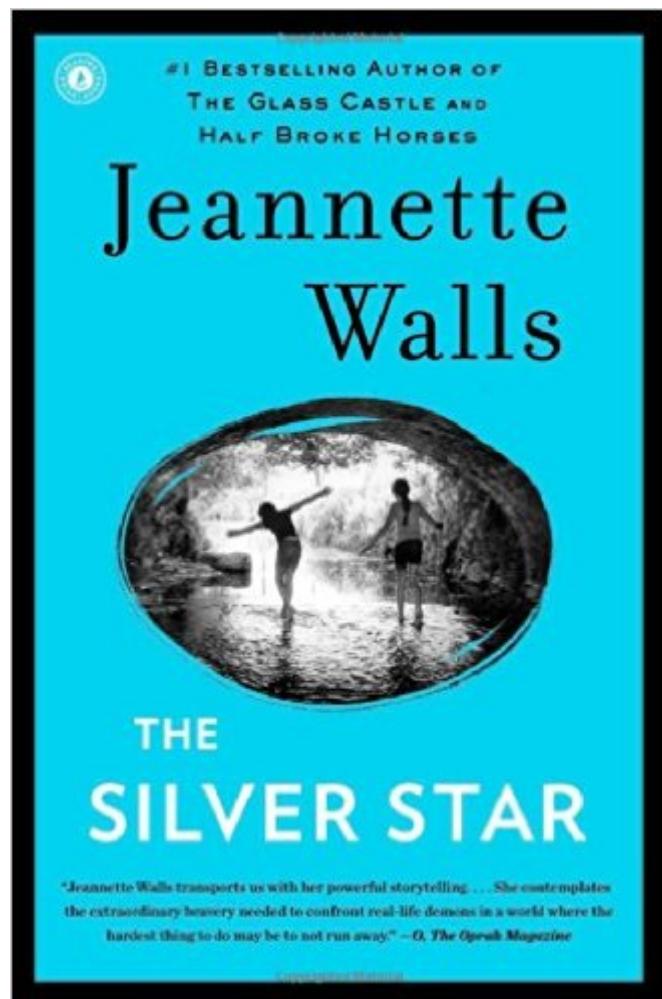


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# The Silver Star: A Novel



## Synopsis

From the #1 New York Times bestselling author of *The Glass Castle*, Jeannette Walls' gripping new novel that "transports us with her powerful storytelling...She contemplates the extraordinary bravery needed to confront real-life demons in a world where the hardest thing to do may be to not run away" (O, The Oprah Magazine). It is 1970 in a small town in California. Bean • Holladay is twelve and her sister, Liz, is fifteen when their artistic mother, Charlotte, takes off to find herself, leaving her girls enough money to last a month or two. When Bean returns from school one day and sees a police car outside the house, she and Liz decide to take the bus to Virginia, where their widowed Uncle Tinsley lives in the decaying mansion that's been in Charlotte's family for generations. An impetuous optimist, Bean soon discovers who her father was, and hears stories about why their mother left Virginia in the first place. Money is tight, and the sisters start babysitting and doing office work for Jerry Maddox, foreman of the mill in town, who bullies his workers, his tenants, his children, and his wife. Liz is whip-smart "an inventor of word games, reader of Edgar Allan Poe, nonconformist. But when school starts in the fall, it's Bean who easily adjusts, and Liz who becomes increasingly withdrawn. And then something happens to Liz in the car with Maddox. Jeannette Walls has written a deeply moving novel about triumph over adversity and about people who find a way to love each other and the world, despite its flaws and injustices.

## Book Information

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Scribner; Reprint edition (June 3, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451661541

ISBN-13: 978-1451661545

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.6 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.1 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (1,660 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #25,623 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Women's Fiction > Sisters #126 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Biographical #545 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Women's Fiction > Domestic Life

## Customer Reviews

Because as other reviewers have said, *The Glass Castle* is one of my favorite books- but this

seemed like it came from a different author and definitely for a younger readership. I pre-ordered it as well and couldn't wait for it to arrive. Then I couldn't wait to get to it, then for it to get better, and it just never did. Too many stereotypes and not an interesting enough plot were its biggest failings. Dysfunctional family books, stories of quirky and or bad parents, voices of young people telling tales of survival in tough circumstances are all of great interest to me, and I believe Jeanette Walls is a wonderful writer. Having said that, I still was very disappointed by this book.

There is no bigger fan of The Glass Castle, and I dislike giving a poor review, but I found Silver Star to be sadly disappointing. And let me be clear, Silver Star fails all on its own - and not because it doesn't measure up to the transcendence of Glass Castle. While it contains a fair amount of action, it feels thin and lacking in depth. I won't rehash the plot lines since other reviewers have done a good job already. My take about 30 pages in was that this book should be marketed for teen readers. While the painful "bad mother" themes were revisited in this book, Walls did so with superficiality and hasty wrap-ups of mini plot lines, shallow dialogue, and quite frankly, cardboard villains and good guys. I don't see where the 4 and 5 stars are coming from, but that is the beauty of subjectivity. Books mean something different to everyone. Fans of Walls have been waiting for this book. It was such a letdown.

Loved Walls' "Glass Castle" and "Half-Broke Horses". Totally disappointed with Silver Star. One reviewer said it reads like a YA fiction....I've read many wonderful YA fiction books, and this was poorly written. Boring, predictable and overly simple. Seems written more for middle school girls than adult fiction.

"Find the magic," Mom always said. "And If you can't find the magic," she added, "then make the magic." The Silver Star is one of those books that I loved but at the same time I'm not sure if it was all that great. On one hand, The Silver Star is an excellent, quick coming-of-age story but on the other hand it's kind of disappointing after reading The Glass Castle. The Glass Castle is my favorite non-fiction book ever written and it was just so mesmerizing. The Silver Star doesn't exactly deliver the same emotional punch that The Glass Castle had but it's still an entertaining read. Thank you Scribner for providing me with an ARC of The Silver Star in exchange for a honest review. If you've read The Glass Castle, parts of The Silver Star may seem pretty similar to you. Negligent, abusive mother mistreats her kids who are way smarter than all the other adults. The kids have to fend for themselves in a tough world where it's seems like everyone is out to get them. The family is

constantly running away from their problems and the world isn't so kind to them. The Silver Star is a story written in the same vein as The Glass Castle. There are themes about growing up, family, and loyalty spread out through the novel. The Silver Star explores racial and socioeconomic boundaries but Walls doesn't develop these themes well. The way Walls explores racial boundaries is pretty basic and doesn't really go beyond the fact that racism is bad. This book is marketed as an adult novel but it feels more like a Middle Grade or YA novel. I really liked the characters Walls created in this novel even though they do share similarities with the characters from The Glass Castle. Jean and Liz were interesting protagonists and I loved how resourceful. It always amazes me how in stories like this how the kids fend for themselves and are more intelligent than the adults in their lives. The way they coped with reality by comparing their lives to Alice In Wonderland was really cute. One of the most amazing things about Walls' writing is that she makes even abusive parents slightly likeable. I'm not condoning abuse but Walls helps the reader explore why the parent is abusive. She talks about Jean and Liz's mother fondly even though she fails at being a parent and an authoritative figure. The reader definitely empathizes with her mother and feels for her because of her unfortunate past. Some of my favorite quotes in this book come from their mother and her dialogue was just so quotable. The Silver Star feels like a rehash of The Glass Castle but a not very developed one. Walls added a little bit about sexual abuse, racism, and other small details but it's still felt like I was reading a mediocre version of The Glass Castle. That being said, this book was still very good and it was definitely a quick read. This book is by no means bad, but it is disappointing after reading The Glass Castle. I would definitely recommend this for readers looking for a quick, historical fiction book. If you haven't read The Glass Castle yet, I would recommend reading it before The Silver Star.

Any readers who grew up in the midst of disturbing family circumstances--with or without chicken potpies--may find this story of special interest. Once again, Jeannette Walls tells an engaging story with unpredictable twists and turns, providing a treasure chest of insights on family dynamics along the way. I enjoyed the charm of her wordplay and expressions ("tire-kickers," "bandersnatches," "rigor mortis"). And I love the way she inspires me to think about how the bond between two sisters can be the key to survival. Yes, it's clearly marked as a novel, but parts of the story sure ring true to me. It's a winner. A great read for the beach, a rainy day, or to jumpstart a lively conversation at a book group...or even with your own family. Bravo, Jeannette. You've done it again! Keep writing.

This book is definitely along the same vein as "The Glass Castle" and "Half-Broke Horses" - many

of the themes are the same - but this is a slight step below. If this had been my first Jeannette Walls book, I would have loved it, but since it is my third, I felt the ending was slightly rushed and that the writing was a little too cutesy at times. However, this is like comparing two exceptional pieces of art against a third good piece by the same artist. It's still pretty good, just not as great as the first two. That being said, I would still recommend this book as a pretty quick read (I read it in one sitting on a 5-hour train ride) and it completely kept my attention. I look forward to more work by Jeannette Walls.

This is not worth reading at all. I loved her Glass Castles and Half Broke Horses and kept waiting for this to get better but it just didn't. Cliched characters - plucky little girl, good country folk, eccentric uncle, wacky selfish neglectful mother, extreme villain - with dialog and narratives that do not ring true at all. Do not waste your time - I actually found myself thinking, was this book some kind of contractual thing that she was forced to come up with something, anything? So disappointing.

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