



Shine

Jodi Picoult

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Jodi Picoult tackles issues of race and privilege in this ebook original short story, a prequel to her upcoming novel *Small Great Things*. In “Shine,” the master storyteller and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of *Leaving Time* and *My Sister’s Keeper* introduces readers to the unforgettable Ruth Brooks.

Today is Ruth’s first day of third grade at Dalton. The prestigious institution on New York’s Upper East Side couldn’t be more different from her old school in Harlem. Despite being the smartest girl in her grade, Ruth suspects that her classmates and teachers only see her dark skin. She also notices that Christina, the daughter of her mother’s employer, treats Ruth very differently when they’re hanging out with the popular girls rather than playing together. Ruth must navigate between two worlds, never losing sight of the dreams she has for herself—in hopes that someday, someone will see her for who she really is.

Includes a preview of Jodi Picoult’s highly anticipated new novel, *Small Great Things*!

Praise for Jodi Picoult

“Picoult writes with unassuming brilliance.”—**Stephen King**

“It’s hard to exaggerate how well Picoult writes.”—*Financial Times*

“Picoult writes with a fine touch, a sharp eye for detail, and a firm grasp of the delicacy and complexity of human relationships.”—*The Boston Globe*

“Picoult is a master of the craft of storytelling.”—**Associated Press**

Shine Details

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From Reader Review Shine for online ebook

Deanna says

My reviews can also be seen at: [https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress...](https://deesradreadsandreviews.wordpress.com)

4.5 Stars!!

I have been looking forward to reading Jodi Picoult's upcoming new novel "Small Great Things" and I was pleased to find this prequel to the book. "Shine" is not a long book but it was quite an interesting read and a great way to introduce some of the characters that will be in the new book. In "Shine" we meet a wonderful and unforgettable character, Ruth Brooks.

Ruth is nervous about starting her first day of third grade at Dalton, a prominent school on New York's Upper East Side. On the one hand will miss her old school in Harlem that she attended with her sister, but on the other hand she's excited that she'll be with her friend, Christina at the new school. Christina is also the daughter of Ruth's mother's long-time employer. However, it's not long before Ruth feels like everyone is treating her differently and she doesn't think it's just because she's new to the school...

I will leave it at that, but I really enjoyed this thought-provoking novella. I'm looking forward to reading "Small Great Things" even more now.

Jodi Picoult is one of my favorite authors and I will honestly read anything she writes. I look forward to the release of a new book from her each year. I may like some more than others, but I always find something that I connect with in some way. It's obvious how much research goes into each of her novels and I appreciate it. Whether the book is about family, love, relationships, religion, cancer, medical emancipation, death, sexual assault, mental illness, addiction, even whales or elephants. I always learn something new, and I love that about her novels.

"Shine" is the perfect appetizer to what looks to me like another great read. I have a feeling that it won't take me long to read "Small Great Things" and I can't wait to start it!

Ankita Singh says

Jodi Picoult is my idol. My Sister's Keeper was the first book I read by her and since then I've read almost all of her books.

I listened to Shine as an AudioBook and it was all Jodi Picoult. I loved how, even in such a short story, she managed to create such deep characters.

Ruth was a sweet, caring character, even when she was a small girl, and I'm so looking forward to read more of her story in Small Great Things.

I love Jodi Picoult for writing about topics that matter, issues that need to be focused on, and Shine was just what I always expect from her, a bunch of awesomeness.

Okay, so this review may sound more like a fangirl's post than a critique's but I can NOT critique Jodi Picoult's work, all I can do is fangirl about it!

PinkAmy loves books, cats, and naps; says

Eight-and-a-half year old Ruth starts third grade on scholarship in the private school of her mother's employer's daughter Christina and experiences culture shock from her previous school in Harlem. Ruth experiences subtle and not so subtle racism, as well as kindness from a loving teacher. Most disturbing is the difference in how Christina treats her in private and public.

While reading SHINE, I couldn't help but to feel like I was reading a well researched story written by a white woman trying to hit on all the racial inequities young Ruth might experience as the only black girl in her private school. I never actually felt like I was reading the POV of a young black girl. The voice felt artificial, at times like it was trying too hard, and at times like it wasn't trying hard enough.

The story didn't feel fresh or original. While I liked and empathized with Ruth, SHINE didn't inspire me to preorder SMALL GREAT THINGS.

Melissa says

Light on pages, but packed with emotion and a little girl's heart-wrenching reality, this short story sets the stage for the stellar novel Small Great Things.

Smart and curious, Ruth is an eight-year-old girl that doesn't really fit in. No matter how hard she tries, she's different. A scholarship kid from Harlem, she's the only black girl in a sea of white faces at a prestigious school, and it's tough. The behavior of her new classmates, the teacher, her supposed "friend" and even her own family makes her question everything she held true. It's a harsh reality, that **no matter how hard she tries to shine, she might not ever been seen as an equal**. I had to admire her perseverance and the way she held her head high, despite the way some people treated her.

I may be incredibly naive, but the entire time I was reading, I just kept asking myself - are kids really this mean? Granted it's been quite some time since I was in third grade and I don't have any kids, but still. Are kids this young really spewing such hatred? There's no way they understand the ramifications of their hurtful comments or even fully grasp what they're saying, so how exactly are they learning to behave this way? It's scary to think about.

Having already read the majority of Small Great Things, as I write this review, I can say **this novella is only a tiny taste** of the issue at hand - racism. It's a good way to prepare yourself for the full novel though, which is an extremely heavy read. Racism is a difficult topic period, but I think Jodi Picoult manages to deliver a thought-provoking and eye-opening story. And more importantly, she does so in a way that forces you to examine all sides of the issue.

Reading.Between.Wines says

5/5 ?

My reviews can also be found on my blog: [https://readingbetweenwinessite.wordpress...](https://readingbetweenwinessite.wordpress.com)

It is rather foreign to me how Jodi Picoult can cultivate so much emotion in me in just 42 pages, but she did. There is no way I could give this short story less than 5 stars, even though I only rated Small Great Things a 4. There is just something about a short story that pulls at the heart strings that makes me want to give high ratings.

This ebook touches on race, friendship, and so much more. I highly recommend reading this and then reading Small Great Things. So dang good, and Jodi Picoult can seriously write.

Well done short story that packs a wallop in a short 42 pages.

Carol says

"Maybe we're more alike than different."

SHINE is the enticing prequel to Jodi Picoult's new novel **SMALL GREAT THINGS** that has just moved up on my to-read list.

Eight year old Ruth is an addictive little character and smart as a whip young girl who lives in Harlem with her hard-working mama and sister Rachel, but an apprehensive Ruth will now ride to a prestigious school on the Upper East Side in a limo.....and mama didn't answer her question.

"Would there be anyone else at Dalton who looked like her?"

EXCELLENT draw for **SMALL GREAT THINGS!**

Kelli says

I haven't read the book that this extremely short story is the prequel to and I wonder if I would have liked this better (or "gotten it") if I had. To me it was too short to have much of an impact. The audio was just an hour long but the narrator was good and the "ending" did hit me, so I'm rounding up...but overall it felt like a teeny, tiny sprinkle of a beginning of a story. 2.5 stars

Pouting Always says

Ruth has recently enrolled in Dalton, a school she couldn't otherwise afford and which is miles apart from her old school in Harlem. Despite her intelligence, Ruth finds it hard to gain acceptance from her peers due to her race and must learn to deal with the exclusion she now faces at school while still ensuring her mother think she's doing well. A short novella meant to introduce a character in Jodi Picoult's novel that came out around the same time. I haven't read the novel so that might be why but I didn't really enjoy the novella. It felt like pointless and I'm sure that's only because I don't have the context of the book to fit it into. I liked the writing and the idea but it just ended abruptly and I felt like it was too short to really go anywhere. I'll give the book itself a try and then see, it might just be because it's meant to introduce a character from the book and not really stand alone.

Judy Collins says

Talented *Jodi Picoult* returns following *Leaving Time* landing on my Top Books of 2014 with **SHINE**, a small book but big in so many ways. Packed with lots of heart, dreams, and the brightest of shining stars.

A special young girl you will fall in love with, as she learns at a young age the injustice of a cruel world *of prejudice, race, and privilege*.

Set in 1979, readers get a look at Ruth Brook's life at an early age, prior to moving into the highly anticipated **SMALL GREAT THINGS**, where we pick up with Ruth's life as an adult. Both powerful moving, thought-provoking, and emotional "must reads."

Ruth is excited about her first day in the third grade at the private prestigious school, Dalton in Manhattan. She is smart and earned a scholarship. Unfortunately, she is the only black student in an all- white school. *Surely her teachers and fellow students would see more than just her skin color.*

Sam Hallowell's chauffeur would take Ruth (black) and Christina (white) in a shiny black car through Central Park to the Upper East side to school. At the end of the school day, she would return and play with Christina in her room, or do her homework in the kitchen until her mama finished working.

Ruth and her mom would then take the bus to Harlem, back to their own place, where Granny and Rachel would be waiting. *Rachel, her sister goes to a public school in Harlem.*

Ms. Mina is her mama's employer and Christina's mom. Ruth's mama is a housekeeper for the wealthy white family. They were a good family and helped her attain a full scholarship, but she had done the work, taken a test and done well. She was grateful for this incredible opportunity and wanted to make her mama proud. She wanted her to have a good education, so she could make something of herself.

Christina and Ruth had been friends for a long time; however, this was something new. There would be no one who looked like her. How would Christina treat her around her friends?

Soon Ruth feels uncomfortable when the class has an assignment of drawing their family. Would her mama be on Christina's drawing and Ruth's? Could she and Christian possibly be more alike than different?

Ruth was a good student, the best reader in the class and loved astronomy. She was a good listener, a willing friend. They were studying about stars. The reason stars look so small in the night sky is because they're so far away from us.

"Her teacher had said that when we look at a star, we're looking backward in time. We're seeing a moment that happened millions of years ago."

What if in the future they had a piece of the moment Ruth was living right now? It made her feel like yesterday and tomorrow weren't all that far away from each other. What if there was a bigger world than her world- bigger than the boundaries of her imagination.

Soon she finds others look at her different. Some do not like her color. They are mean and mistreat her. *All her hopes and dreams are soon shattered.* Ruth happened to be on the outskirts of the universe.

"That was all it took. That chink in the foundation, that work of a question—for Ruth to peek behind the fancy wrapping of the story she'd created in her own mind. The justification, the wishful thinking—it swept away by the broom of doubt, like so much smoke. "

Ruth felt as though her life was like Cinderella, turning back into her rags with her pumpkin.

She learns early on (firsthand) she is in the middle of two universes. She does not want to be in Harlem as she does not fit in, as a light milky cream color and wants a better education. Nor does she fit in a white world at Dalton. Ruth is smart and wants to learn, unlike her sister, Rachel. She is even a much lighter color than her sister.

She must learn to navigate between the two worlds and hope like the stars, no matter where you stand you will be under the same light. *She wants to be "seen" beneath her color.*

What a great book and a great intro!

I had the opportunity of receiving an advance reading copy of Coming Oct 11 **SMALL GREAT THINGS** (Top Books of 2016), which I read prior to the release of **SHINE**. I absolutely **fell in love with Ruth** as an adult and sympathized with all the challenges she had to overcome. It further enhanced my overall experience, when then getting to return to Ruth's childhood to learn of her journey from the start. *From the eyes of a child.*

Picoult is such a dynamic author (have read all her books). She always does a fabulous job in packaging her books, offering insights into childhood and adulthood. Two different views. Highly recommend reading both (in any order you choose). *They will "change" the way you think.* Soul-Searching.

Bonus: Includes a preview of highly anticipated *Small Great Things!*

JDCMustReadBooks

Rebecca McNutt says

Shine is a powerful story of friendship, prejudice and understanding, written from the mind of a third-grader confused yet intrigued by the world around her.

Esil says

I really liked *Small Great Things*, so I couldn't pass up a chance to read this brief prequel that deals with a slice of Ruth's childhood. Part of me wishes I hadn't taken the bait. In *Small Great Things*, Picoult did an excellent job of tackling a complicated topic, and looking at it from the perspective of three very different characters. This included looking at the experience of racism through the eyes of middle aged Ruth, an Africa America nurse who grew up in Harlem. In *Shine*, Picoult paints a picture of Ruth as an 8 year old in her first few days attending an elite Manhattan private school on a scholarship. This prequel focuses on Ruth's experience of racism as a child. The topic is interesting, but I wasn't thrilled with the delivery. I think that Picoult did an excellent job of depicting Ruth in *Small Great Things*, but in *Shine* I felt that Ruth and her schoolmates were painted with blunter strokes, and they didn't really ring true – Ruth's complex lovely character doesn't come through in *Shine*. I'm glad I read *Small Great Things* first, because I suspect that I may not have wanted to read it if I had started with *Shine*. But that might be me because there are certainly some enthusiastic ratings for this short story.

Marianne says

Shine is a prequel to *Small Great Things*, the 22nd full length novel by American author, Jodi Picoult. Eight-and-a-half year-old Ruth Brooks has just started at a new school. She loves learning, especially about the stars. She's the only black girl at the prestigious Dalton School; she's there on a scholarship, and she's smart. But even though no one is openly racist, it's still there.

Ruth's mother, Lou works for Ms Mina, and Ruth's best friend is Mina's daughter, Christina. But at school, Christina is different. Ruth isn't included. Her teacher, Ms Thomas is always kind and inspiring; her classmates are not; her older sister Rachel opens her eyes to reality; her Mama is fiercely supportive. An excellent taste of *Small Great Things*, an excerpt of which is included.

Catherine ? says

Whew. There were several scenes that were definitely heartbreaking, illustrating just how cruel children could be. The issue of race and privilege were definitely tackled, as stated in the blurb, but there were some scenes where Ruth sounded wise beyond her years, and I'm not quite sure if the change in voice was intentional.

Brenda says

With Ruth's Mama working for Ms Mina it meant that her daughter Christina and Ruth were friends, playing and spending time while Ruth's Mama was working, then travelling home on their bus to Harlem. Eight and

a half year old Ruth Brooks had left her old school in Harlem and was about to start school on a scholarship at Dalton in New York's Upper East Side. She was both excited and nervous – Christina would be the only person she knew...

But Christina had her own friends and Ruth felt excluded in the playground – she was a smart child and excelled in class; her teacher Ms Thomas was kind and Ruth loved her. But she wasn't sure how to cope with the taunts from the other students; was she just the Black girl to everyone? The problems of race hadn't faced Ruth prior to Dalton school; the shock of it was hurtful.

Shine by Jodi Picoult is the prequel to the author's latest release, *Small Great Things* and with this tempting short story, I'm really looking forward to it. Empathy for Ruth; sadness for her situation and knowing it doesn't matter the circumstances, children can be and are cruel. A thoroughly enjoyable novella which I recommend.

Erin says

This novella introduces readers to Ruth, one of the main characters in the recently released "Small Great Things." Although it is brief, it sets up the issue of racism seen through the eyes of a third grader.
