

A lucky 17 life lessons from *The Quiet Man*

My mother is 100 percent Irish, so I grew up with soda bread baking in the oven, “Toora Loora Loora” at bedtime, and a series of green cars my father drove to hand out programs at the St. Patrick’s Day parade.

Yet somehow I never knew about *The Quiet Man* until I married John, my husband whose wee bit of Irish heritage is magnified by the fact that his mother was born on the highest holy day of the Irish year.



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Over the past decade, John and I have seen *The Quiet Man* several times. And when we sat down to watch it again the other day, I was thinking how few movies portray marital love as a relationship with challenges that can be addressed and overcome.

It occurred to me that despite John Wayne’s character’s rough and tough side, *The Quiet Man* is full of life lessons. Here’s what I took away on this viewing:

1. *No playing patty-fingers in the holy water.*
2. *When your husband is dragging you across a field, try to keep your shoes on.*



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3. *Nothing is more romantic than being stranded on an Irish hillside in the rain. Unless it’s playing patty-fingers in the holy water.*
4. *When you drink whiskey, drink whiskey. When you drink water, drink water.*
5. *Instead of talking about women folk in saloons, sing “There Was a Wild Colonial Boy.”*
6. *Planting roses can be as important as planting vegetables.*
7. *If your spouse cares passionately about something, you need to care about it at*

least a little.



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8. *Don't underestimate quiet people.*
9. *A tandem bicycle makes an excellent escape vehicle.*
10. *Whenever you enter a home say, "God bless all in this house."*
11. *If you have a problem, talk to your priest —just maybe not while he's trying to land a salmon.*



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12. *Some things are easier to say in Irish.*
13. *Sometimes to become friends, you have to spend time together, whether you're fighting or drinking in an Irish pub.*
14. *If you both want to throw the money in the fire, go for it.*
15. *Marriage isn't always easy, but it's always worthwhile.*
16. *Love is worth fighting for.*



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The main lesson I learned this time around, though, was this:

17. *Don't let your sons watch John Wayne fighting unless you want to watch them "play" fight around the house for the rest of the weekend.*

Now what I want to do for St. Patrick's Day is tuck our sons in bed, bake some soda bread, and watch *The Quiet Man* again.