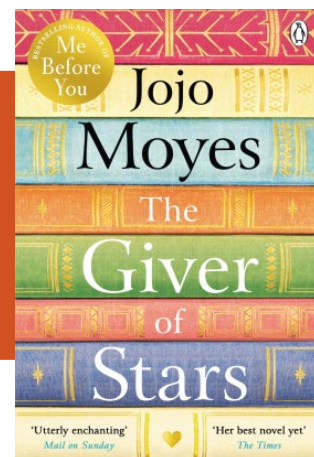




The Giver of Stars

Jojo Moyes



Author Background

Jojo Moyes was born Pauline Sara-Jo Moyes on 4 August 1969 in Maidstone, England and is a journalist and best-selling novelist. Moyes became a full-time novelist in 2002, when her first book *Sheltering Rain* was published. Her books include the bestsellers *Me Before You*, *After You*, *Still Me*, *The Girl You Left Behind*, *The One Plus One* and her short story collection *Paris for One and Other Stories*. Her novels have been translated into 46 languages, have hit the number one spot in 12 countries and have sold over 38 million copies worldwide. *Me Before You* was adapted into a major film starring Sam Claflin and Emilia Clarke in 2016.

Moyes is one of only a few authors to have twice won the Romantic Novel of the Year Award by the Romantic Novelists' Association. Her latest novel, *The Giver of Stars* was shortlisted for the 2020 Fiction Book of the Year in the British Book Awards. She is married to Charles Arthur, technology editor of *The Guardian*. They live with their three children on a farm in Essex, England.

Book Summary

Alice Wright marries handsome American Bennett Van Cleve hoping to escape her stifling life in England. But small-town Kentucky quickly proves equally claustrophobic, especially living alongside her overbearing father-in-law. So when a call goes out for a team of women to deliver books as part of Eleanor Roosevelt's new travelling library, Alice signs on enthusiastically.

The leader, and soon Alice's greatest ally, is Margery, a smart-talking, self-sufficient woman who's never asked a man's permission for anything. They will be joined by three other women who become known as the Horseback Librarians of Kentucky. What happens to them --- and to the men they love --- becomes a classic drama of loyalty, justice, humanity and passion. Though they face all kinds of dangers, they're committed to their job --- bringing books to people who have never had any and sharing the gift of learning that will change their lives.

Based on a true story rooted in America's past, *The Giver of Stars* is unparalleled in its scope. At times funny, at others heartbreaking, this is a richly rewarding novel of women's friendship, of true love, and of what happens when we reach beyond our grasp for the great beyond.

Discussion Questions

- ❖ While writing and researching *The Giver of Stars*, author Jojo Moyes visited Kentucky several times, stayed in a tiny cabin on the side of a mountain, rode horses along the trails, and met the people of Kentucky. Did the characters and sense of place feel authentic to you?
- ❖ Literacy and censorship are significant issues in *The Giver of Stars*, issues that affect the women of the novel very differently from the men. Why do you think Moyes chose to focus on these topics?
- ❖ The novel features families from vastly different backgrounds, and one of the central issues in the book is that of class inequality. In which scenarios did you see these dynamics play out, and between which characters?
- ❖ Several times in the book, the acquisition of knowledge changes a character's life. Have you ever experienced such a shift after gaining new knowledge in your own life? How did it happen? If not, what held you back from making a change?
- ❖ Which of the five members of the Horseback Librarians of Kentucky did you most identify with? Why?
- ❖ Moyes has said she wanted to write a book about women who had agency and who actually did something worthwhile, rather than simply existing in a romantic or domestic plotline. Throughout the book, most of the women do have their moments of agency. Which of these moments struck you most intensely? Did you ever wish a character had taken action when she hadn't? If so, when, and what could she have done differently?

References

- ❖ Reading Group Guides: <https://www.readinggroupguides.com/reviews/the-giver-of-stars>
- ❖ Jojo Moyes: <https://www.jojomoyes.com/about-jojo/>
- ❖ Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jojo_Moyes
- ❖ Penguin Random House: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/535031/the-giver-of-stars-by-jojo-moyes/9780399562488/readers-guide/>
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