

**Literature and Medicine Readings, Mass General, 2009-2019**  
**Selected by Suzanne Koven MD, MFA**

**Fiction**

Adrian, Chris "The Sum of Our Parts"  
Atwood, Margaret "Death By Landscape"  
Barrett, Andrea "Ship Fever"  
Bloom, Amy "Silver Water"  
Camus, Albert *The Plague*  
Carr, J.L. *A Month in the Country*  
Carver, Raymond "Cathedral"  
Chekhov, Anton "A Doctor's Visit"  
"An Awkward Business"  
"Ward Six"  
Coetzee, J.M. *Disgrace*  
*Slow Man*  
Cooper, Bernard "What to Name the Baby"  
Dark, Alice Elliott "In The Gloaming"  
Dubus, Andre "The Colonel's Wife"  
Eugenides, Jeffrey *Middlesex*  
Faulkner, William *As I Lay Dying*  
Greene, Graham *A Burnt-Out Case*  
Haddon, Mark *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time*  
Hamid, Mohsin *Exit West*  
Harleman, Ann "Thoreau's Laundry"  
Hawthorne, Nathaniel "Roger Malvin's Burial"  
"The Birthmark" "Rappaccini's Daughter"  
Hempel, Amy "In The Cemetery Where Al Jolson Is Buried"  
Hemingway, Ernest "The Snows of Kilimanjaro"  
Ishiguro, Kazuo *Never Let Me Go*  
Jen, Gish "Who's Irish?"  
Jones, Tayari *An American Marriage*  
Joyce, James "An Encounter"  
Kafka, Franz *The Metamorphosis*  
Kang, Han *The Vegetarian*  
King, Lily *Euphoria*  
Lahiri, Jhumpa "The Treatment of Bibi Haldar"  
"The Third and Final Continent"  
Lam, Vincent "Winston"  
Lianke, Yan *Dream of Ding Village*  
Machado, Carmen Maria "The Husband Stitch"  
Mates, Susan Onthank "Laundry"  
Maugham, Somerset *Of Human Bondage*  
Maxwell, William *So Long, See You Tomorrow*

McCorkle, Jill "Intervention"  
McEwan, Ian *The Children Act*  
Melville, Herman "Bartleby The Scrivener"  
Morrison, Toni *The Bluest Eye*  
Munro, Alice "The Bear Came Over The Mountain"  
"Friend of My Youth" "Before the Change"  
Murakami, Haruki "Birthday Girl"  
Nunez, Sigrid *The Friend*  
O'Brien, Tim "The Things They Carried"  
O'Connor, Flannery "The Enduring Chill"  
Pearlman, Edith "Castle 4"  
Proulx, Annie "The Half-Skinned Steer"  
Roth, Philip "Defender of the Faith"  
*Everyman*  
*Nemesis*  
Singer, Isaac Bashevis "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy"  
Smith, Ali *Autumn*  
Tolstoy, Leo "The Death of Ivan Ilyich"  
Ward, Jesmyn *Salvage the Bones*  
Wharton, Edith *Ethan Frome*

## **Nonfiction**

Aronson, Louise "'Good' Patients and 'Difficult' Patients--Rethinking Our Definitions"  
Awdish, Rana *In Shock*  
Alcott, Louisa May *Hospital Sketches*  
Alexievich, Svetlana *Voices from Chernobyl*  
Angell, Roger "This Old Man"  
Arnold, Miah "You Owe Me"  
Athill, Diana *Somewhere Towards The End*  
Bailey, Elisabeth Tova *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating*  
Baldwin, James "Notes of a Native Son"  
Biss, Eula *On Immunity*  
"The Pain Scale"  
Borges, Jose Luis "On Blindness"  
Broyard, Anatole *Intoxicated By My Illness*  
Chabon, Michael "The Recipe for Life"  
Coates, Ta-Nehisi "The Condition of Black Life is One of Mourning"  
Davis, Linda "Open After My Death"  
De Beauvoir, Simone *A Very Easy Death*  
Didion, Joan "In Bed"  
*The Year of Magical Thinking*  
Fey, Tina "Remembrances of Being Very, Very Skinny" and "Remembrances of Being a Little Bit Fat"  
Fink, Sheri "Strained By Katrina, A Hospital Faced Deadly Choices"

Franzen, Jonathan "My Father's Brain"  
Gawande, Atul "Letting Go"  
Grealy, Lucy *Autobiography of a Face*  
Hall, Donald "Between Loneliness and Solitude"  
Hanna-Attisha *What the Eyes Don't See*  
Hemon, Aleksandr "The Aquarium"  
Hersey, John *Hiroshima*  
Hitchens, Christopher "The Topic of Cancer"  
Jamison, Kay Redfield *An Unquiet Mind*  
Jamison, Leslie "The Empathy Exams"  
Kalanithi, Paul *When Breath Becomes Air*  
Kidder, Tracey *Strength In What Remains*  
Knighton, Ryan *Cockeyed*  
Koven, Suzanne "Using Humor in the Doctor's Office"  
"Empathy Examined"  
Levy, Ariel "Thanksgiving in Mongolia"  
Lewis, C.S. *A Grief Observed*  
Lopate, Phillip "Portrait of My Body"  
Lorde, Audre *The Cancer Journals*  
Mairs, Nancy "On Being A Cripple"  
Martin, Marlene "Crossing Borders"  
Mitchell, Joseph "Joe Gould's Secret"  
Mooallem, Jon "The House at the End of the World"  
Moore, Judith *Fat Girl*  
Mukherjee, Siddhartha "Same But Different"  
Munro, Alice "Night"  
Nasar, Sylvia *A Beautiful Mind*  
Nealon, Mary Jane *Beautiful Unbroken*  
Oates, Joyce Carol "The Widow's Walk"  
Ofri, Danielle "Is Your Doctor Listening?"  
Patchett, Ann *Truth and Beauty*  
Provenzano, Audrey "Caring for Ms. L—Overcoming My Fear of Treating Opioid Use Disorder"  
Riederer, Rachel "Patient"  
Rieff, David *Swimming in a Sea of Death*  
Robinson, Roxana "Paralyzed: Learning To Live In Polio's Shadow"  
Rosenbaum, Lisa "Transitional Chaos or Enduring Harm: The EHR and the Disruption of Medicine"  
Roth, Philip *Patrimony*  
Scialabba, George "The Endlessly Examined Life"  
Sedaris, David "Now We Are Five"  
"Why Aren't You Laughing?"  
"The Happy Place"  
Sheff, David *Beautiful Boy*  
Skloot, Rebecca *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*  
Smith, Patti *Just Kids*

Solomon, Andrew *Far From The Tree*  
Strayed, Cheryl "Heroin/e"  
Sweet, Victoria *God's Hotel*  
Thernstrom, Melanie *The Pain Chronicles*  
Tisdale, Sallie "Chemo World"  
Verghese, Abraham *The Tennis Partner*  
Wachter, Robert *The Digital Doctor*  
Weinberg, Richard B. "Communion"  
Williams, William Carlos "The Girl With The Pimply Face"  
Zarin, Cynthia "An Enlarged Heart"

## Poetry

Bishop, Elizabeth "In The Waiting Room"  
Bowe, Geoffrey "Male Nurse Washing a Nun"  
Brashler, Anne "He Read To Her"  
Campo, Rafael "Elegy for the AIDS Virus"  
Carver, Raymond "What The Doctor Said"  
Clifton, Lucille "Donor"  
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor "Kubla Khan"  
Davis, Cortney "The Body Flute"  
Davis, Marilyn "Song For My Son"  
Dickinson, Emily "After Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes"  
Doty, Mark "Tiara"  
Frost, Robert "After Apple Picking"  
Hall, Donald "The Ship Pounding"  
Heney, Seamus "Chekhov on Sakhalin"  
"Digging"  
Homer *The Odyssey* (excerpt translated by Emily Wilson)  
Jarrell, Randall "The X-Ray Waiting Room In The Hospital"  
Kaur, Rupi *Milk and Honey*  
Kenyon, Jane "Let Evening Come"  
"Notes From The Other Side"  
Dorianne Laux "Nurse"  
Levertov, Denise "The 90<sup>th</sup> Year"  
Masson, Venetta "Guilt"  
"Passages"  
Olds, Sharon "The Death Of Marilyn Monroe"  
Perillo, Lucia "Poem Without Breasts"  
"Second Poem Without Breasts"  
Plath, Sylvia "Lady Lazarus"  
Rankine, Claudia *Citizen*  
Rich, Adrienne "Diving into the Wreck"  
Ritvo, Max "Poem To My Litter"  
Shakespeare, William "Sonnet #60"

Thomas, Dylan "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night"  
Turner, Brian "AB Positive"  
Updike, John "Hospital"  
Viramontes, Helena Maria "The Moths"  
Voigt, Ellen Bryant *Kyrie*  
Whitman, Walt "'I Sing the Body Electric"  
Yeats, W.B. "When You Are Old"  
"Politics"  
Young, Kevin "Ode To The Hotel Near The Children's Hospital"

### **Graphic Memoirs**

Bechdel, Alison *Fun Home*  
Chast, Roz *Can't We Talk About Something More Pleasant?*  
Delisle, Guy *Hostage*  
Pekar, Harvey and Brabner, Joyce *Our Cancer Year*  
Small, David *Stitches*

### **Plays**

Heaney, Seamus *The Cure At Troy*  
Miller, Arthur *Death of a Salesman*  
O'Neill, Eugene *Long Day's Journey Into Night*  
Shaffer, Peter *Equus*  
Shakespeare, William *King Lear*  
Williams, Tennessee *The Glass Menagerie*

### **Films**

*A Beautiful Mind*  
*Angels in America*  
*Black Women in Medicine*  
*Brazil*  
*Fences*  
*Modern Times*  
*Never Let Me Go*  
*Rashomon*  
*Shadowlands*