My Favorite Book Characters in Native and Foreign Literature

Some people read for education, some read for boredom and I read for pleasure. What is the point of reading something if you are not interested in it? Many of my classmates gave up reading because in the childhood they were made to read all the classic literature and made a conclusion that all the books are like those from our school program: extremely dull and too obsolete for modern generation. But even the strongest attempts of teachers couldn’t prevent me from reading as I started to read before school, when I was four, and learned to choose materials for reading properly. At first they were fairy-tales of different countries, and then I become keen on myths and legends (later that helped me in studying Ancient History), later I switched to encyclopedias (only those that were artistically illustrated) and while growing up I’ve tasted poetry(though I’m not a big fan of it), novels, sci-fi, detective stories and fantasy. But still I can’t call myself a voracious reader. The reason is I am so fastidious, that there is no chance for something to be read if I haven’t caught something designing at the first two pages.

I prefer to read foreign writers (many thanks to our school program), but some of our Russian modern writers can successfully compete with them.

As every creative person, who enjoys reading, I adore some extraordinary book characters, but that doesn’t mean my personality becomes influenced too much by them, as the times of childish fanaticism had gone away. I’ll start with Terry Pratchett's "Discworld". It’s a comedic fantasy book series set on a flat world balanced on the backs of four elephants which, in turn, stand on the back of a giant turtle. The books frequently parody, or at least take inspiration from, J. R. R. Tolkien, Robert E. Howard, H. P. Lovecraft and William Shakespeare, as well as mythology, folklore and fairy tales, often using them for satirical parallels with current cultural, political and scientific issues. The main characters can be changed, but one person is immortally constant. His name is Death, he is a black-robed skeleton carrying a scythe. He does not appear to be Death in the universal sense; his jurisdiction appears to be only the Discworld itself. Death is not invisible. Most people's brains refuse to acknowledge him for who he is, unless he insists. Under normal circumstances, only witches, wizards, children and cats can see him, or allow themselves to see him. Due to his eternal nature, Death can ignore such things as walls or magic spells; he exists through all time, and therefore things lasting merely centuries are not as real as he is. Death is efficient but not cruel, and sees his job as a necessary public service. His task is not to kill, but to collect. He harvests the old, worn-out souls of the dead. Death is intrigued by humans and their cultures, and attempts to imitate their lives by adopting a daughter and building a house. But without the emotions and biological needs that motivate humans, he is unable truly to understand why humans do the things that they do and his imitative actions often have fundamental flaws. Death is fascinated by humanity. His interest is coupled with bafflement: it's a favorite point of Pratchett's that the habits and beliefs that are grown into instead of being rationally acquired are an essential part of being human. This fascination with humanity extends to the point of sympathy towards them, and he often sides with humans against greater threats.

The next work of literature, I admire with is a novel "Crime and Punishment" by F.M. Dostoevsky. Perhaps, this is the only book from the school program that I had read from the beginning up to end. I consider this book is still popular and speaks of hot problems through ages. Sonya Marmeladova is my favorite character, though she is a prostitute, she is full of Christian virtue and is only driven into the profession by her family's poverty. She’s modest, intelligent, keeps her feminity and remains of her innocence though too many problems fall on her fragile shoulders. She becomes the first person to whom Raskolnikov confesses his crime, and she supports him even though she was friends with one of the victims. For most of the novel, Sonya serves as the spiritual guide for Raskolnikov. And in my opinion she is the only positive character here.