross who sets out to avenge the death of her father. Mattie hires the services of the larger than life Rooster Cogburn a U.S Marshall with a somewhat shady past. Mattie is a wonderful heroine, she's smart, resourceful, opinionated and more than a match for anyone who gets in her way. She's more than a match for Rooster. In short it is Mattie who shows she has "true grit." She is a delight. This is a wonderful story, fast paced and action packed. Have had this book in my "to be read mountain" for simply ages. Regret it's taken me so long to read it. Time and money well spent.

True Grit is the story of thirteen-year old Mattie Ross who, allied with the stone-faced Rooster Coburn, embarks on an adventure to bring her father's killer to justice in western times. The novel's central theme is that everything comes at a price. Tom Chaney ultimately suffers for killing Mattie's father, and our protagonist has to undergo severe sacrifice to get justice. This is a story about paying your dues - nothing is free in this world, not vengeance or justice or malice. Everything comes at a price. Out of the lengthy list of books deemed "American Classics" this one is by far my favorite. Charles Portis' use of language is captivating and really transports you to the old west. Portis demonstrates a masterful understanding of his characters and the world they inhabit, making for an engrossing read. An odd thing about this novel is that it features zero subplots. The story is first and foremost about Mattie and Rooster's quest to apprehend Tom Chaney. Bereft of any unnecessary narrative fat, the story moves nimbly forward at all times, proving a quick and straightforward read over its 200 pages. The novel is admittedly a hard one to pick up. The western language can be intimidating to some, but Portis doesn't use fancy words just for the sake of sounding smart. The old language is easy to follow, and personally, the world around this story was one of my favorite parts of the book. If you are willing to emerge yourself in the old west, or enjoy straightforward, quick reads, this is for you. The story's narrative is surprisingly compelling. Within its short page count, Portis packs in several morally ambiguous scenes where Mattie really questions if what she's doing is right - and it's those ideas that bleed into the thematic through line of the novel itself. Like I said before, this is a story about paying your dues, and Mattie certainly grapples with that idea until the bitter climax. It's these moments that ground the novel in reality, and make Mattie a character that I could relate to. It greatly increased my enjoyment of the novel. Beautiful prose, well-drawn characters and fresh, interesting ideas make for a quick, compelling read.

If you are a fan of either of the True Grit Movies, be it the John Wayne title or the more recent 2010 remake with Jeff Bridges, you'll enjoy this book. Both films stick to the book in their own way, but in my opinion the newer release sticks closer to the original plot and tone of the book; although both add and take away in places. Overall, even if you haven't seen the film I'd recommend it as it is a captivating but quick read (I finished it in one night). My only complaint is it is not longer, but sometimes the greatest pieces get to the point quicker than others.

I grew up watching John Wayne movies with my dad, we also saw the remake starring Jeff Bridges and immensely enjoyed it. That movie follows the book much more closely than the original film including using a lot of the dialog. I was not even aware that True Grit the films were based on a book until the Remake was made and I read about that. Even if you've never seen either movie if you enjoy a good Western you will enjoy this book.

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