

Books are Great Book Club

Free Read Suggestions

2019

In the Sanctuary of Outcasts

By Neil W. White III

Following conviction for bank fraud, White spent a year in a minimum-security prison in Carville, Louisiana, housed in the last leper colony in mainland America. His fascinating memoir reflects on the sizable group of lepers living alongside the prisoners

Mississippi Mud: Southern Justice and the Dixie Mafia

By Edward Humes

Biloxi, Mississippi, is a city of contradictions. A lush green jewel on the Gulf of Mexico, a Southern Riviera steeped in Confederate history, where antebellum mansions command staggering ocean views. Yet it has also been home to The Strip, a beachside center of neon decadence, prostitution, drugs, and corrupt public servants - all in thrall to a shadowy band of criminals called the Dixie Mafia. Here in Biloxi, Old South virtue clashes with a long-standing tolerance for evil. When one of the city's most prominent couples - a judge and his mayoral-candidate wife - were shot in their home, their daughter embarked on a dangerous crusade for justice that would forever change the complexion of Biloxi. She wanted to accomplish what the police could not or would not do: find the assassins and shake the city of Biloxi from its jaded complacency. In Mississippi Mud, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Edward Humes tells the inspiring and harrowing story of Lynne Sposito, whose obsession with solving her parents' murder "irresistibly draws us into a ripe, teeming, darkness," into a sin-belt world of conscienceless killers, illegal casinos, and venal politicians. At the same time, Mississippi Mud provides a fascinating and vivid portrait of a little-known corner of the Deep South where corruption and betrayal arise not only from the criminal element but also from the good people of Biloxi's long-standing tradition of turning a blind eye to the malignancy in their midst. Though a work of nonfiction, scrupulously reported and documented, Mississippi Mud reads like an exquisitely taut and suspenseful novel, building toward a surprising - and chilling - conclusion, as the forces unleashed by Lynne's investigation forever alter her life, and Biloxi's future.

Beneath a Scarlet Sky

By Mark T. Sullivan

Based on the true story of a forgotten hero, *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* is the triumphant, epic tale of one young man's incredible courage and resilience during one of history's darkest hours.

Pino Lella wants nothing to do with the war or the Nazis. He's a normal Italian teenager—obsessed with music, food, and girls—but his days of innocence are numbered. When his family home in Milan is destroyed by Allied bombs, Pino joins an underground railroad helping Jews escape over the Alps, and falls for Anna, a beautiful widow six years his senior.

In an attempt to protect him, Pino's parents force him to enlist as a German soldier—a move they think will keep him out of combat. But after Pino is injured, he is recruited at the tender age of eighteen to become the personal driver for Adolf Hitler's left hand in Italy, General Hans Leyers, one of the Third Reich's most mysterious and powerful commanders.

Now, with the opportunity to spy for the Allies inside the German High Command, Pino endures the horrors of the war and the Nazi occupation by fighting in secret, his courage bolstered by his love for Anna and for the life he dreams they will one day share.

Fans of *All the Light We Cannot See*, *The Nightingale*, and *Unbroken* will enjoy this riveting saga of history, suspense, and love.

The Widow and the Tree

By Sonny Brewer

The magnificent Ghosthead Oak has stood watch over coastal Alabama's mysterious backwater bays and slow-running rivers, where bull alligators rumble the nerves of lesser creatures and every living thing has the capacity to kill, for five hundred years. Some say the fabled giant tree was once a knee-high seedling brushed by the black boot of Spanish conquistador Hernando Cortez. No other tree along the entire coastal crescent from New Orleans to Apalachicola can rival its majesty or its power to draw people to it.

In silence and with dignity, the Ghosthead has served as sentinel to the widow's family land for countless generations. It was a childhood friend and a spirit guide in troubled times. Her father is buried in its shade.

So why would the widow walk into a biker bar and hire a man to fire his chainsaw and inflict fatal gashes around its trunk, ending in a few minutes what took five centuries to create?

The Widow and the Tree is a tale of dark deeds committed with mercy in mind,

provoking the reader to ask: Would I have done the same thing? This book is based on a true story.

The Other Einstein

by Marie Benedict

In the tradition of *The Paris Wife* and *Mrs. Poe*, *The Other Einstein* offers us a window into a brilliant, fascinating woman whose light was lost in Einstein's enormous shadow. It is the story of Einstein's wife, a brilliant physicist in her own right, whose contribution to the special theory of relativity is hotly debated and may have been inspired by her own profound and very personal insight.

Mitza Maric has always been a little different from other girls. Most twenty-year-olds are wives by now, not studying physics at an elite Zurich university with only male students trying to outdo her clever calculations. But Mitza is smart enough to know that, for her, math is an easier path than marriage. And then fellow student Albert Einstein takes an interest in her, and the world turns sideways. Theirs becomes a partnership of the mind and of the heart, but there might not be room for more than one genius in a marriage.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg: A Life

By Jane Sherron De Hart

The first full life--private, public, legal, philosophical--of the 107th Supreme Court Justice, one of the most profound and profoundly transformative legal minds of our time; a book fifteen years in work, written with the cooperation of Ruth Bader Ginsburg herself and based on many interviews with the justice, her husband, her children, her friends, and her associates.

In this large, comprehensive, revelatory biography, Jane De Hart explores the central experiences that crucially shaped Ginsburg's passion for justice, her advocacy for gender equality, her meticulous jurisprudence: her desire to make We the People more united and our union more perfect. At the heart of her story and abiding beliefs--her Jewish background. *Tikkun olam*, the Hebrew injunction to "repair the world," with its profound meaning for a young girl who grew up during the Holocaust and World War II. We see the influence of her mother, Celia Amster Bader, whose intellect inspired her daughter's feminism, insisting that Ruth become independent, as she witnessed her mother coping with terminal cervical cancer (Celia died the day before Ruth, at seventeen, graduated from high school).

From Ruth's days as a baton twirler at Brooklyn's James Madison High School, to Cornell University, Harvard and Columbia Law Schools (first in her class), to being a law professor at Rutgers University (one of the few women in the field and fighting pay discrimination), hiding her second pregnancy so as not to risk losing her job; founding

the *Women's Rights Law Reporter*, writing the brief for the first case that persuaded the Supreme Court to strike down a sex-discriminatory state law, then at Columbia (the law school's first tenured female professor); becoming the director of the women's rights project of the ACLU, persuading the Supreme Court in a series of decisions to ban laws that denied women full citizenship status with men.

Her years on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, deciding cases the way she played golf, as she, left-handed, played with right-handed clubs--aiming left, swinging right, hitting down the middle. Her years on the Supreme Court . .

A pioneering life and legal career whose profound mark on American jurisprudence, on American society, on our American character and spirit, will reverberate deep into the twenty-first century and beyond.

The Library Book

By Susan Orlean

On the morning of April 28, 1986, a fire alarm sounded in the Los Angeles Public Library. As the moments passed, the patrons and staff who had been cleared out of the building realized this was not the usual fire alarm. As one fireman recounted, "Once that first stack got going, it was 'Goodbye, Charlie.'" The fire was disastrous: it reached 2000 degrees and burned for more than seven hours. By the time it was extinguished, it had consumed four hundred thousand books and damaged seven hundred thousand more. Investigators descended on the scene, but more than thirty years later, the mystery remains: Did someone purposefully set fire to the library—and if so, who?

Weaving her lifelong love of books and reading into an investigation of the fire, award-winning *New Yorker* reporter and *New York Times* bestselling author Susan Orlean delivers a mesmerizing and uniquely compelling book that manages to tell the broader story of libraries and librarians in a way that has never been done before.

In *The Library Book*, Orlean chronicles the LAPL fire and its aftermath to showcase the larger, crucial role that libraries play in our lives; delves into the evolution of libraries across the country and around the world, from their humble beginnings as a metropolitan charitable initiative to their current status as a cornerstone of national identity; brings each department of the library to vivid life through on-the-ground reporting; studies arson and attempts to burn a copy of a book herself; reflects on her own experiences in libraries; and reexamines the case of Harry Peak, the blond-haired actor long suspected of setting fire to the LAPL more than thirty years ago.

Along the way, Orlean introduces us to an unforgettable cast of characters from libraries past and present—from Mary Foy, who in 1880 at eighteen years old was named the head of the Los Angeles Public Library at a time when men still dominated the role, to Dr. C.J.K. Jones, a pastor, citrus farmer, and polymath known as "The Human Encyclopedia" who roamed the library dispensing information; from Charles Lummis, a wildly eccentric journalist and adventurer who was determined to make the L.A. library one of the best in the world, to the current staff, who do heroic work every day to ensure that their institution remains a vital part of the city it serves.

Brimming with her signature wit, insight, compassion, and talent for deep research, *The Library Book* is Susan Orlean's thrilling journey through the stacks that reveals how these beloved institutions provide much more than just books—and why they remain an essential part of the heart, mind, and soul of our country. It is also a master journalist's reminder that, perhaps especially in the digital era, they are more necessary than ever.

The Orchid Thief: A True Story of Beauty and Obsession

By Susan Orlean

The Orchid Thief is Susan Orlean's tale of an amazing obsession. Determined to clone an endangered flower—the rare ghost orchid *Polyrrhiza lindenii*—a deeply eccentric and oddly attractive man named John Laroche leads Orlean on an unforgettable tour of America's strange flower-selling subculture, through Florida's swamps and beyond, along with the Seminoles who help him and the forces of justice who fight him. In the end, Orlean—and the reader—will have more respect for underdog determination and a powerful new definition of passion.

In this new edition, coming fifteen years after its initial publication and twenty years after she first met the “orchid thief,” Orlean revisits this unforgettable world, and the route by which it was brought to the screen in the film *Adaptation*, in a new retrospective essay.

We Were the Lucky Ones

By Georgia Hunter

Inspired by the incredible true story of one Jewish family separated at the start of World War II, determined to survive—and to reunite—*We Were the Lucky Ones* is a tribute to the triumph of hope and love against all odds

It is the spring of 1939 and three generations of the Kurc family are doing their best to live normal lives, even as the shadow of war grows closer. The talk around the family Seder table is of new babies and budding romance, not of the increasing hardships threatening Jews in their hometown of Radom, Poland. But soon the horrors overtaking Europe will become inescapable and the Kurcs will be flung to the far corners of the world, each desperately trying to navigate his or her own path to safety.

As one sibling is forced into exile, another attempts to flee the continent, while others struggle to escape certain death, either by working grueling hours on empty stomachs in the factories of the ghetto or by hiding as gentiles in plain sight. Driven by an unwavering will to survive and by the fear that they may never see one another again, the Kurcs must rely on hope, ingenuity, and inner strength to persevere.

An extraordinary, propulsive novel, *We Were the Lucky Ones* demonstrates how in the

face of the twentieth century's darkest moment, the human spirit can endure and even thrive.

American Kingpin: The Epic Hunt for the Criminal Mastermind Behind the Silk Road

By Nick Bilton

The unbelievable true story of the man who built a billion-dollar online drug empire from his bedroom--and almost got away with it

In 2011, a twenty-six-year-old libertarian programmer named Ross Ulbricht launched the ultimate free market: the Silk Road, a clandestine Web site hosted on the Dark Web where anyone could trade anything--drugs, hacking software, forged passports, counterfeit cash, poisons--free of the government's watchful eye.

It wasn't long before the media got wind of the new Web site where anyone--not just teenagers and weed dealers but terrorists and black hat hackers--could buy and sell contraband detection-free. Spurred by a public outcry, the federal government launched an epic two-year manhunt for the site's elusive proprietor, with no leads, no witnesses, and no clear jurisdiction. All the investigators knew was that whoever was running the site called himself the Dread Pirate Roberts.

The Silk Road quickly ballooned into \$1.2 billion enterprise, and Ross embraced his new role as kingpin. He enlisted a loyal crew of allies in high and low places, all as addicted to the danger and thrill of running an illegal marketplace as their customers were to the heroin they sold. Through his network he got wind of the target on his back and took drastic steps to protect himself--including ordering a hit on a former employee. As Ross made plans to disappear forever, the Feds raced against the clock to catch a man they weren't sure even existed, searching for a needle in the haystack of the global Internet. Drawing on exclusive access to key players and two billion digital words and images Ross left behind, *Vanity Fair* correspondent and *New York Times* bestselling author Nick Bilton offers a tale filled with twists and turns, lucky breaks and unbelievable close calls. It's a story of the boy next door's ambition gone criminal, spurred on by the clash between the new world of libertarian-leaning, anonymous, decentralized Web advocates and the old world of government control, order, and the rule of law. Filled with unforgettable characters and capped by an astonishing climax, *American Kingpin* might be dismissed as too outrageous for fiction. But it's all too real.

Ali: A Life

By Jonathan Eig

The definitive biography of an American icon, from a *New York Times* best-selling author with unique access to Ali's inner circle

He was the wittiest, the prettiest, the strongest, the bravest, and, of course, the greatest (as he told us himself). Muhammad Ali was one of the twentieth century's most fantastic

figures and arguably the most famous man on the planet.

But until now, he has never been the subject of a complete, unauthorized biography. Jonathan Eig, hailed by Ken Burns as one of America's master storytellers, radically reshapes our understanding of the complicated man who was Ali. Eig had access to all the key people in Ali's life, including his three surviving wives and his managers. He conducted more than 500 interviews and uncovered thousands of pages of previously unreleased FBI and Justice Department files, as well dozens of hours of newly discovered audiotaped interviews from the 1960s. Collectively, they tell Ali's story like never before—the story of a man who was flawed and uncertain and brave beyond belief.

“I am America,” he once declared. “I am the part you won't recognize. But get used to me—black, confident, cocky; my name, not yours; my religion, not yours; my goals, my own. Get used to me.”

He was born Cassius Clay in racially segregated Louisville, Kentucky, the son of a sign painter and a housekeeper. He went on to become a heavyweight boxer with a dazzling mix of power and speed, a warrior for racial pride, a comedian, a preacher, a poet, a draft resister, an actor, and a lover. Millions hated him when he changed his religion, changed his name, and refused to fight in the Vietnam War. He fought his way back, winning hearts, but at great cost. Like so many boxers, he stayed too long.

Jonathan Eig's *Ali* reveals Ali in the complexity he deserves, shedding important new light on his politics, religion, personal life, and neurological condition. *Ali* is a story about America, about race, about a brutal sport, and about a courageous man who shook up the world.

The Odyssey of Echo Company: The 1968 Tet Offensive and the Epic Battle to Survive the Vietnam War

By Doug Stanton

On January 31, 1968, as many as 100,000 guerilla fighters and soldiers in the North Vietnamese Army attacked thirty-six cities throughout South Vietnam, hoping to dislodge American forces during one of the vital turning points of the Vietnam War. Alongside other young American soldiers in an Army reconnaissance platoon (Echo Company, 1/501) of the 101st Airborne Division, Stanley Parker, the nineteen-year-old son of a Texan ironworker, was suddenly thrust into savage combat, having been in-country only a few weeks. As Stan and his platoon-mates, many of whom had enlisted in the Army, eager to become paratroopers, moved from hot zone to hot zone, the extreme

physical and mental stresses of Echo Company's day-to-day existence, involving ambushes and attacks, grueling machine-gun battles, and impossibly dangerous rescues of wounded comrades, pushed them all to their limits and forged them into a lifelong brotherhood. The war became their fight for survival.

When they came home, some encountered a bitterly divided country that didn't understand what they had survived. Returning to the small farms, beach towns, and big cities where they grew up, many of the men in the platoon fell silent, knowing that few of their countrymen wanted to hear the stories they lived to tell—until now. Based on interviews, personal letters, and Army after-action reports, *The Odyssey of Echo Company* recounts the searing tale of wartime service and homecoming of ordinary young American men in an extraordinary time and confirms Doug Stanton's prominence as an unparalleled storyteller of our age.

Three Men in a Boat

By Jerome K. Jerome

A comic masterpiece that has never been out of print since it was first published in 1889, Jerome K. Jerome's *Three Men in a Boat* includes an introduction and notes by Jeremy Lewis in Penguin Classics.

Martyrs to hypochondria and general seediness, J. and his friends George and Harris decide that a jaunt up the Thames would suit them to a 'T'. But when they set off, they can hardly predict the troubles that lie ahead with tow-ropes, unreliable weather forecasts and tins of pineapple chunks - not to mention the devastation left in the wake of J.'s small fox-terrier Montmorency. *Three Men in a Boat* was an instant success when it appeared in 1889, and, with its benign escapism, authorial discursions and wonderful evocation of the late-Victorian 'clerking classes', it hilariously captured the spirit of its age.

In his introduction, Jeremy Lewis examines Jerome K. Jerome's life and times, and the changing world of Victorian England he depicts - from the rise of a new mass-culture of tabloids and bestselling novels to crazes for daytripping and bicycling.

From Here to Eternity: Traveling the World to Find the Good Death

By Caitlin Doughty

Fascinated by our pervasive fear of dead bodies, mortician Caitlin Doughty embarks on a global expedition to discover how other cultures care for the dead. From Zoroastrian sky burials to wish-granting Bolivian skulls, she investigates the world's funerary

customs and expands our sense of what it means to treat the dead with dignity. Her account questions the rituals of the American funeral industry—especially chemical embalming—and suggests that the most effective traditions are those that allow mourners to personally attend to the body of the deceased. Exquisitely illustrated by artist Landis Blair, *From Here to Eternity* is an adventure into the morbid unknown, a fascinating tour through the unique ways people everywhere confront mortality.

Bad Blood: Secrets and Lies in a Silicon Valley Startup

By John Carreyrou

The full inside story of the breathtaking rise and shocking collapse of Theranos, the multibillion-dollar biotech startup, by the prize-winning journalist who first broke the story and pursued it to the end, despite pressure from its charismatic CEO and threats by her lawyers.

In 2014, Theranos founder and CEO Elizabeth Holmes was widely seen as the female Steve Jobs: a brilliant Stanford dropout whose startup "unicorn" promised to revolutionize the medical industry with a machine that would make blood testing significantly faster and easier. Backed by investors such as Larry Ellison and Tim Draper, Theranos sold shares in a fundraising round that valued the company at more than \$9 billion, putting Holmes's worth at an estimated \$4.7 billion. There was just one problem: The technology didn't work.

A riveting story of the biggest corporate fraud since Enron, a tale of ambition and hubris set amid the bold promises of Silicon Valley.

Turtles All the Way Down

By John Green

Sixteen-year-old Aza never intended to pursue the mystery of fugitive billionaire Russell Pickett, but there's a hundred-thousand-dollar reward at stake and her Best and Most Fearless Friend, Daisy, is eager to investigate. So together, they navigate the short distance and broad divides that separate them from Russell Pickett's son, Davis. Aza is trying. She is trying to be a good daughter, a good friend, a good student, and maybe even a good detective, while also living within the ever-tightening spiral of her own thoughts.

I'll Be Gone in the Dark: One Woman's Obsessive Search for the Golden State Killer

By Michelle McNamara

For more than ten years, a mysterious and violent predator committed fifty sexual assaults in Northern California before moving south, where he perpetrated ten sadistic murders. Then he disappeared, eluding capture by multiple police forces and some of the best detectives in the area.

Three decades later, Michelle McNamara, a true crime journalist who created the popular website TrueCrimeDiary.com, was determined to find the violent psychopath she called "the Golden State Killer." Michelle pored over police reports, interviewed victims, and embedded herself in the online communities that were as obsessed with the case as she was.

I'll Be Gone in the Dark—the masterpiece McNamara was writing at the time of her sudden death—offers an atmospheric snapshot of a moment in American history and a chilling account of a criminal mastermind and the wreckage he left behind. It is also a portrait of a woman's obsession and her unflagging pursuit of the truth. Utterly original and compelling, it has been hailed as a modern true crime classic—one which fulfilled Michelle's dream: helping unmask the Golden State Killer.

Girl Waits with Gun

By Amy Stewart

A novel based on the forgotten true story of one of the nation's first female deputy sheriffs.

Constance Kopp doesn't quite fit the mold. She towers over most men, has no interest in marriage or domestic affairs, and has been isolated from the world since a family secret sent her and her sisters into hiding fifteen years ago. One day a belligerent and powerful silk factory owner runs down their buggy, and a dispute over damages turns into a war of bricks, bullets, and threats as he unleashes his gang on their family farm. When the sheriff enlists her help in convicting the men, Constance is forced to confront her past and defend her family — and she does it in a way that few women of 1914 would have dared.

The Elementals

By Michael McDowell

On a split of land cut off by the Gulf, three Victorian summer houses stand against the encroaching sand. Two of the houses at Beldame are still used. The third house, filling with sand, is empty...except for the vicious horror which is shaping nightmares from the nothingness that hangs in the dank, fetid air.

The McCrays and Savages, two fine Mobile families allied by marriage, have been coming to Beldame for years. This summer, with a terrible funeral behind them and a messy divorce coming up, even Luker McCray and little India down from New York are looking forward to being alone at Beldame.

But they won't be alone. For something there, something they don't like to think about, is thinking about them...and about all the ways to make them die.

24 Hours

By Greg Iles

24 HOURS --- that's how long it takes a madman to pull off the perfect crime. He's done it before, he'll do it again, and no one can stop him.

But this time, he's just picked the wrong family to terrorize. Because Will and Karen Jennings aren't going to watch helplessly as he victimizes them. And they aren't going to let him get away with it.

Flowers for Sarajevo

By John McCutcheon

The moving story of a young boy who discovers the power of beauty and kindness during a time of war. Drasko helps his father sell flowers in Sarajevo, but when war threatens and his father is called to the battlefield, Drasko must take over the flower stall. One morning the boys familiar routine is shattered when a mortar shell hits the bakery, killing twenty-two people. The next day, a cellist from the Sarajevo Opera Orchestra goes to the crater and plays the most beautiful music that Drasko can imagine. Inspired, he looks for ways to ease the sorrow of those around him.

The Ragamuffin Gospel: Good News for the Bedraggled, Beat-Up, and Burnt Out

By Brennan Manning

Many believers feel stunted in their Christian growth. We beat ourselves up over our failures and, in the process, pull away from God because we subconsciously believe He tallies our defects and hangs His head in disappointment. In this newly repackaged edition--now with full appendix, study questions, and the author's own epilogue, "'Ragamuffin' Ten Years Later," Brennan Manning reminds us that nothing could be further from the truth. The Father beckons us to Himself with a "furious love" that burns brightly and constantly. Only when we truly embrace God's grace can we bask in the joy of a gospel that enfolds the most needy of His flock--the "ragamuffins."

Are you bedraggled, beat-up, burnt-out?

Most of us believe in God's grace--in theory. But somehow we can't seem to apply it in our daily lives. We continue to see Him as a small-minded bookkeeper, tallying our failures and successes on a score sheet.

Yet God gives us His grace, willingly, no matter what we've done. We come to Him as ragamuffins--dirty, bedraggled, and beat-up. And when we sit at His feet, He smiles upon us, the chosen objects of His "furious love."

Brennan Manning's now-classic meditation on grace and what it takes to access it--simple honesty--has changed thousands of lives. Now with a Ragamuffin's thirty-day spiritual journey guide, it will change yours, too.

Educated

By Tara Westover

Tara Westover was 17 the first time she set foot in a classroom. Born to survivalists in the mountains of Idaho, she prepared for the end of the world by stockpiling home-canned peaches and sleeping with her "head-for-the-hills bag". In the summer she stewed herbs for her mother, a midwife and healer, and in the winter she salvaged in her father's junkyard.

Her father forbade hospitals, so Tara never saw a doctor or nurse. Gashes and concussions, even burns from explosions, were all treated at home with herbalism. The family was so isolated from mainstream society that there was no one to ensure the children received an education and no one to intervene when one of Tara's older brothers became violent.

Then, lacking any formal education, Tara began to educate herself. She taught herself enough mathematics and grammar to be admitted to Brigham Young University, where she studied history, learning for the first time about important world events like the Holocaust and the civil rights movement. Her quest for knowledge transformed her, taking her over oceans and across continents, to Harvard and to Cambridge. Only then would she wonder if she'd traveled too far, if there was still a way home.

Educated is an account of the struggle for self-invention. It is a tale of fierce family loyalty and of the grief that comes with severing the closest of ties. With the acute insight that distinguishes all great writers, Westover has crafted a universal coming-of-age story that gets to the heart of what an education is and what it offers: the perspective to see one's life through new eyes and the will to change it.

The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America's Shining Women

By Kate Moore

The Curies' newly discovered element of radium makes gleaming headlines across the nation as the fresh face of beauty, and wonder drug of the medical community. From body lotion to tonic water, the popular new element shines bright in the otherwise dark years of the First World War.

Meanwhile, hundreds of girls toil amidst the glowing dust of the radium-dial factories. The glittering chemical covers their bodies from head to toe; they light up the night like industrious fireflies. With such a coveted job, these "shining girls" are the luckiest alive — until they begin to fall mysteriously ill.

But the factories that once offered golden opportunities are now ignoring all claims of the gruesome side effects, and the women's cries of corruption. And as the fatal poison of the radium takes hold, the brave shining girls find themselves embroiled in one of the biggest scandals of America's early 20th century, and in a groundbreaking battle for workers' rights that will echo for centuries to come.

Written with a sparkling voice and breakneck pace, *The Radium Girls* fully illuminates the inspiring young women exposed to the "wonder" substance of radium, and their awe-inspiring strength in the face of almost impossible circumstances. Their courage and tenacity led to life-changing regulations, research into nuclear bombing, and ultimately saved hundreds of thousands of lives...

Note: All summaries were taken from Goodreads.com