

Chapter 1

Let me say this: bein a idiot is no box of chocolates. People laugh, lose patience, treat you shabby. Now they says folks 'sposed to be kind to the afflicted, but let me tell you - it ain't always that way. Even so, I got no complaints, cause I reckon I done live a pretty interestin life, so to speak.

I been a idiot since I was born. My IQ is near 70, which qualifies me, so they say. Probly, tho, I'm closer to bein a imbecile or maybe even a moron, but personally, I'd rather think of myself as like a halfwitn, or somethin - an not no idiot - cause when people think if a idiot, more'n likely they be thinkin of one of them Mongolian idiots - the ones with they eyes too close together what look like Chinamen an drool a lot an play with theyselves.

Now I'm slow - I'll grant you that, but I'm probably a lot brighter than folks think, cause what goes on in my mind is a sight different than what folks see.

[...]

When I was born, my mama name me Forrest, cause of General Nathan Bedford Forrest who fought in the Civil War. [...] My mama is a real fine person. Everybody says that. My daddy, he got kilt just after I's born, so I never known him.

[...]

About the only class I liked was lunch, but I guess you couldn't call that a class. At the nut school, my mama would fix me a sambwich an a cookie an a piece of fruit - except no bananas - an I'd take it to school with me. But in this school they was a cafeteria with nine or ten different things to eat an I'd have trouble makin up my mind what I wanted.

Guess who should be in my homeroom class but Jenny Curran. She come up to me in the hall and say she remember me from first grade. She was all growed up now, with pretty black hair and she was long-legged an had a beautiful face, an they was other things, I dare not mention.

[...]

Then one day a even happen that changed all that too. In the cafeteria I had started gettin my food and goin over to set next to Jenny Curran. I wouldn't say nothing, but she was just about the only person in the school I knew halfways, an it felt good setting there with her. At first I'd been settin with some of the football players, but they acted like I was invisible or somethin'. At least Jenny Curran acted like I was there.

Abridged from Winston Groom, *Forrest Gump*, 1986