

The following excerpt is from "Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption" which is a novella by Stephen King that was first published in 1982. *The Shawshank Redemption* is also a 1994 American prison drama film based on the story.

It tells the story of banker Andy Dufresne, who is sentenced to life in Shawshank State Penitentiary for murder, despite his claims of innocence. Over the following two decades, he befriends a fellow prisoner, contraband smuggler Ellis "Red" Redding who narrates Andy's story.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Shawshank_Redemption

Stephen King is an American author of horror, supernatural fiction, suspense, crime, science-fiction, and fantasy novels. His books have sold more than 350 million copies, and many have been adapted into films, television series, miniseries, and comic books. King has published 62 novels, including seven under the pen name Richard Bachman, and five non-fiction books. He has also written approximately [200 short stories](#), most of which have been published in book collections.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_King

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Source:

<https://www.tyrone.k12.pa.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=2789&dataid=3275&FileName=Rita%20Hayworth%20and%20the%20Shawshank%20Redemption.pdf>

It was surprisingly warm, that sun, for a day so late in the year.

"Hello, Red," he called. "Come on and sit a spell."

I did.

"You want this?" he asked, and handed me one of the two carefully polished "millennium rock sandwiches*" I just told you about.

"I sure do," I said. "It's very pretty. Thank you."

He shrugged and changed the subject. "Big anniversary coming up for you next year." I nodded. Next year would make me a thirty-year man. Sixty per cent of my life spent in Shawshank State Prison.

"Think you'll ever get out?"

"Sure. When I have a long white beard and just about three be marbles left rolling around upstairs."

He smiled a little and then turned his face up into the sun again, his eyes closed. "Feels good."

"I think it always does when you know the damn winter's almost right on top of you."

He nodded, and we were silent for awhile. "When I get out of here," Andy said finally, "I'm going where it's warm all the time." He spoke with such calm assurance you would have thought he had only a month or so left to serve. "You know where I'm goin, Red?"

"Nope."

"Zihuatanejo," he said, rolling the word softly from his tongue like music. "Down in Mexico. It's a little place maybe twenty miles from Playa Azul and Mexico Highway Thirty-seven. It's a hundred miles northwest of Acapulco on the Pacific Ocean. You know what the Mexicans say about the Pacific?"

I told him I didn't.

"They say it has no memory. And that's where I want to finish out my life, Red. In a warm place that has no memory." He had picked up a handful of pebbles as he spoke; now he tossed them, one by one, and watched them bounce and roll across the baseball diamond's dirt infield, which would be under a foot of snow before long. "Zihuatanejo. I'm going to have a little hotel down there. Six cabanas along the beach, and six more set further back, for the highway trade. I'll have a guy who'll take my guests out charter fishing. There'll be a trophy for the guy who catches the biggest marlin of the season, and I'll put his picture up in the lobby. It won't be a family place. It'll be a place for people on their honeymoons first or second varieties."

"And where are you going to get the money to buy this fabulous place?" I asked "Your stock account?"

He looked at me and smiled. "That's not so far wrong," he said. "Sometimes you startle me, Red."

"What are you talking about?"

"There are really only two types of men in the world when it comes to bad trouble," Andy said, cupping a match between his hands and lighting a cigarette. "Suppose there was a house full of rare paintings and sculptures and fine old antiques, Red? And suppose the guy who owned the house heard that there was a monster of a hurricane headed right at it? One of those two kinds of men just hopes for the best. The hurricane will change course, he says to himself. No right-thinking hurricane would ever dare wipe out all these Rembrandts, my two Degas horses, my Grant Woods, and my Bentons. Furthermore, God wouldn't allow it. And if worse comes to worst, they're insured. That's one sort of man. The other sort just assumes that hurricane is going to tear right through the middle of his house. If the weather bureau says the hurricane just changed course, this guy assumes it'll change back in order to put his house on ground-zero again. This second type of guy knows there's no harm in hoping for the best as long as you're prepared for the worst."

I lit a cigarette of my own. "Are you saying you prepared for the eventuality?"

"Yes. I prepared for the hurricane. I knew how bad it looked. I didn't have much time, but in the time I had, I operated. I had a friend-just about the only person who stood by me-who worked for an investment company in Portland. He died about six years ago."

"Sorry."

Footnote: Millennium sandwiches

[*from page 55](#)

"Andy continued to shape and polish the rocks he found in the exercise yard, but the yard was smaller by then; half of what he been there in 1950 had been asphalted over in 1962. Nonetheless he found enough to keep him occupied, I guess. When he had finished with each rock he would put it carefully on his window ledge, which faced east. He told me he liked to look at them in the sun, the pieces of the planet he had taken up from the dirt and shaped. Schists, quartzes, granites. Funny little mica-sculptures that were held together with airplane glue. Various sedimentary conglomerates that were polished and cut in such a way that you could see why Andy called them "**millennium sandwiches**"-the layers of different material that had built up over a period of decades and centuries."