

home before dark book

Home Before Dark Book: A Captivating Thriller by Riley Sager

The phrase home before dark book immediately evokes a sense of mystery, suspense, and eerie storytelling. Riley Sager's Home Before Dark is a gripping novel that has captivated readers worldwide, blending psychological suspense with supernatural elements. If you're a fan of thrillers that keep you guessing until the very last page, this book should be at the top of your reading list. In this article, we will explore everything you need to know about the Home Before Dark book, from its plot and themes to its reception and where to find it.

Overview of the Home Before Dark Book

Home Before Dark is a bestselling novel by Riley Sager, published in 2020. It's a compelling story that intertwines a haunted house narrative with a modern-day psychological thriller. The novel follows the journey of a woman returning to her childhood home to confront her past and uncover secrets buried deep within her family history.

Plot Summary

The story revolves around Maggie Holt, who, as a child, spent her summers in the notorious Baneberry Hall, a house rumored to be haunted. Her parents, Ewan and Kit Holt, claimed that the house was haunted, and their experiences became the basis of Ewan's bestseller, House of Horrors. However, twenty-five years later, Maggie returns to the house, now abandoned, to investigate whether the supernatural stories were true or if her parents fabricated the tales for fame.

As Maggie explores Baneberry Hall, she begins to experience strange occurrences and uncovers clues that suggest her childhood memories may not be entirely accurate. The novel oscillates between her past and present, gradually revealing the truth about the house, her family's secrets, and her own identity.

Main Themes

- Haunted House Mysteries: The novel explores the classic haunted house trope, blending supernatural elements with psychological suspense.
- Memory and Reality: It questions whether memories are reliable and how personal history shapes our perception of truth.
- Family Secrets: The story delves into the complexities of family relationships and the secrets that can linger for decades.

- Fear and Trauma: Maggie's journey is also about confronting personal fears and past traumas.

Why Readers Love the Home Before Dark Book

Home Before Dark has received widespread acclaim for its suspenseful storytelling, complex characters, and clever plot twists. Here are some reasons why it remains a favorite among thriller enthusiasts:

Engaging and Twisting Plot

Riley Sager is known for his ability to craft unpredictable plots, and Home Before Dark is no exception. The book keeps readers guessing, with multiple twists that challenge assumptions and heighten suspense.

Atmosphere and Setting

The eerie, foreboding atmosphere of Baneberry Hall creates a perfect backdrop for the story. Sager's vivid descriptions immerse readers into the haunted house, making the chilling moments even more impactful.

Well-Developed Characters

Maggie Holt is a relatable protagonist whose emotional journey resonates with readers. Her quest for truth and understanding adds depth to the story, making it more than just a haunted house tale.

Seamless Blending of Genres

The novel combines elements of horror, mystery, and psychological thriller, appealing to a broad audience. Its clever narrative structure keeps readers engaged from start to finish.

Where to Find the Home Before Dark Book

The Home Before Dark book is widely available across various platforms, including physical bookstores, online retailers, and digital formats.

Physical Copies

- Bookstores: Major chains like Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, and independent bookstores stock hardcover and paperback editions.

- Libraries: Check your local library for borrowing options.

Digital and Audiobook Formats

- E-Books: Available on Kindle, Apple Books, Google Play Books, and other e-reader platforms.
- Audiobooks: Accessible via Audible, Google Play Audiobooks, and Apple Books, narrated by talented voice actors that bring the story to life.

Special Editions and Merchandise

Some editions feature special cover art or signed copies, perfect for collectors. Limited edition merchandise related to the book can also be found online.

Critical Reception and Awards

Home Before Dark has been praised by critics and readers alike for its inventive plot and atmospheric storytelling.

Notable Reviews

- The New York Times described it as “a masterclass in suspense, blending supernatural horror with psychological depth.”
- Booklist highlighted Sager’s “expert pacing and chilling atmosphere that will keep readers awake at night.”
- Many readers on Goodreads and Amazon have awarded the novel high ratings, praising its twists and emotional depth.

Awards and Nominations

While it may not have won major literary awards, Home Before Dark was a finalist for several thriller and horror awards, solidifying its place as a contemporary classic in its genre.

Tips for Reading and Enjoying the Home Before Dark Book

To maximize your reading experience, consider the following tips:

Create the Right Atmosphere

- Find a cozy, quiet place to read where you can immerse yourself fully.
- Consider reading at night for added suspense, especially if you're a fan of spooky stories.

Pay Attention to Details

- Riley Sager's writing is layered with clues and subtle foreshadowing. Keep notes or highlight passages to track the story's twists.

Re-read for Deeper Understanding

- The novel's complex narrative may reward multiple readings, revealing new insights and connections.

Discuss with Fellow Readers

- Join book clubs or online forums dedicated to thrillers and horror novels to share theories and interpretations.

Conclusion: Why You Should Read Home Before Dark Book

The Home Before Dark book is a must-read for fans of suspense, mystery, and supernatural thrillers. Riley Sager's masterful storytelling, combined with a haunting atmosphere and compelling characters, creates an unforgettable reading experience. Whether you enjoy unraveling secrets, exploring haunted houses, or simply love a good twist, this novel offers all that and more.

If you're seeking a book that will keep you on the edge of your seat and leave you pondering long after the last page, Home Before Dark is the perfect choice. Its popularity and critical acclaim speak to its quality as a modern thriller that expertly balances fear, emotion, and intrigue.

Get your copy today and discover why the Home Before Dark book is a must-have in your thriller collection!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main plot of 'Home Before Dark' by Riley Sager?

'Home Before Dark' follows Maggie Holt as she returns to her childhood home, which was the subject of her father's bestselling true crime book. As she

investigates her family's past, she uncovers dark secrets and questions the truth about her father's story.

Is 'Home Before Dark' based on real events?

No, 'Home Before Dark' is a work of fiction by Riley Sager. However, it incorporates elements of real haunted house stories and true crime tropes to create a suspenseful narrative.

Who is the protagonist in 'Home Before Dark'?

The protagonist is Maggie Holt, a woman who revisits her childhood home to confront her past and uncover the truth about her family's history.

What genre does 'Home Before Dark' belong to?

'Home Before Dark' is primarily a psychological thriller with elements of mystery and horror.

Has 'Home Before Dark' been adapted into a TV series or movie?

As of October 2023, there has been no official adaptation of 'Home Before Dark' into a TV series or movie.

What are some common themes in 'Home Before Dark'?

The novel explores themes of family secrets, the reliability of memory, the supernatural versus skepticism, and the search for truth.

How has 'Home Before Dark' been received by readers and critics?

The book has received positive reviews for its suspenseful plot, atmospheric writing, and compelling mystery, making it popular among fans of psychological thrillers.

Would someone who enjoyed 'The Haunting of Hill House' like 'Home Before Dark'?

Yes, readers who enjoy haunted house stories and psychological suspense are likely to find 'Home Before Dark' engaging and thrilling.

Additional Resources

Home Before Dark Book: An In-Depth Analysis and Review

In recent years, the horror and mystery genres have seen a resurgence in popularity, with authors pushing the boundaries of storytelling to deliver chilling, thought-provoking narratives. Among these, *Home Before Dark* by Riley Sager has garnered significant attention, captivating readers with its blend of psychological suspense, supernatural intrigue, and richly layered storytelling. This investigative-style review aims to delve deeply into the themes, structure, and impact of *Home Before Dark*, providing a comprehensive understanding suitable for readers, critics, and literary scholars alike.

Introduction to Home Before Dark

Published in 2020, *Home Before Dark* is a standalone novel by Riley Sager, renowned for his mastery of the modern thriller. The book follows Alexis "Alex" Bishop, a woman confronting her family's haunted history while unraveling her own past. The novel is notable for its dual narrative structure, blending present-day mystery with flashbacks to her childhood, and weaving in elements of supernatural folklore.

The premise revolves around Alex returning to her family's home—Eden Oaks, a sprawling, historic estate in Maine—after her father's death. The house's reputation as being haunted and the mysterious circumstances surrounding her father's death serve as catalysts for the story's suspense. As Alex investigates her family's history and confronts her trauma, she begins to question the nature of reality and the influence of inherited darkness.

Structural and Narrative Analysis

Dual Timeline and Perspective

One of the defining features of *Home Before Dark* is its dual timeline structure. The narrative oscillates between:

- Present Day: Alex's current investigation into her family's history, dealing with grief and skepticism toward her own perceptions.
- Past (1988): The period when her father, Dr. Jonas Bishop, was alive, and the initial events related to the house's haunted reputation.

This duality allows readers to see how perceptions evolve over time and adds layers of complexity. The shifting perspectives also serve to build suspense, as clues from the past inform the present, and vice versa.

Unreliable Narrator and Psychological Depth

Alex's perspective is intentionally unreliable, as she grapples with her upbringing, trauma, and her skepticism or belief in the supernatural. Riley Sager cleverly manipulates the reader's trust, making it difficult to discern what is real and what is hallucination or memory distortion.

This narrative choice amplifies the psychological horror aspect, as the reader is invited to question the nature of fear, trauma, and perception. The novel explores themes of inherited trauma, denial, and the thin line separating reality from hallucination.

Foreshadowing and Clues

Throughout the novel, subtle clues and foreshadowing are embedded, encouraging attentive reading. Sager employs red herrings and misdirection, keeping the reader guessing about the true nature of Eden Oaks and the events surrounding her father's death.

Thematic Deep Dive

Haunted House as a Literary Device

The house in *Home Before Dark* functions as both a literal setting and a symbolic representation of family secrets, trauma, and the past's inescapable grip. Eden Oaks embodies the idea that physical spaces are repositories of memory and emotion, often serving as characters in their own right within horror literature.

The novel examines how inherited environments shape identity and perception, reinforcing the notion that some ghosts are not supernatural but psychological.

Inheritance of Trauma and Secrets

A central theme is the legacy of trauma passed through generations. Alex's father's mysterious death, her mother's silence, and the house's reputation all symbolize the weight of secrets that threaten to destroy or define individuals.

The narrative suggests that confronting the past is necessary for healing, but such confrontation can be fraught with danger, both psychological and literal.

Supernatural vs. Psychological Horror

While the novel incorporates supernatural elements—such as ghostly apparitions and strange phenomena—it ultimately questions their reality. Is Eden Oaks haunted by spirits, or are the disturbances manifestations of psychological distress?

This ambiguity is a hallmark of Sager's style, inviting readers to interpret the story through multiple lenses, blurring the line between supernatural horror and psychological thriller.

Character Analysis

Alex Bishop

As the protagonist, Alex is complex and multidimensional. Her journey from skepticism to belief, and ultimately to understanding, mirrors the reader's own exploration of the story's mysteries. Her trauma, resilience, and quest for truth make her a compelling figure.

Dr. Jonas Bishop

Her father's mysterious death and his past as a psychiatrist researching the supernatural serve as pivotal elements. His character embodies the conflict between scientific skepticism and the allure of the supernatural.

Margot Bishop

Alex's mother, whose silence and distant attitude symbolize the repression of trauma. Her interactions with Alex reveal the generational silence that perpetuates secrets.

Critical Reception and Impact

Home Before Dark has been widely praised for its atmospheric tension, intricate plotting, and compelling character development. Critics highlight Sager's skillful use of pacing, red herrings, and emotional depth. The novel has been lauded for its:

- Effective blending of horror and psychological thriller elements
- Richly atmospheric setting that immerses readers
- Thought-provoking themes about family, trauma, and perception

Some critics have noted that the ending, while satisfying, may feel somewhat conventional in the context of horror tropes. However, others argue that Sager's nuanced approach elevates the genre, making Home Before Dark a standout in contemporary horror fiction.

Comparison with Similar Works

For readers interested in similar themes or styles, Home Before Dark can be compared to:

- Shirley Jackson's The Haunting of Hill House – for its haunted house motif and psychological depth
- Stephen King's The Haunting of Hill House – for its blend of supernatural horror and character-driven narrative
- Ruth Ware's The Woman in Cabin 10 – for its suspenseful pacing and isolated setting
- Gillian Flynn's Gone Girl – for its unreliable narrator and exploration of family secrets

Conclusion: Is Home Before Dark Worth Reading?

In conclusion, Home Before Dark is a masterful exploration of familial trauma, perception, and the supernatural. Its layered storytelling, atmospheric setting, and complex characters make it a compelling read for fans of psychological thrillers and horror alike. Riley Sager's skillful manipulation of genre tropes, combined with his focus on emotional truth, ensures that the novel resonates on both a suspenseful and psychological level.

Whether you approach it as a ghost story, a family drama, or a psychological

thriller, *Home Before Dark* offers a haunting, immersive experience that invites careful reflection on the ghosts we inherit and the truths we choose to confront.

Final Verdict: A must-read for those seeking a suspenseful, thought-provoking, and chilling journey into the darkness lurking within family histories and the human mind.

Note: For best experience, readers are encouraged to approach *Home Before Dark* with an open mind and a readiness to question what is real. Its layered narrative rewards attentive reading and multiple interpretations.

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home before dark book: *Home Before Dark* Riley Sager, 2021-08-31 THE INSTANT NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • One of USA Today's Best Books of 2020 “A haunted house story—with a twist....[Sager] does not hold back”(Rolling Stone) in this chilling thriller from the author of *Final Girls* and *Survive the Night*. Every house has a story to tell and a secret to share. Twenty-five years ago, Maggie Holt and her parents moved into Baneberry Hall, a rambling Victorian estate in the Vermont woods. Three weeks later they fled in the dead of night, an ordeal her father recounted in a memoir called *House of Horrors*. His story of supernatural happenings and malevolent spirits became a worldwide phenomenon, rivaling *The Amityville Horror* in popularity—and skepticism. Maggie was too young to remember any of the horrific events that supposedly took place, and as an adult she doesn't believe a word of her father's claims. Ghosts, after all, don't exist. When she inherits Baneberry Hall after his death and returns to renovate the place and sell it, her homecoming is anything but warm. The locals aren't thrilled that their small town has been made infamous, and human characters with starring roles in *House of Horrors* are waiting in the shadows. Even more unnerving is Baneberry Hall itself—a place where unsettling whispers of the past lurk around every corner. And as Maggie starts to experience strange occurrences ripped from the pages of her father's book, the truth she uncovers about the house's dark history will challenge everything she believes.

home before dark book: *Home Before Dark* Susan Cheever, 2015-09-01 In *Home Before Dark*, Susan Cheever, daughter of the famously talented writer John Cheever, uses previously unpublished letters, journals, and her own precious memories to create a candid and insightful tribute to her father. While producing some of the most beloved and celebrated American literature of this century, John Cheever wrestled with personal demons that deeply affected his family life as well as his career. In this poignant memoir of a man driven by boundless genius and ambition, Susan Cheever writes with heartwrenching honesty of family life with the father, the writer, and the remarkable man she loved.

home before dark book: *Home Before Dark* Edith Duven Flaherty, 2008-11 *Home Before Dark* is a loving look back at the Great Depression. Along with vanishing jobs, long lines at soup kitchens, loss of the family farm to foreclosure, there were neighborhood five-person baseball games, floating on home-made rafts, jump-rope. Rockland High School Class of 1942 graduated into World War II; two classmates had already died at sea. Women became WAACS, WAVES, SPARS, Rosie the Riveter, air raid wardens, defense plant workers and, more traditionally, keepers of the Home Front. Suddenly life was filled with air raid drills, trains jammed with servicemen, ration

books, movie stars in USO canteens, wartime romances, while everyone waited for the war's end so the men could all come home.

home before dark book: Home Before Dark Susan Wiggs, 2018-03-12 In this reader-favorite tale, #1 New York Times bestselling author Susan Wiggs captures the heartache of long-held regrets as one young woman comes to terms with her past...and reveals devastating secrets. As an irresponsible young mother, Jessie Ryder knew she'd never be able to give her newborn the stable family that her older sister could, and the security her child deserved. So Luz and her husband adopted little Lila and told her Jessie was but a distant aunt. Sixteen years later, having traveled the world with the winds of remorse at her back, Jessie is suspending her photojournalism career to return home—even if it means throwing her sister's world into turmoil. Where life once seemed filled with boundless opportunity, Jessie is now on a journey to redeem her careless past, bringing with her a terrible burden. Jessie's arrival is destined to expose the secrets and lies that barely held her daughter's adoptive family together to begin with, yet the truth can do so much more than just hurt. It can bring you home to a new kind of honesty, shedding its light into the deepest corners of the heart. Originally published in 2003. Includes an exclusive excerpt from BETWEEN YOU AND ME by Susan Wiggs, coming soon from William Morrow!

home before dark book: Make It Home Before Dark Crawford W. Loritts, Jr., 2000-06-01 God calls us to live lives of holiness. But that is impossible without a close walk with Christ. That walk must begin with repentance; it is crucial to living biblical, practical holiness everyday. Crawford Loritts takes a fresh look at the role of repentance in Make It Home Before Dark. Written with warmth and insight, Loritts gives help to those struggling with sin or rejection in their lives. This is an honest and hopeful book, full of biblical insight and practical advice. It may be just the tool to help you in your journey to a fuller life in Christ.

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home before dark book: Home Before Dark Bryant M. Kirkland, 1965

home before dark book: Home Before Dark Susan Cheever, 2001 This moving memoir traces John Cheever's life and work from his early days as a writer for the New Yorker to the 60s when he was showered with awards. His daughter Susan charts his struggles with ambition, alcoholism and his private desires.

home before dark book: New York Magazine, 1994-07-25 New York magazine was born in 1968 after a run as an insert of the New York Herald Tribune and quickly made a place for itself as the trusted resource for readers across the country. With award-winning writing and photography covering everything from politics and food to theater and fashion, the magazine's consistent mission has been to reflect back to its audience the energy and excitement of the city itself, while celebrating New York as both a place and an idea.

home before dark book: The Palgrave Handbook of Neo-Victorianism Brenda Ayres, Sarah E. Maier, 2024-01-20 This handbook offers analysis of diverse genres and media of neo-Victorianism, including film and television adaptations of Victorian texts, authors' life stories, graphic novels, and contemporary fiction set in the nineteenth century. Contextualized by Sarah E Maier and Brenda Ayres in a comprehensive introduction, the collection describes current trends in neo-Victorian scholarship of novels, film, theatre, crime, empire/postcolonialism, Gothic, materiality, religion and science, amongst others. A variety of scholars from around the world contribute to this volume by applying an assortment of theoretical approaches and interdisciplinary focus in their critique of a wide range of narratives—from early neo-Victorian texts such as A. S. Byatt's *Possession* (1963) and Jean Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) to recent steampunk, from musical theatre to slumming, and from *The Alienist* to queerness—in their investigation of how this fiction reconstructs the past, informed by and reinforming the present.

home before dark book: Dinosaurs Before Dark (Full-Color Edition) Mary Pope Osborne, 2012-09-25 We are celebrating by bringing full color to the Cretaceous period—full-color art that is!

This jacketed hardcover edition boasts new artwork, plus extras, like an interview between the creators, a letter from Mary Pope Osborne, and up-to-date dinosaur info! Join Jack and Annie as they travel back to the time of dinosaurs where they encounter all sorts of dinos from the terrifying T-Rex to the crowd-pleasing Triceratops—and start on a life-time of adventures with new readers.

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home before dark book: *Come Home Before Dark* Sheila O'Connor, 1993-12

home before dark book: *Home Before Dark* Eileen Bassing, 1957

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home before dark book: *A Likeable Woman* May Cobb, 2024-08-06 Named A Most Anticipated Thriller of Summer 2023 by Oprah Daily • BuzzFeed • SheReads • BookBub • PureWow • CrimeReads • and more! Kira's back in her affluent hometown for the first time in years and determined to unravel the secrets of her mother's death—hidden in the unpublished memoir she left behind—even if it kills her. . . . After her troublemaker mother's mysterious death, Kira fled her wealthy Texas town and never looked back. Now, decades later, Kira is invited to an old frenemy's vow renewal celebration. Though she is reluctant to go, there are things pulling her home . . . like chilled wine and days spent by the pool . . . like sexy Jack, her childhood crush. But more important are the urgent texts from her grandmother, who says she has something for Kira. Something related to her mother's death, something that makes it look an awful lot like murder. When her grandmother gives Kira a memoir that her mother had been working on before she died, Kira is drawn into the past and all the sizzling secrets that come along with it. With few allies left in her gossipy country-club town, Kira turns to Jack for help. As she gets closer to discovering what—and who—might have brought about her mother's end, it becomes clear that someone wants the past to stay buried. And they might come after Kira next.

home before dark book: *Magic Tree House 2-in-1 Bindup: Dinosaurs Before Dark/The Knight at Dawn* Mary Pope Osborne, 2024-04-30 2 BOOKS IN 1! Get whisked away in the #1 bestselling chapter book series of all time! This bindup includes the first two adventures with Jack and Annie as

they travel in time and all over the world. . . There's a mysterious tree house in the woods. Jack and Annie don't know where it came from, but it's filled with books. . . and magic! Before they know it, the tree house whisks Jack and Annie to the prehistoric past. Then to the time of knights and castles! Can they make it home before their parents notice? Introduce your young reader to the adventures that have been beloved by kids, teachers, librarians, and parents for generations! This bindup includes DINOSAURS BEFORE DARK and THE KNIGHT AT DAWN.

home before dark book: *Only After Dark Books 1-6* Elle Thorne, 2016-05-20 Follow the Arceneaux family, a group of white tiger shifters in Louisiana where they find love... and heart-stopping danger in other species of supernatural beings. Full of romance, suspense, and gritty drama, this red-hot collection is sure to entertain! Desirable The last time he saw her he promised to spank her curvy derriere. This time, he may do a lot more than that! Curvalicious Natalya thought she'd never have to grow up. And then she met Lézare. The man who makes her want to be the woman she's never been. Except his family hates her, and as far as she knows, he does to. So the only option she has is to go to the Shifter Masquerade Ball in disguise. Lézare desires Natalya. There's something about this spunky, sassy, mouthy, pouty curvy girl. Insatiable Alexa's the alpha sister of Lézare. She's got to worry about the Arceneaux Masquerade Ball because her brother's gone gallivanting to Austin. Except this once, she'd like to concentrate on her own pursuits. Namely one. Reese. Reese Nielsen is an alpha wolf with a territory of his own to worry about. And that whole damned underground fighting ring. He's got information on it, but with Lézare MIA, Rory waits until the time is right. Except his heart and his tiger have an agenda of their own: the curvy and hot sister of Lézare, a white tigress with a mind of her own, and a temper to boot. Things heat up in the midst of a Masquerade Ball. Combustible Some histories should stay buried. Some are too combustible! One glance. That's all it took. Wolf shifter Rory Nielsen, Reese's twin brother doesn't get involved in affairs of the heart. He's all business. So why is he at the Arceneaux home? He's attending the Masquerade Ball, but itching to get home. The only thing on his mind is getting back. —Until a car pulls up and curvy redhead Valencia steps out. They have a history, one that should stay buried! Undeniable Lion shifter Mason Martinez has history with Evangeline, the curvy sexy tigress sister of Lézare Arceneaux. For Mason, it's not history. Except that Evie hates him. She's hated him since college, when they split up. Evie has no problem burying things—usually. So why can't she bury her feelings for Mason Martinez? Permanently. Now the two of them are missing. Find out what happens when an Arceneaux goes missing!

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home before dark book: *The Impossible Craft* Scott Donaldson, 2015-02-23 In *The Impossible Craft*, Scott Donaldson explores the rocky territory of literary biography, the most difficult that biographers try to navigate. Writers are accustomed to controlling the narrative, and notoriously opposed to allowing intruders on their turf. They make bonfires of their papers, encourage others to destroy correspondence, write their own autobiographies, and appoint family or friends to protect their reputations as official biographers. Thomas Hardy went so far as to compose his own life story to be published after his death, while falsely assigning authorship to his widow. After a brief background sketch of the history of biography from Greco-Roman times to the present, Donaldson recounts his experiences in writing biographies of a broad range of twentieth-century American writers: Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, John Cheever, Archibald MacLeish, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Winfield Townley Scott, and Charlie Fenton. Donaldson provides readers with a highly readable insiders' introduction to literary biography. He suggests how to conduct interviews, and what not to do during the process. He offers sound advice about how closely biographers should

identify with their subjects. He examines the ethical obligations of the biographer, who must aim for the truth without unduly or unnecessarily causing discomfort or worse to survivors. He shows us why and how misinformation comes into existence and tends to persist over time. He describes “the mythical ideal biographer,” an imaginary creature of universal intelligence and myriad talents beyond the reach of any single human being. And he suggests how its very impossibility makes the goal of writing a biography that captures the personality of an author a challenge well worth pursuing.

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