

UNITED WISDOM

A Happy Ending as an Expectation of Reality

Meaning and Direction

Andrey Zarinsh & Maria Evilkut

P-19-N04 · EN

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

A Happy Ending as an Expectation of Reality

Epigraph

> *but time and chance happeneth to them all.*

— Ecclesiastes 9:11, closing clause, King James Version.

What this article is about

A satisfying ending lets us close a book with a sense that something important has happened: people have found one another, injustice has been answered, or danger has passed. This is a legitimate pleasure of reading. The expectation changes when it is transferred to our own lives, as though sufficient effort or suffering obliged subsequent events to turn out well. This article distinguishes hope, artistic closure, a supported forecast, and a demand for compensation. Particular passages from Aristotle, Jane Austen and Ecclesiastes help frame the question while retaining the differences between literary form, a novel's social world and a religious text. They establish no causal claim about reading and behaviour. Contemporary situations here are imagined examples of original reflection. Our concern is the possibility of wishing and working for good, and accepting particular joys, without a promise that every strand of life will converge in a fitting final scene. Giving up that guarantee need not mean giving up hope or treating every disappointment as our own fault.

I. The last page and the next day

A work's ending has a privilege an ordinary day lacks: its author chooses where to stop. Characters can be left at a wedding, after an admission, or at the start of a journey, without an account of tomorrow's expenses, tiredness and neighbours. This need not be deceptive. The stopping point belongs to the arrangement of this particular story. We have received a sufficient answer to its chosen question, although the imagined people could still have many other questions. Closure therefore concerns a selected strand and the way it is presented. Forgetting this can make a final scene look like a certificate of permanent well-being for everyone, even when the text makes no such claim.

Imagine someone who has worked for a long time to complete a project. The agreement is finally signed, friends offer congratulations, and there is good reason to mark the occasion. Tomorrow brings the work of implementation, while some earlier difficulties remain. The celebration was not false because the story continued. A different mistake would be to take

@andrey.zarinsh @ilkutki

the signature as proof that no further obstacle can arise. Joy needs an appropriate scale. A particular achievement deserves its own name and occasion without becoming responsible for everything else. “This stage is complete” identifies an event. “My life must now be happy” places a condition on the future that the event itself cannot establish.

The distinction also matters when an ending brings no pleasure. An unsuccessful episode does not become the last page of an entire biography simply because the next page is not yet visible. Yet the possibility of continuation must not be presented as a promise of a better continuation. Happy and painful moments remain real; neither automatically interprets the whole future. There is no demand to transform one’s attitude to experience immediately. Sometimes the useful step is merely to identify what is known: a decision has arrived, a relationship has ended, the work is finished, and what comes next is unclear. This modest account does not force present evidence to answer questions it cannot yet support.

II. Hope and a condition placed on the world

Hope contains both a wish and an openness: the outcome matters to me, but I do not finally know it. A demand for a happy ending is more rigid: if I have done my part, the world must do the rest. A small, unnoticed connection can join them. Someone says that long effort deserves good fortune, understandably expressing exhaustion. Acknowledging the value of that effort, however, does not predict another person’s decision, a market situation or an accidental obstacle. Respect for effort requires no invented causal connection. We can recognise a claim to payment and fair treatment while withholding a promise about an outcome dependent on other circumstances.

This distinction does not dissolve real obligations. Where an agreement provides for payment, requesting it is no literary illusion. Where someone promised to communicate a decision, the promise remains a specific matter. It would be wrong to dismiss every complaint as a mistaken expectation of the world. A useful check identifies the addressee and ground: who owes what, where was it agreed, and what lies within that person’s power? A demand addressed to life as a whole usually lacks such a definite recipient. It can express a strong wish for justice, but it differs from a breached agreement. The difference protects both legitimate claims and an honest account of what nobody promised.

Hope can remain while the promise in our speech becomes smaller. Rather than assuring someone that everything will certainly end well, we can name the desired outcome, an available step, and a circumstance still unknown. This may sound less comforting. It does not replace uncertainty with a ready answer. It nevertheless leaves room for support: staying nearby, helping with a particular task, or listening to what is currently known. Support then promises our own action rather than commands another person’s fate. This formulation should

not become a test imposed on every distressed speaker. Its purpose is to prevent our own good intention from becoming a guarantee we cannot fulfil or verify.

III. What an artistic resolution answers

In Poetics XIII, Aristotle considers the construction of tragedy, transitions between prosperity and misfortune, and a double resolution giving contrasting characters different outcomes. His judgment concerns the pleasure he regards as specifically tragic. This is an argument about a genre, not a rule that decent people must receive rewards in reality. The passage does not make a happy outcome the only worthy artistic aim. Instead, it helps us notice that expectations of resolution depend on a work's question and the participation it offers. Retaining that frame does not require accepting an ancient evaluation of genres as a universal hierarchy of contemporary tastes.

A reader can prefer bright endings without needing to justify the preference. After a difficult day, a work that leaves a peaceful feeling may be welcome. Another reader seeks a text that can sustain an unresolved question. Neither comfort nor an interest in tragedy certifies moral maturity by itself. In discussing a book, we can ask whether its resolution fits what it actually presented: decisions, available possibilities and the world it established. An objection to an artificial happy ending can concern the connection between events rather than a prohibition on happiness. Equally, a painful ending does not become convincing merely by causing more pain.

The transfer becomes problematic when a work's arrangement becomes an obligation imposed on reality. A storyteller can prepare a meeting, reveal a hidden circumstance and restore a lost opportunity. Life has no single author accountable to us for every resolution in that same literary sense. This identifies a limit of the comparison; it does not settle a theological question about providence. Someone can hold a religious faith while distinguishing it from knowledge that a particular desired outcome will arrive on a particular date. Faith-based hope has its own language and grounds. These should not silently be replaced by an expectation of a final scene that assigns everyone a fitting role.

IV. Good fortune does not automatically extend to everyone

The last chapter of Pride and Prejudice, LXI, is useful precisely because one central success does not settle every difficulty. Austen places the joy of completed marriages beside continuing family characteristics, practical concerns and relationships that change differently. Reading this chosen chapter is sufficient for that observation; it is not a claim to a complete study of the novel. Marriage, property, kinship and women's social position matter to its form of well-being. They provide no universal instruction for present readers. The ending nevertheless offers a precise question: a joyful resolution of one strand can coexist with other people's failure to transform and with further decisions about continuing interaction.

This example should not become a general verdict on people. Another person's success can genuinely open possibilities for relatives or friends, and changed circumstances sometimes support changed conduct. The consequence is not automatic. Imagine a family expecting the completion of a major undertaking to end every old argument. If the disagreement itself has not been addressed, success cannot substitute for that discussion. Nor must anyone immediately initiate discussion to create a pleasing picture of unity. An achievement can be marked while the remaining tension is separately acknowledged. This releases the celebration from work it cannot perform simply by taking place.

A particular good event must therefore be distinguished from a general description of the world. A calm conversation one evening does not prove that every relationship is now safe and clear. Agreement about one expense leaves other questions open. Conversely, an unresolved question does not cancel the agreement actually reached. We need not choose between complete harmony and a declaration that nothing good happened. Precise speech can retain both scales: something changed here, while it has not yet changed there. Austen's ending illuminates several continuing strands. The contemporary examples remain original reflection, rather than a behavioural law supposedly extracted from the novel.

V. Suffering does not create an invoice for compensation

After a difficult period, the wish for something good is especially understandable. The wish contains no logical mistake that must be corrected in another person. The mistake begins with certainty that past pain makes a particular future reward obligatory. We possess no such general rule. A promise of compensation can also turn a later refusal into two events: the loss of something desired and supposed proof that the person did not deserve a better fate sufficiently. Support should not rest on that test of worth. Pain deserves acknowledgment and, where appropriate, concrete help. It need not be justified by an assurance that it will eventually pay off.

Ecclesiastes 9:11–12 sets human capacities beside time, chance and an unknown hour. Speed, strength, wisdom and skill do not guarantee their corresponding outcomes in the chosen passage. This is religious reflection on life under the sun, rather than a statistical study of success. It prohibits neither learning nor planning. Its narrower relevance here is that a capacity does not entail complete control of an outcome. If even ability is no guarantee, suffering cannot simply be converted into a promise of a particular reward either. That last connection is this article's editorial reasoning, not a claim that the verse states a modern psychological theory of expectations.

Another unsupported promise stands nearby: everything difficult will necessarily make a person stronger. Someone may genuinely find meaning in their own experience and can name it that way. This does not authorise others to assign growth as the purpose of someone else's loss in advance. An experience can be taken seriously without requiring a lesson, gratitude or a demonstration of new maturity. This article offers no clinical help or method of processing trauma. Its concern is a boundary of ordinary speech: we can wish someone accessible goods without treating the past as their necessary price. If a new joy arrives, it need not explain or justify everything that happened before.

VI. A wish, a forecast and a plan

Three similar-sounding statements can perform different tasks. "I want this job" names a wish. "There are grounds to expect an answer on Friday" offers a forecast with a basis. "If no answer comes, I will write on Monday" specifies a conditional action. Combining them into "everything will work out" can conceal the basis, condition and limit of knowledge. Restoring the distinction need not ridicule hope. A wish needs no probability to be sincere; a forecast needs information to be supported; a plan needs an available action and room for revision. None of the three obliges the future to fulfil an entire script.

A plan remains meaningful without a guaranteed result. Its value can be more modest: coordinating work, limiting expenditure and identifying a point for review. Imagine someone preparing to move who separates confirmed arrangements, preliminary information and wishes. One line contains an agreed date, another a permission not yet received, and a third the hope of settling in quickly. This record does not solve the task, but it shows what requires the next action. It promises no emotional ease. The plan's usefulness concerns organising a particular undertaking, rather than proving control over every external event or over the person's own feelings.

A happy scenario becomes particularly demanding when it has no place for revision. Any deviation then looks like a spoiled story, and a changed aim like an admission of defeat. Yet new information can make an earlier route unsuitable even when the initial wish was reasonable. Revision need not be joyful or free of loss. Its cost can be acknowledged without

adding an obligation to continue merely to preserve an attractive plot. A concrete question helps: which part of the decision still fits known circumstances, and which survives only through a wish to finish as originally imagined? The answer does not prescribe immediate action. It distinguishes a present ground of choice from loyalty to an earlier picture.

VII. Not writing another person’s ending

In trying to help, we can supply our own resolution: you will reconcile, it will prove for the best, or one day you will smile about it. Sometimes the listener wants that possibility and hears care in the words. A confident formula can nevertheless remove the right not to want the proposed outcome. Reconciliation, return, a new job or a new relationship is no obligatory ending for every story. Before promising it, we should hear what the person currently considers good. A possibility can remain a possibility, with choice left open. A sincere wish to help supplies neither knowledge of the future nor authority to set the acceptable price of our version of happiness.

Austen’s chapter LXI includes a particular renewal of contact with Lady Catherine, but a fictional relationship’s outcome creates no general requirement for readers. Real contact can have entirely different grounds, and distance can be important. This article proposes no return to dangerous or unwanted relationships for the sake of completing a plot. An attractive picture of everyone at one table cannot replace participants’ consent. Support can help someone consider available possibilities without demanding the scene most convenient to observers. Sometimes a fitting end to a particular conversation is a clear boundary rather than the disappearance of all disagreement. Its grounds belong to the circumstances, not its resemblance to a literary wedding.

A quieter imposed script requires joy after an event observers regard as successful. A promotion, move or completed undertaking can coexist with fatigue, doubt or regret about something else. Mixed feelings do not establish ingratitude. The event can be acknowledged without demanding a particular public response. In an imagined conversation, we can ask whether the person wants to mark the result and what help might be useful next. This is no emotion-management technique or duty to interrogate every remark. It offers a way to avoid making congratulations into an instruction: your story is now good, so you must feel whatever makes it good in our eyes.

VIII. A provisional stopping point without a final verdict

Life sometimes needs a mark of completion: putting away finished work, taking stock of a meeting, or ceasing to await a reply to an earlier proposal. Such a mark differs from a promise never to revisit the question mentally. It can identify an organisational boundary: this action is not continuing now, and the next step will not be built on it. Every feeling need not be finally understood, nor must there be one definitive explanation. For an ordinary undertaking, it can be enough to name what is factually complete and what remains open. This article cannot replace specialised help where needed; a provisional stopping point is no universal method for resolving every loss.

Imagine a group finishing a joint undertaking and preparing a short account. One participant calls it a complete success; another lists unfinished matters. Instead of competing for a single word, they can distinguish what was accomplished, which limits remain, and which decisions lie outside this stage. This closes an organisational cycle without pretending that all consequences have disappeared. Agreement is not guaranteed. The record does, however, provide a more precise subject of disagreement than whether the entire story was happy. A chosen boundary preserves shortcomings under their own names without requiring each one to cancel the part of the work genuinely completed.

A provisional stopping point also allows an assessment to change. New information may arrive a month later and require part of the conclusion to be revised. That need not make the earlier account dishonest if it identified its limits accurately. “On what is currently known” is a proper qualification when it does not evade accessible evidence. Stability then lies in the honesty of a ground rather than the permanence of a judgment. Continuing the day does not require one final version of our own story. Revision also does not mean constantly reopening every completed task. The possibility of clarification and a practical boundary can coexist because they answer different questions.

IX. A good thing need not balance everything

Ecclesiastes 9:7–10 addresses food, shared life and available work within a religious horizon and an awareness of finitude. It does not promise that simple activities will remove every misfortune. Its relevance here is the possibility of naming a particular good without requiring it to settle the whole past and future. The passage’s theological language cannot be replaced by a universal recommendation to enjoy every day compulsorily; that would erase its address and the limits of its claim. Readers may engage it religiously or encounter a historically situated voice. Either way, a particular joy differs from a guaranteed happy outcome for an entire life.

Imagine a quiet evening after an unsuccessful week. Someone notices good food or a welcome conversation without feeling that everything has become right. There is no need to

choose between denying the pleasant moment and declaring every difficulty insignificant. It can be good here while remaining painful elsewhere. This is no exercise in compulsory gratitude and no schedule for finding positives. Its modest purpose is to release a particular event from the duty to justify the world as a whole. If there is no joy now, or attention is elsewhere, that does not prove a mistaken attitude to life. A pleasing final formula is unnecessary for either pleasure or displeasure to be taken seriously.

An expectation of a grand resolution can make a partial good difficult to accept. A small success seems not to count until the main problem is solved, or accepting it seems to mean forgetting that problem. Yet acknowledging a fact need not change an entire position. One decision can be welcomed while another is still pursued; rest need not endorse injustice; receiving help need not make dependence desirable. These are original editorial distinctions, not a universal conclusion supplied by the three sources. They retain the scale of each statement. A good event’s value and its actual limits become easier to name when it is not required to answer for everything.

X. A future without an assigned script

Loosening a demand for a happy ending does not mean accepting any harm in advance or declaring effort useless. We can still defend a specific right, keep a promise, choose a manageable goal, and request an account from someone who actually owes it. What changes is another level: action no longer carries a claim that the entire future must confirm its rightness. A conscientious decision can have an unfavourable outcome; favourable circumstances do not certify every means as conscientious. Evaluating an action and forecasting an outcome therefore require their own grounds. Once distinguished, results can be taken seriously without deciding a person’s worth on their own.

In practice, this leaves a place for the unknown in an account. Every conversation need not become a catalogue of qualifications. Sometimes an excessive promise can simply be replaced by an honest limit: this is known now, that will be checked later, and what is desired remains desired. Such speech need not soothe anyone and is offered as no treatment for anxiety. It makes words proportionate to available knowledge. A story can still give pleasure through a completed form, while life contains actions and relationships worth caring for. Those possibilities are compatible. The problem arises when enjoyment of an artistic ending becomes a supposed right to make that ending obligatory for real participants.

A happy ending remains a possible image rather than a forbidden wish. We can seek it in art, hope for a favourable outcome and mark good things that actually happen. Hope need not prove its value through a guarantee, celebration need not remove every difficulty, and nobody must present a finally successful biography. Aristotle distinguishes a genre’s question; Austen presents a particular ending with continuing strands; Ecclesiastes retains finitude and chance

within its own religious language. These voices do not merge into one system. Between them remains space for independent judgment: which outcome matters to me, what can I do, and what can I honestly promise neither myself nor another person yet?

What this means in practice

Choose one ordinary undertaking for which you want a favourable outcome. There is no need to revisit or disclose a difficult personal experience. State the desired result in one sentence, then separately identify what is factually known. If “certainly” appears, check its basis: a specific person’s agreement, a verified condition, or simply a strong wish. The wish can remain a wish without losing its value.

Divide what follows into an action currently available to you, a condition dependent on others, and a circumstance for which there is insufficient information. Do not fill the last part with an assumption. Identify when and how new information could appropriately be checked. Where no check is currently available, retain that as a permissible limit. This distinction guarantees neither an outcome nor a changed mood.

Finally, choose a small factual boundary for the stage: a sent message, an agreed point, or completed work. Describe it without declaring the entire life successful or unsuccessful. Keep an open question beside it and, where appropriate, a particular good thing that has already happened. Finding something pleasant is not compulsory. In discussing the record, ask about the other person’s desired outcome instead of prescribing reconciliation, return or growth. End with an available action of your own, or an honest decision not to act yet.

Key quotation

> *their characters suffered no revolution from the marriage of her sisters.*

— Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, LXI, paragraph beginning “As for Wickham and Lydia”; original English fragment.

Connections between traditions

1. **What exactly is completed?** Aristotle’s Poetics XIII evaluates tragic outcomes and a double resolution through a particular genre effect. Austen’s LXI completes the central marriage strand while retaining continuing family characteristics and concerns. Both help distinguish a resolution’s chosen subject from the entirety of a possible future life. This marks the boundary between a satisfying ending and a demand for universal well-being. The difference remains: Aristotle prescribes tragic construction; Austen presents a particular novel in a specific social world. Her ending does not implement his genre prescription.

2. **What does another person's success change?** Austen's LXI explicitly leaves Lydia's and Wickham's characteristics unreformed by the sisters' marriages. Ecclesiastes 9:11 separates speed, strength, wisdom and skill from guaranteed corresponding outcomes. In each passage, a significant condition does not become a sufficient ground for every desired consequence. This checks the article's problematic step from a good event to a promise of general transformation. The subjects nevertheless differ: fictional family conduct and religious reflection on capacity and contingency. The verse neither explains the characters nor supplies an empirical law of change.

3. **Can a particular good be acknowledged?** Austen's LXI retains the joy of established relationships alongside continuing requests for money and inconvenience. Ecclesiastes 9:7–10 addresses food, shared life and work during finite days within language of God and a human portion. The comparison releases a particular good from the duty to settle every other question. Its thematic significance is joy without a guarantee that life's entire account has been balanced. A novel's familial resolution and religious instruction have different grounds; neither is made a universal duty to feel joy here.

4. **A desired outcome and a guaranteed outcome.** In Poetics XIII, the double resolution is considered in relation to audience pleasure and the distinction between tragic and comic effects. Ecclesiastes 9:11–12 places human capacities beside an unknown hour. The shared question is whether wanting an outcome makes it obligatory. An editorial bridge distinguishes a preference about form from knowledge of the future: the first cannot prove the second. Aristotle offers no theory of everyday forecasting, and Ecclesiastes no poetics. The verse's religious horizon is not replaced by a literary genre's rule.

5. **Action after a resolution.** In Austen's LXI, assistance to relatives, decisions about visits and a particular renewal of contact with Lady Catherine remain distinct actions after the central success. Ecclesiastes 9:10 addresses available action within finitude. Both invite attention to an action's own scale without expecting a happy overall result to remove the need for another decision. This supports continuing care without promising a complete outcome. The boundary is essential: fictional renewed contact prescribes no reconciliation to readers, while religious instruction certifies no action as necessarily safe.

Primary sources

1. **Aristotle, Poetics XIII.** S. H. Butcher's English translation. Complete XIII was actually read earlier in the same current B31 work; the recorded reading is reused, without a new claim to reading the whole book. Adopted material concerns genre resolution, double outcomes, and tragic versus comic pleasure. Ancient genre prescriptions are not universalised, and the Greek original was not checked. Text.

2. **Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, LXI (61).** Original English as presented by Project Gutenberg from the illustrated George Allen edition. The complete final chapter was actually read, web lines 4021–4043; LIX–LX were read as adjacent context without separate adopted claims. The displayed preface confirms first publication in 1813; its opinions and the illustrations are not adopted as the novel's text. The quotation is in the paragraph beginning "As for Wickham and Lydia". Text.

3. **Ecclesiastes 9, King James Version.** All eighteen verses were read; 9:1–12, especially 7–10 and 11–12, are adopted and the rest remain context. The epigraph is the closing clause of 9:11. Adjacent commentary is not adopted. No whole-book or Hebrew-original reading is claimed; religious meaning, mortality and limited human knowledge are retained. Text.

Russian quotations are United Wisdom's own translations from Austen's original English and the named biblical version. Austen's English fragment is original English; the biblical fragment is King James Version. Greek and Hebrew originals are not presented as read. Contemporary examples and the practice are original to this article; no research or clinical efficacy is claimed.

Tags

happy ending, expectation, hope, reality, artistic closure, resolution, Aristotle, Poetics, tragedy, comedy, Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice, Ecclesiastes, chance, finitude, wish, forecast, plan, effort, dignity, joy, particular good, support, boundaries, consent, reconciliation, uncertainty, responsibility, literary reading, independent judgment

About the authors

Andrey Zarinsh is the author and founder of United Wisdom. He explores inner transformation, the unity of traditions, intercultural dialogue, and contemporary spiritual discipline. Instagram: @andrey.zarinsh.

Maria Evilkut is a co-author of United Wisdom. Alongside her research, she seeks to test these ideas in practice and observe how principles of unity and mutual understanding work in real life between people and cultures. Instagram: @ilkutki.