



**Title:** A Spark of Light: A Novel

**Author:** Jodi Picoult

**Imprint:** Ballantine Books

**Publisher:** Random House Publishing Group

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**ISBN:** 9780345545008

**Format:** Paperback

## BOOK RESUME: A SPARK OF LIGHT

### BOOK SYNOPSIS

The warm fall day starts like any other at the Center—a women’s reproductive health services clinic—its staff offering care to anyone who passes through its doors. Then, in late morning, a desperate and distraught gunman bursts in and opens fire, taking all inside hostage.

After rushing to the scene, Hugh McElroy, a police hostage negotiator, sets up a perimeter and begins making a plan to communicate with the gunman. As his phone vibrates with incoming text messages he glances at it and, to his horror, finds out that his fifteen-year-old daughter, Wren, is inside the clinic.

But Wren is not alone. She will share the next and tensest few hours of her young life with a cast of unforgettable characters: A nurse who calms her own panic in order to save the life of a wounded woman. A doctor who does his work not in spite of his faith but because of it, and who will find that faith tested as never before. A pro-life protester, disguised as a patient, who now stands in the crosshairs of the same rage she herself has felt. A young woman who has come to terminate her pregnancy. And the disturbed individual himself, vowing to be heard.

Told in a daring and enthralling narrative structure that counts backward through the hours of the standoff, this is a story that traces its way back to what brought each of these very different individuals to the same place on this fateful day.

One of the most fearless writers of our time, Jodi Picoult tackles a complicated issue in this gripping and nuanced novel. How do we balance the rights of pregnant women with the rights of the unborn they carry? What does it mean to be a good parent? *A Spark of Light* will inspire debate, conversation . . . and, hopefully, understanding.

### REVIEWS AND PRAISE

“Picoult at her fearless best . . . Timely, balanced and certain to inspire debate.”  
—*The Washington Post*

“Thoroughly realistic storytelling . . . Picoult has achieved what politicians across the spectrum have not been able to: humanized a hot-button issue. Excellent for book clubs, this should also be considered for discussions in critical thinking and political debate.” —*Library Journal* (starred review)

“The author presents the white-knuckled narrative in a reverse-chronological order. The effect is mesmerizing, as Picoult establishes moments in the overarching event, before revealing how they came to be.” —*Houston Chronicle*

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

“Picoult delivers another riveting yarn . . . in this carefully crafted, utterly gripping tale.” —*Booklist* (starred review)

“Novels such as this . . . are necessary” —*Kirkus Reviews*

#### **MEDIA AND RESOURCES**

- [Discussion Guide](#)
- [Book Club Questions](#)
- [“Jodi Picoult on ‘A Spark of Light,’ moving beyond legislating abortion rights,” CBS This Morning \(2018\)](#)
- [“Writing From Opposite Sides: Jodi Picoult Asks The Big Questions,” \*For the Love of Books\* Episode 4](#)
- [Readers React to Jodi Picoult’s Books](#)

#### **RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES**

- [“Author Jodi Picoult denounces book bans after Florida school district pulls 20 of her titles from shelves,” ABC News \(2023\)](#)
- [“Jodi Picoult: NH is not Florida. Book ban bill should be defeated.” Seacoastonline \(2024\)](#)
- [“Bestselling Author Jodi Picoult Warns Against Book Bans,” \*The Brian Lehrer Show\*, WNYC \(2023\)](#)
- [“Jodi Picoult: ‘It’s not a badge of honour to be banned,’” BBC \(2024\)](#)
- [“Jodi Picoult Speaks Out Against Iowa Book Ban,” \*ilovelibraries\* \(2023\)](#)

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