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FINAL THOUGHT

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topography of humanity.

A Thousand Acres

A Novel *Anchor*

This powerful twentieth-century reimagining of Shakespeare's King Lear centers on a wealthy Iowa farmer who decides to divide his farm between his three daughters. When the youngest objects, she is cut out of his will. This sets off a chain of events that brings dark truths to light and explodes long-suppressed emotions. Ambitiously conceived and stunningly written, A Thousand Acres takes on themes of truth, justice, love, and pride—and reveals the beautiful yet treacherous

A Thousand Acres

A Novel *Random House Digital, Inc.*

On a prosperous Iowa farm in the 1970s, wealthy farmer Lawrence Cook announces his intentions to divide the farm among his daughters, setting off a family crisis reminiscent of Shakespeare's "King Lear." Reader's Guide available. Reprint. 12,500 first printing.

A Thousand Acres

A Novel *Anchor*

This powerful twentieth-century reimagining of Shakespeare's King Lear centers on a wealthy Iowa farmer who

decides to divide his farm between his three daughters. When the youngest objects, she is cut out of his will. This sets off a chain of events that brings dark truths to light and explodes long-suppressed emotions. Ambitiously conceived and stunningly written, *A Thousand Acres* takes on themes of truth, justice, love, and pride—and reveals the beautiful yet treacherous topography of humanity.

Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres*

A Reader's Guide *A&C Black*

Continuum Contemporaries will be a wonderful source of ideas and inspiration for members of book clubs and readings groups, as well as for literature students. The aim of the series is to give

readers accessible and informative introductions to 30 of the most popular, most acclaimed, and most influential novels of recent years. A team of contemporary fiction scholars from both sides of the Atlantic has been assembled to provide a thorough and readable analysis of each of the novels in question. The books in the series will all follow the same structure: a biography of the novelist, including other works, influences, and, in some cases, an interview; a full-length study of the novel, drawing out the most important themes and ideas; a summary of how the novel was received upon publication; a summary of how the novel has performed since publication, including film or TV adaptations, literary prizes, etc.; a wide range of suggestions for

further reading, including websites and discussion forums; and a list of questions for reading groups to discuss.

Some Luck

A novel *Anchor*

Longlisted for the 2014 National Book Award From the winner of the Pulitzer Prize: a powerful, engrossing new novel—the life and times of a remarkable family over three transformative decades in America. On their farm in Denby, Iowa, Rosanna and Walter Langdon abide by time-honored values that they pass on to their five wildly different children: from Frank, the handsome, willful first born, and Joe, whose love of animals and the land sustains him, to Claire, who earns a

special place in her father's heart. Each chapter in *Some Luck* covers a single year, beginning in 1920, as American soldiers like Walter return home from World War I, and going up through the early 1950s, with the country on the cusp of enormous social and economic change. As the Langdons branch out from Iowa to both coasts of America, the personal and the historical merge seamlessly: one moment electricity is just beginning to power the farm, and the next a son is volunteering to fight the Nazis; later still, a girl you'd seen growing up now has a little girl of her own, and you discover that your laughter and your admiration for all these lives are mixing with tears. *Some Luck* delivers on everything we look for in a work of fiction. Taking us through cycles

of births and deaths, passions and betrayals, among characters we come to know inside and out, it is a tour de force that stands wholly on its own. But it is also the first part of a dazzling epic trilogy—a literary adventure that will span a century in America: an astonishing feat of storytelling by a beloved writer at the height of her powers.

Golden Age *Anchor*

From the winner of the Pulitzer Prize: the much-anticipated final volume, following *Some Luck* and *Early Warning*, of her acclaimed American trilogy—a richly absorbing new novel that brings the remarkable Langdon family into our present times and beyond. A lot can happen in one hundred years, as Jane

Smiley shows to dazzling effect in her *Last Hundred Years* trilogy. But as *Golden Age*, its final installment, opens in 1987, the next generation of Langdons face economic, social, political—and personal—challenges unlike anything their ancestors have encountered before. Michael and Richie, the rivalrous twin sons of World War II hero Frank, work in the high-stakes world of government and finance in Washington and New York, but they soon realize that one's fiercest enemies can be closest to home; Charlie, the charming, recently found scion, struggles with whether he wishes to make a mark on the world; and Guthrie, once poised to take over the Langdons' Iowa farm, is instead deployed to Iraq, leaving the land—ever the heart of this

compelling saga—in the capable hands of his younger sister. Determined to evade disaster, for the planet and her family, Felicity worries that the farm's once-bountiful soil may be permanently imperiled, by more than the extremes of climate change. And as they enter deeper into the twenty-first century, all the Langdon women—wives, mothers, daughters—find themselves charged with carrying their storied past into an uncertain future. Combining intimate drama, emotional suspense, and a full command of history, *Golden Age* brings to a magnificent conclusion the century-spanning portrait of this unforgettable family—and the dynamic times in which they've loved, lived, and died: a crowning literary achievement from a beloved master of American storytelling.

Perestroika in Paris *Anchor*

"From the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres* and the New York Times best-selling *Last Hundred Years Trilogy*, a captivating, brilliantly imaginative story of three extraordinary animals--and a young boy--whose lives intersect in Paris. Paras is a spirited racehorse at a racetrack west of Paris. At dusk, one afternoon she pushes open the door of her stall--she's a curious filly--and, after traveling through the night, arrives by chance in the City of Light. She's dazzled, and often mystified, by the sights, sounds and smells around her, but she isn't afraid. Soon she meets an elegant dog, a German shorthair pointer named Frida, who knows how to get by without attracting the attention of suspicious Parisians. Paras and Frida

coexist for a time in the city's lush green spaces, nourished by Frida's strategic trips to the bakery and the butchershop. They keep company with two irrepressible ducks, and an opinionated raven. But then Paras meets a human boy, Etienne, and discovers a new, otherworldly part of Paris: the secluded, ivy-walled house where the boy and his nearly-one-hundred-year-old great grandmother live, quietly and unto themselves. As the cold weather and Christmas near, the unlikeliest of friendships bloom among humans and animals alike. But how long can a runaway horse live undiscovered in Paris? And how long can a boy keep her hidden, and all his own? Jane Smiley's beguiling new novel is itself an adventure that celebrates curiosity and

ingenuity, and expresses the desire of all creatures for true friendship, love, and freedom"--

Moo Anchor

In this darkly satirical send-up of academia and the Midwest, we are introduced to Moo University, a distinguished institution devoted to the study of agriculture. Amid cow pastures and waving fields of grain, Moo's campus churns with devious plots, mischievous intrigue, lusty liaisons, and academic one-upmanship. Chairman X of the Horticulture Department harbors a secret fantasy to kill the dean; Mrs. Walker, the provost's right hand and campus information queen, knows where all the bodies are buried; Timothy Monahan, associate professor of English,

advocates eavesdropping for his creative writing assignments; and Bob Carlson, a sophomore, feeds and maintains his only friend: a hog named Earl Butz. Wonderfully written and masterfully plotted, *Moo* gives us a wickedly funny slice of life.

Private Life

A Novel *Alfred a Knopf Incorporated*

As her husband's obsessions with science take a darker turn on the eve of World War II, Margaret Mayfield is forced to consider the life she has so carefully constructed. By the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*.

King Lear *Standard Ebooks*

King Lear is a tragedy by Shakespeare,

written about 1605 or 1606. Shakespeare based it on the legendary King Leir of the Britons, whose story is outlined in Geoffrey of Monmouth's pseudohistorical *History of the Kings of Britain* (written in about 1136). The play tells the tale of the aged King Lear who is passing on the control of his kingdom to his three daughters. He asks each of them to express their love for him, and the first two, Goneril and Regan do so effusively, saying they love him above all things. But his youngest daughter, Cordelia, is compelled to be truthful and says that she must reserve some love for her future husband. Lear, enraged, cuts her off without any inheritance. The secondary plot deals with the machinations of Edmund, the bastard son of the Earl of Gloucester, who

manages to convince his father that his legitimate son Edgar is plotting against him. After Lear steps down from power, he finds that his elder daughters have no real respect or love for him, and treat him and his followers as a nuisance. They allow the raging Lear to wander out into a storm, hoping to be rid of him, and conspire with Edmund to overthrow the Earl of Gloucester. The play is a moving study of the perils of old age and the true meaning of filial love. It ends tragically with the deaths of both Cordelia and Lear—so tragically, in fact, that performances during the Restoration period sometimes substituted a happy ending. In modern times, though, *King Lear* is performed as written and generally regarded as one of Shakespeare's best plays. This Standard

Ebooks edition is based on William George Clark and William Aldis Wright's 1887 Victoria edition, which is taken from the Globe edition. This book is part of the Standard Ebooks project, which produces free public domain ebooks.

A Study Guide for Jane Smiley's *A Thousand Acres* *Gale, Cengage Learning*

The All-True Travels and Adventures of Lidie Newton

A Novel *Ballantine Books*

See the difference, read #1 bestselling author Jane Smiley in Large Print * About Large Print All Random House Large Print editions are published in a 16-point typeface Six years after her Pulitzer

Prize-winning best-seller, *A Thousand Acres*, and three years after her witty, acclaimed, and best-selling novel of academe, *Moo*, Jane Smiley once again demonstrates her extraordinary range and brilliance. Her new novel, set in the 1850s, speaks to us in a splendidly quirky voice--the strong, wry, no-nonsense voice of Lidie Harkness of Quincy, Illinois, a young woman of courage, good sense, and good heart. It carries us into an America so violently torn apart by the question of slavery that it makes our current political battlegrounds seem a peaceable kingdom. Lidie is hard to scare. She is almost shockingly alive--a tall, plain girl who rides and shoots and speaks her mind, and whose straightforward ways paradoxically amount to a kind of

glamour. We see her at twenty, making a good marriage--to Thomas Newton, a steady, sweet-tempered Yankee who passes through her hometown on a dangerous mission. He belongs to a group of rashly brave New England abolitionists who dedicate themselves to settling the Kansas Territory with like-minded folk to ensure its entering the Union as a Free State. Lidie packs up and goes with him. And the novel races alongside them into the Territory, into the maelstrom of "Bloody Kansas," where slaveholding Missourians constantly and viciously clash with Free Staters, where wandering youths kill you as soon as look at you--where Lidie becomes even more fervently abolitionist than her husband as the young couple again and again barely

escape entrapment in webs of atrocity on both sides of the great question. And when, suddenly, cold-blooded murder invades her own intimate circle, Lidie doesn't falter. She cuts off her hair, disguises herself as a boy, and rides into Missouri in search of the killers--a woman in a fiercely male world, an abolitionist spy in slave territory. On the run, her life threatened, her wits sharpened, she takes on yet another identity--and, in the very midst of her masquerade, discovers herself. Lidie grows increasingly important to us as we follow her travels and adventures on the feverish eve of the War Between the States. With its crackling portrayal of a totally individual and wonderfully articulate woman, its storytelling drive, and its powerful recapturing of an almost

forgotten part of the American story, this is Jane Smiley at her enthralling and enriching best.

Ordinary Love and Good Will *Anchor*

These exquisite twin novellas chronicle the difficult choices that reshape the lives of two very different families. In *Ordinary Love*, Smiley focuses on a woman's infidelity and the lasting, indelible effects it leaves on her children long after her departure. *Good Will* portrays a father who realizes how his son has been affected by his decision to lead a counterculture life and move his family to a farm. As both stories unfold, Smiley gracefully raises the questions that confront all families with the characteristic style and insight that has marked all of her work.

Good Faith *Anchor*

Greed. Envy. Sex. Property. In her subversively funny and genuinely moving new novel, Jane Smiley nails down several American obsessions with the expertise of a master carpenter. Fortright, likable Joe Stratford is the kind of local businessman everybody trusts, for good reason. But it's 1982, and even in Joe's small town, values are in upheaval: not just property values, either. Enter Marcus Burns, a would-be master of the universe whose years with the IRS have taught him which rules are meant to be broken. Before long he and Joe are new best friends—and partners in an investment venture so complex that no one may ever understand it. Add to this Joe's roller coaster affair with his mentor's married daughter. The result is

as suspenseful and entertaining as any of Jane Smiley's fiction.

Early Warning**A novel** *Anchor*

From the Pulitzer Prize-winner: the second installment, following *Some Luck*, of her widely acclaimed, best-selling American trilogy, which brings the journey of a remarkable family with roots in the Iowa heartland into mid-century America. *Early Warning* opens in 1953 with the Langdon family at a crossroads. Their stalwart patriarch, Walter, who with his wife, Rosanna, sustained their farm for three decades, has suddenly died, leaving their five children, now adults, looking to the future. Only one will remain in Iowa to work the land,

while the others scatter to Washington, D.C., California, and everywhere in between. As the country moves out of post-World War II optimism through the darker landscape of the Cold War and the social and sexual revolutions of the 1960s and '70s, and then into the unprecedented wealth—for some—of the early 1980s, the Langdon children each follow a different path in a rapidly changing world. And they now have children of their own: twin boys who are best friends and vicious rivals; a girl whose rebellious spirit takes her to the notorious Peoples Temple in San Francisco; and a golden boy who drops out of college to fight in Vietnam—leaving behind a secret legacy that will send shock waves through the Langdon family into the next generation.

Capturing a transformative period through richly drawn characters we come to know and care deeply for, *Early Warning* continues Smiley's extraordinary epic trilogy, a gorgeously told saga that began with *Some Luck* and will span a century in America. But it also stands entirely on its own as an engrossing story of the challenges—and rewards—of family and home, even in the most turbulent of times, all while showcasing a beloved writer at the height of her considerable powers.

Learwife *Canongate Books*

AN OBSERVER BEST DEBUT NOVELIST OF 2021 'Dreamlike and haunting' The Times 'I am the queen of two crowns, banished fifteen years, the famed and gilded woman, bad-luck baleful girl,

mother of three small animals, now gone. I am fifty-five years old. I am Lear's wife. I am here.' Word has come. Care-bent King Lear is dead, driven mad and betrayed. His three daughters too, broken in battle. But someone has survived: Lear's queen. Exiled to a nunnery years ago, written out of history, her name forgotten. Now she can tell her story. Though her grief and rage may threaten to crack the earth open, she knows she must seek answers. Why was she sent away in shame and disgrace? What has happened to Kent, her oldest friend and ally? And what will become of her now, in this place of women? To find peace she must reckon with her past and make a terrible choice – one upon which her destiny, and that of the entire abbey, rests. Giving

unforgettable voice to a woman whose absence has been a tantalising mystery, Learwife is a breathtaking novel of loss, renewal and how history bleeds into the present.

The Greenlanders *Pan Macmillan*

Set in the fourteenth century in Europe's most far-flung outpost, a land of glittering fjords, blasting winds, sun-warmed meadows, and high, dark, mountains, *The Greenlanders* is the story of one family – proud landowner Asgeir Gunnarsson; his daughter Margret, whose wilful independence leads her into passionate adultery and exile; and his son, Gunnar, whose quest for knowledge is at the compelling centre of this unforgettable book. Jane Smiley takes us into this world of

farmers, priests, and lawspeakers, of hunts and feasts and long-standing feuds, and by an act of literary magic, makes a remote time, place, and people not only real, but dear to us.

Duplicate Keys *Anchor*

Alice Ellis is a Midwestern refugee living in Manhattan. Still recovering from a painful divorce, she depends on the companionship and camaraderie of tightly knit circle of friends. At the center of this circle is a rock band struggling to navigate New York's erratic music scene, and an apartment/practice space with approximately fifty key-holders. One sunny day, Alice enters the apartment and finds two of the band members shot dead. As the double-murder sends waves of shock through their lives, this

group of friends begins to unravel, and dangerous secrets are revealed one by one. When Alice begins to notice things amiss in her own apartment, the tension breaks out as it occurs to her that she is not the only person with a key, and she may not get a chance to change the locks. Jane Smiley applies her distinctive rendering of time, place, and the enigmatic intricacies of personal relationships to the twists and turns of suspense. The result is a brilliant literary thriller that will keep readers guessing up to its final, shocking conclusion.

Horse Heaven *Ballantine Reader's Circle*

A novel set in the world of thoroughbred racing follows a group of trainers, jockeys, and "track brats" on a two-year

journey through the racing cycle.

We That Are Young

A novel *Vintage*

When a billionaire hotelier and political operator attempts to pit his three daughters against one another, a brutal struggle for primacy begins in this modern-day take on Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Set in contemporary India, where rich men are gods while farmers starve and water is fast running out, *We That Are Young* is a story about power, status, and the love of a megalomaniac father. A searing exploration of human fallibility, Preti Taneja's remarkable novel reveals the fragility of the human heart—and its inevitable breaking point.

13 Ways of Looking at the Novel *Anchor*

An essential guide for writers and readers alike, here is Smiley's great celebration of the novel. As she embarks on an exhilarating tour through one hundred titles—from classics such as the thousand-year-old *Tale of Genji* to recent fiction by Zadie Smith and Alice Munro—she explores the power of the form, looking at its history and variety, its cultural impact, and just how it works its magic. She invites us behind the scenes of novel-writing, sharing her own habits and spilling the secrets of her craft, and offering priceless advice to aspiring authors. Every page infects us anew with the passion for reading that is the governing spirit of this gift to book lovers everywhere.

Ten Days in the Hills *Anchor*

In the aftermath of the 2003 Academy Awards, Max and Elena- he's an Oscar-winning writer/director-open their Hollywood Hills home to a group of friends and neighbors, industry insiders and hangers-on, eager to escape the outside world and dissect the latest news, gossip, and secrets of the business. Over the next ten days, old lovers collide, new relationships form, and sparks fly, all with Smiley's signature sparkling wit and characterization. With its breathtaking passion and sexy irreverence, *Ten Days in the Hills* is a glowing addition to the work of one of our most beloved novelists.

A Year at the Races**Reflections on Horses, Humans, Love, Money and Luck** *Faber & Faber*

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jane Smiley draws upon her first-hand knowledge to examine the horse on all levels - practical, theoretical and emotional. Drawing on the wisdom of trainers, vets, jockeys and a real-life horse whisperer, Smiley adds an element of drama and suspense as two of her own horses begin their careers at the racetrack. As the horses get closer to the winner's circle, we are enchanted, enthralled and informed about what it's really like to own, train and root for a racehorse.

The Georges and the Jewels**Book One of the Horses of Oak Valley Ranch** *Knopf Books for Young*

Readers

A Pulitzer Prize winner makes her debut for young readers. Jane Smiley makes her debut for young readers in this stirring novel set on a California horse ranch in the 1960s. Seventh-grader Abby Lovitt has always been more at ease with horses than with people. Her father insists they call all the mares "Jewel" and all the geldings "George" and warns Abby not to get attached: the horses are there to be sold. But with all the stress at school (the Big Four have turned against Abby and her friends) and home (her brother Danny is gone—for good, it seems—and now Daddy won't speak his name), Abby seeks refuge with the Georges and the Jewels. But there's one gelding on her family's farm that gives her no end of trouble: the horse who

won't meet her gaze, the horse who bucks her right off every chance he gets, the horse her father makes her ride and train, every day. She calls him the Ornery George.

The Meanings of Property in Terms of Land in "A Thousand Acres" by Jane Smileys *GRIN Verlag*

Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel (Englisches Seminar), 8 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: This work deals with concepts of ownership in terms of land in the novel "A Thousand Acres" written by Jane Smiley. The novel was written in 1991 and was rewarded a Pulitzer Prize. Jane Smiley rewrote the Shakespearean

play King Lear by narrating the story from the eldest daughter's point of view. However, *A Thousand Acres* is not only a rewriting of Shakespeare's work, it also comments on the social and agricultural circumstances in the United States of the 1960s and 70s, where the novel is set. Her critique in this novel points towards industrialised farming and the exploitation of land and its resources. The aim of the paper is to find out how agriculture and farming are represented in "*A Thousand Acres*." How does Jane Smiley describe the results of industrialised farming? Is there any return? How do people cope with agribusiness and its consequences? What is the structure of the society that lives for agribusiness? In the course of answering these questions I will try to

draw relating problems between Smiley's "*A Thousand Acres*" and Shakespeare's "*King Lear*" and will try to point out the differences between the novel and the play in matters pertaining to concepts of land-ownership.

Secrets of the Sprakkar

Iceland's Extraordinary Women and How They Are Changing the World

Simon and Schuster

The Canadian first lady of Iceland pens a book about why this tiny nation is leading the charge in gender equality, in the vein of *The Moment of Lift*. Iceland is the best place on earth to be a woman—but why? For the past twelve years, the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report has ranked

Iceland number one on its list of countries closing the gap in equality between men and women. What is it about Iceland that enables its society to make such meaningful progress in this ongoing battle, from electing the world's first female president to passing legislation specifically designed to help even the playing field at work and at home? The answer is found in the country's *sprakkar*, an ancient Icelandic word meaning extraordinary or outstanding women. Eliza Reid—Canadian born and raised, and now first lady of Iceland—examines her adopted homeland's attitude toward women: the deep-seated cultural sense of fairness, the influence of current and historical role models, and, crucially, the areas where Iceland still has room for

improvement. Throughout, she interviews dozens of *sprakkar* to tell their inspirational stories, and expertly weaves in her own experiences as an immigrant from small-town Canada. The result is an illuminating discussion of what it means to move through the world as a woman and how the rules of society play more of a role in who we view as equal than we may understand. What makes many women's experiences there so positive? And what can we learn about fairness to benefit our society? Like influential and progressive first ladies Eleanor Roosevelt, Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Michelle Obama, Reid uses her platform to bring the best of her nation to the world. *Secrets of the Sprakkar* is a powerful and atmospheric portrait of a tiny country that could lead

the way forward for us all.

At Paradise Gate

A Novel *Simon and Schuster*

While seventy-seven-year-old Ike Robison is on his deathbed, three generations of women--his wife, Anna, three middle-aged daughters, and granddaughter--reconcile their personal and family histories and claim their birthrights

A Thousand Acres

This powerful twentieth-century reimagining of Shakespeare's King Lear centers on a wealthy Iowa farmer who decides to divide his farm among his three daughters. When the youngest objects, she is cut out of his will, which

sets in motion a chain of events that brings dark truths to light. Ambitiously conceived and stunningly written, *A Thousand Acres* spins the most fundamental themes of truth, justice, love, and pride into a universally acclaimed masterpiece.

True Blue *Yearling Books*

In 1960s California, Abby Lovitt has trouble with True Blue, the newest horse on her family's ranch, a beautiful dappled gray who is so often spooked, making Abby wonder if he is haunted by the ghost of his deceased former owner.

The Moor's Account *Simon and Schuster*

An "exquisite piece of historical fiction" (Winnipeg Free Press), *The Moor's*

Account is “brilliantly imagined fiction...rewritten to give us something that feels very like the truth” (Salman Rushdie). In 1527, the conquistador Pánfilo de Narváez left the port of San Lucar de Barrameda in Spain with a crew of more than five hundred men. His goal was to claim what is now the Gulf Coast of the United States for the Spanish crown and, in the process, become as wealthy and as famous as Hernán Cortés. But from the moment the Narváez expedition reached Florida it met with incredibly bad luck—storms, disease, starvation, hostile Indians. Within a year, there were only four survivors: the expedition’s treasurer, Cabeza de Vaca; a Spanish nobleman named Alonso del Castillo Maldonado; a young explorer by the name of Andrés

Dorantes; and his Moroccan slave, Mustafa al-Zamori. The four survivors were forced to live as slaves to the Indians for six years, before fleeing and establishing themselves as faith healers. Together, they traveled on foot through present-day Florida, Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, gathering thousands of disciples and followers along the way. In 1536, they crossed the Rio Grande into Mexican territory, where they stumbled on a group of Spanish slavers, who escorted them to the capital of the Spanish empire, México-Tenochtitlán. Three of the survivors were asked to provide testimony of their journey—Castillo, Dorantes, and Cabeza de Vaca, who later wrote a book about this adventure, called *La Relación*, or *The Account*. But because he was a

slave, Estebanico was not asked to testify. His experience was considered irrelevant, or superfluous, or unreliable, or unworthy, despite the fact that he had acted as a scout, an interpreter, and a translator. This novel is his story.

Jane Smiley's A Thousand Acres

Subterranean Currents

The Strays of Paris *Pan Macmillan*

'Sunshine in book form' – Daily Mail 'A joyfully escapist celebration of friendship and freedom' – Mail on Sunday
'Delightful, heartwarming . . . An especially welcome reminder of the bright spots even in dark times' – NPR
Paras is a spirited young racehorse living in a stable in the French countryside.

That is until one afternoon when she pushes open the gate of her stall and, travelling through the night, arrives quite by chance in the dazzling streets of Paris. She soon meets a German shorthaired pointer named Frida, two irrepressible ducks and an opinionated crow, and life amongst the animals in the city's lush green spaces is enjoyable for a time. But everything changes when Paras meets a human boy, Étienne, and discovers a new, otherworldly part of Paris: the secluded, ivy-walled house where the boy and his nearly one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother live quietly and keep to themselves. As the cold weather of Christmas nears, the unlikelyst of friendships blooms between human and animals. But how long can a runaway horse live

undiscovered in Paris? And how long can one boy keep her all to himself? Charming and beguiling in equal measure, Jane Smiley's novel celebrates the intrinsic need for friendship, love and freedom, whoever you may be . . . From Jane Smiley, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*, *The Strays of Paris* is a captivating story of a group of extraordinary animals – and one little boy – whose lives cross paths in Paris.

The Age of Grief *Mantle*

In this brilliant collection of five short stories and a novella, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jane Smiley presents six unforgettable portraits exploring the perils of domestic life. I am thirty-five years old, and it seems to me that I have reached the age of grief. Others arrive

there sooner. Almost no one arrives much later . . . In the title novella, a man who has reached the 'age of grief' slowly realizes that his wife is in love with someone else. Unsure whether his marriage is best protected by confronting her or by feigning ignorance, he struggles to repress his anguish and to prevent his wife discovering that he is aware of her infidelity . . . Accompanying this novella are five short stories, including *The Pleasure of Her Company*, in which a lonely, single woman befriends the married couple next door, hoping to learn the secret to their happiness. And *Long Distance*, in which a man finds himself relieved of the obligation to continue an affair that is no longer compelling to him, only to be waylaid by the guilt he feels at his easy

escape.

The Descendants

A Novel *Random House*

Narrated in a bold, fearless, unforgettable voice and set against the lush, panoramic backdrop of Hawaii, *The Descendants* is a stunning debut novel about an unconventional family forced to come together and re-create its own legacy—and the inspiration for the major motion picture starring George Clooney. Fortunes have changed for the King family, descendants of Hawaiian royalty and one of the state's largest landowners. Matthew King's daughters—Scottie, a feisty ten-year-old, and Alex, a seventeen-year-old recovering drug addict—are out of

control, and their charismatic, thrill-seeking mother, Joanie, lies in a coma after a boat-racing accident. She will soon be taken off life support. As Matt gathers his wife's friends and family to say their final goodbyes, a difficult situation is made worse by the sudden discovery that there's one person who hasn't been told: the man with whom Joanie had been having an affair. Forced to examine what they owe not only to the living but to the dead, Matt, Scottie, and Alex take to the road to find Joanie's lover, on a memorable journey that leads to unforeseen humor, growth, and profound revelations. **BONUS:** This edition includes an excerpt from *Kauai Hart Hemmings's The Possibilities*.

The Man who Invented the

Computer

The Biography of John Atanasoff, Digital Pioneer *Random House LLC*

Traces physics professor John Vincent Atanasoff's role in the invention of the computer, describing his innovative construction of an unpatented electronic device that eased the lives of burdened scientists by performing calculations using binary numbers.

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Barn Blind Mantle

Written with the grace and quiet beauty of her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, *Barn Blind* is a spellbinding story on the classic American themes of work, love, and duty, and the lengths we will go to achieve success. The verdant pastures

of a farm in Illinois have the placid charms of a landscape painting, but the horses that graze there have become the obsession of a woman who sees them as the fulfilment of every wish: to win, to be honoured, to be the best. Her ambition is the galvanizing force in Jane Smiley's first novel, a force that will drive a wedge between her and her family, and bring them all to tragedy . . .

Taking the Reins (An Ellen & Ned Book) *Knopf Books for Young Readers*

A young rider encounters well-known horses and new friends in the final installment of the Ellen & Ned trilogy by Pulitzer Prize winner Jane Smiley. Ellen's family has moved to a new town...but some things, like her love for horses, remain the same. Ellen is now the proud

owner of her own horse, Tater. She's learning new skills and challenging herself as a rider...but she still can't stop thinking about Ned, the feisty former racehorse she sees on the ranch during her lessons. In the meantime, Ellen's making new friends and encountering old ones. Most exciting of all is Da, a boy from a riding family who is possessed of a spirit of mischief and daring and knows his own mind. Ellen still has a lot to learn...about horses, friendship, and herself. And will she ever be able to get Ned off her mind?

Plainsong *Vintage*

National Book Award Finalist A heartstrong story of family and romance, tribulation and tenacity, set on the High Plains east of Denver. In the small town

of Holt, Colorado, a high school teacher is confronted with raising his two boys alone after their mother retreats first to the bedroom, then altogether. A teenage girl—her father long since disappeared, her mother unwilling to have her in the house—is pregnant, alone herself, with nowhere to go. And out in the country, two brothers, elderly bachelors, work the family homestead, the only world they've ever known. From these unsettled lives emerges a vision of life, and of the town and landscape that bind them together—their fates somehow overcoming the powerful circumstances of place and station, their confusion, curiosity, dignity and humor intact and resonant. As the milieu widens to embrace fully four generations, Kent Haruf displays an emotional and

aesthetic authority to rival the past masters of a classic American tradition.

Discussion Notes on Jane Smiley's A Thousand Acres