***Fahrenheit 451*** - Divided into 3 Parts:

Part I – The Hearth and the Salamander

Part II – The Sieve and the Sand

Part III – Burning Bright

PART I - IT WAS A PLEASURE TO BURN

IT was a special pleasure to see things eaten, to see things blackened and changed. With the brass nozzle in his fists, with this great python spitting its venomous kerosene upon the world, the blood pounded in his head, and his hands were the hands of some amazing conductor playing all the symphonies of blazing and burning to bring down the tatters and charcoal ruins of history. With his symbolic helmet numbered 451 on his stolid head, and his eyes all orange flame with the thought of what came next, he flicked the igniter and the house jumped up in a gorging fire that burned the evening sky red and yellow and black. He strode in a swarm of fireflies. He wanted above all, like the old joke, to shove a marshmallow on a stick in the furnace, while the flapping pigeon-winged books died on the porch and lawn of the house. While the books went up in sparkling whirls and blew away on a wind turned dark with burning. […]

(page 38) Montag looked at the cards in his own hands. "I-I've been thinking. About the fire last week. About the man whose library we fixed. What happened to him?"

"They took him screaming off to the asylum" "He wasn't insane."

Beatty arranged his cards quietly. "Any man's insane who thinks he can fool the Government and us."

"I've tried to imagine," said Montag, "just how it would feel. I mean to have firemen burn our houses and our books."

"We haven't any books." "But if we did have some."

"You got some?" Beatty blinked slowly.

"No." Montag gazed beyond them to the wall with the typed lists of a million forbidden books. Their names leapt in fire, burning down the years under his axe and his hose which sprayed not water but kerosene. "No." But in his mind, a cool wind started up and blew out of the ventilator grille at home, softly, softly, chilling his face. And, again, he saw himself in a green park talking to an old man, a very old man, and the wind from the park was cold, too.

Montag hesitated, "Was-was it always like this? The firehouse, our work? I mean, well, once upon a time..."

"Once upon a time!" Beatty said. "What kind of talk is THAT?"

Fool, thought Montag to himself, you'll give it away. At the last fire, a book of fairy tales, he'd glanced at a single line. "I mean," he said, "in the old days, before homes were completely fireproofed." Suddenly it seemed a much younger voice was speaking for him. He opened his mouth and it was Clarisse McClellan saying, "Didn't firemen prevent fires rather than stoke them up and get them going?"

"That's rich!" Stoneman and Black drew forth their rulebooks, which also contained brief histories of the Firemen of America, and laid them out where Montag, though long familiar with them, might read:

"Established, 1790, to burn English-influenced books in the Colonies. First Fireman: Benjamin Franklin." […]

(p. 57 – End of part I) Beatty puffed his pipe. "Every fireman, sooner or later, hits this. They only need understanding, to know how the wheels run. Need to know the history of our profession. They don't feed it to rookies like they used to. Damn shame." Puff. "Only fire chiefs remember it now." Puff. "I'll let you in on it."

Mildred fidgeted.

Beatty took a full minute to settle himself in and think back for what he wanted to say. "When did it all start, you ask, this job of ours, how did it come about, where, when? Well, I'd say it really got started around about a thing called the Civil War. Even though our rule-book claims it was founded earlier. The fact is we didn't get along well until photography came into its own. Then--motion pictures in the early twentieth century. Radio. Television. Things began to have mass." […]

"And because they had mass, they became simpler," said Beatty. "Once, books appealed to a few people, here, there, everywhere. They could afford to be different.

The world was roomy. But then the world got full of eyes and elbows and mouths. Double, triple, quadruple population. Films and radios, magazines, books levelled down to a sort of paste pudding norm, do you follow me?"

"I think so."

Beatty peered at the smoke pattern he had put out on the air. "Picture it. Nineteenth- century man with his horses, dogs, carts, slow motion. Then, in the twentieth century, speed up your camera. Books cut shorter. Condensations, Digests. Tabloids.

Everything boils down to the gag, the snap ending."

"Snap ending." Mildred nodded.

"Classics cut to fit fifteen-minute radio shows, then cut again to fill a two-minute book column, winding up at last as a ten- or twelve-line dictionary resume. I exaggerate, of course. The dictionaries were for reference. But many were those whose sole knowledge of Hamlet (you know the title certainly, Montag; it is probably only a faint rumour of a title to you, Mrs. Montag) whose sole knowledge, as I say, of Hamlet was a one-page digest in a book that claimed: 'now at least you can read all the classics; keep up with your neighbours.' Do you see? Out of the nursery into the college and back to the nursery; there's your intellectual pattern for the past five centuries or more."

Mildred arose and began to move around the room, picking things up and putting them down. Beatty ignored her and continued

"Speed up the film, Montag, quick. Click? Pic? Look, Eye, Now, Flick, Here, There,

Swift, Pace, Up, Down, In, Out, Why, How, Who, What, Where, Eh? Uh! Bang!

Smack! Wallop, Bing, Bong, Boom! Digest-digests, digest-digest-digests. Politics? One column, two sentences, a headline! Then, in mid-air, all vanishes! Whirl man's mind around about so fast under the pumping hands of publishers, exploiters, broadcasters, that the centrifuge flings off all unnecessary, time-wasting thought!"

[…] "School is shortened, discipline relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped,

English and spelling gradually neglected, finally almost completely ignored. Life is immediate, the job counts, pleasure lies all about after work. Why learn anything save pressing buttons, pulling switches, fitting nuts and bolts?" […]

(p. 114 - End of Part II) Montag put his cards down.

"Tired, Montag? Going out of this game?" "Yes." [...]

"I'll be all right."

"You'll be fine. This is a special case. Come on, jump for it!" [...]

They rounded a corner in thunder and siren, with concussion of tyres, with scream of rubber, with a shift of kerosene bulk in the glittery brass tank, like the food in the stomach of a giant; with Montag's fingers jolting off the silver rail, swinging into cold space, with the wind tearing his hair back from his head, with the wind whistling in his teeth, and him all the while thinking of the women, the chaff women in his parlour tonight, with the kernels blown out from under them by a neon wind, and his silly damned reading of a book to them. How like trying to put out fires with water-pistols, how senseless and insane. One rage turned in for another. One anger displacing another. When would he stop being entirely mad and be quiet, be very quiet indeed? "Here we go!"

[...] "Why," said Montag slowly, "we've stopped in front of my house." [...]

**p. 122 – Part III**

Montag took the four remaining books and hopped, jolted, hopped his way down the alley and suddenly fell as if his head had been cut off and only his body lay there. Something inside had jerked him to a halt and flopped him down. He lay where he had fallen and sobbed, his legs folded, his face pressed blindly to the gravel.

Beatty wanted to die. [...]

(p. 149 ) And then the voices began and they were talking, and he could hear nothing of what the voices said, but the sound rose and fell quietly and the voices were turning the world over and looking at it; the voices knew the land and the trees and the city which lay down the track by the river. The voices talked of everything, there was nothing they could not talk about, he knew from the very cadence and motion and continual stir of curiosity and wonder in them.

And then one of the men looked up and saw him, for the first or perhaps the seventh time, and a voice called to Montag:

"All right, you can come out now ! "

Montag stepped back into the shadows.

"It's all right," the voice said. "You're welcome here."

Montag walked slowly toward the fire and the five old men sitting there dressed in dark blue denim pants and jackets and dark blue suits. He did not know what to say to them.

"Sit down," said the man who seemed to be the leader of the small group. "Have some coffee?"

[...] Granger touched Montag's arm. "Welcome back from the dead." Montag nodded. Granger went on. "You might as well know all of us, now. This is Fred Clement, former occupant of the Thomas Hardy chair at Cambridge in the years before it became an Atomic Engineering School. This other is Dr. Simmons from U.C.L.A., a specialist in Ortega y Gasset; Professor West here did quite a bit for ethics, an ancient study now, for Columbia University quite some years ago. Reverend Padover here gave a few lectures thirty years ago and lost his flock between one Sunday and the next for his views. He's been bumming with us some time now. Myself: I wrote a book called The Fingers in the Glove; the Proper Relationship between the Individual and Society, and here I am! Welcome, Montag! "

"I don't belong with you," said Montag, at last, slowly. "I've been an idiot all the way." "We're used to that. We all made the right kind of mistakes, or we wouldn't be here. When we were separate individuals, all we had was rage. I struck a fireman when he came to burn my library years ago. I've been running ever since. You want to join us, Montag?"

"Yes."

"What have you to offer?"

"Nothing. I thought I had part of the Book of Ecclesiastes and maybe a little of Revelation, but I haven't even that now."

"The Book of Ecclesiastes would be fine. Where was it?" "Here," Montag touched his head.

"Ah," Granger smiled and nodded.

"What's wrong? Isn't that all right?" said Montag.

"Better than all right; perfect!" Granger turned to the Reverend. "Do we have a Book of Ecclesiastes?"

"One. A man named Harris of Youngstown."

"Montag." Granger took Montag's shoulder firmly. "Walk carefully. Guard your health. If anything should happen to Harris, you are the Book of Ecclesiastes. See how important you've become in the last minute!"

"But I've forgotten!"

"No, nothing's ever lost. We have ways to shake down your clinkers for you."

"But I've tried to remember!"

"Don't try. It'll come when we need it. All of us have photographic memories, but spend a lifetime learning how to block off the things that are really in there. Simmons here has worked on it for twenty years and now we've got the method down to where we can recall anything that's been read once. Would you like, some day, Montag, to read Plato's Republic?"

"Of course!"

"I am Plato's Republic. Like to read Marcus Aurelius? Mr. Simmons is Marcus." "How do you do?" said Mr. Simmons.

"Hello," said Montag.

"I want you to meet Jonathan Swift, the author of that evil political book, Gulliver's

Travels! And this other fellow is Charles Darwin, and-this one is Schopenhauer, and this one is Einstein, and this one here at my elbow is Mr. Albert Schweitzer, a very kind philosopher indeed. Here we all are, Montag. Aristophanes and Mahatma Gandhi and Gautama Buddha and Confucius and Thomas Love Peacock and Thomas Jefferson and Mr. Lincoln, if you please. We are also Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John." Everyone laughed quietly. "It can't be," said Montag.

"It is," replied Granger, smiling. " We're book-burners, too. We read the books and burnt them, afraid they'd be found. Micro-filming didn't pay off; we were always travelling, we didn't want to bury the film and come back later. Always the chance of discovery. Better to keep it in the old heads, where no one can see it or suspect it.

We are all bits and pieces of history and literature and international law, Byron, Tom Paine, Machiavelli, or Christ, it's here. And the hour is late. And the war's begun. And we are out here, and the city is there, all wrapped up in its own coat of a thousand colours. What do you think, Montag?"

[...] And the war began and ended in that instant.

[...] "It's flat," he said, a long time later. "City looks like a heap of baking-powder. It's gone." And a long time after that. "I wonder how many knew it was coming? I wonder how many were surprised?"

And across the world, thought Montag, how many other cities dead? And here in our country, how many? A hundred, a thousand?

[...] Granger looked into the fire. "Phoenix." "What?"

"There was a silly damn bird called a Phoenix back before Christ: every few hundred years he built a pyre and burned himself up. He must have been first cousin to Man. But every time he burnt himself up he sprang out of the ashes, he got himself born all over again. And it looks like we're doing the same thing, over and over, but we've got one damn thing the Phoenix never had. We know the damn silly thing we just did. We know all the damn silly things we've done for a thousand years, and as long as we know that and always have it around where we can see it, some day we'll stop making the goddam funeral pyres and jumping into the middle of them. We pick up a few more people that remember, every generation." [...]