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# Books Referenced in *The End of Your Life Book Club*

*The End of Your Life Book Club* by [Will Schwalbe](http://www.amazon.com/Will-Schwalbe/e/B0052Y7THQ/ref%3Dsr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1403717692&sr=8-1) (DB075762) is a popular book about a mother and son discussing fascinating literature, contemporary and classic, while the mother is being treated for cancer. This list includes many of the fiction and nonfiction titles discussed in the book but is by no means a complete list. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](http://www.btbl.library.ca.gov/klasweb). Select titles can be [downloaded from BARD.](https://bard.loc.gov/)

**Little Women** By Louisa May Alcott

Read by Patricia Beaudry Reading time 18 hours, 40 minutes

The author's home life in New England is the basis of this book, which has been popular for more than a century. The tale tells the story of the four March sisters-quick tempered Jo, who is restless for freedom; Beth, who loves her home and family; Meg, who longs for pretty clothes; and self-absorbed Amy. For grades 6-9 and older readers.

 [Download from BARD: Little Women](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.18128)

 Also available on cassette RC018128

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR11778](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR001038 OR BR009758 OR BR011778

**Continental Drift** By Russell Banks

Read by Robert O'Keefe Reading time 14 hours, 49 minutes

A decent thirty-year-old, burnt-out oil repairman uproots his family from a bleak life in a New Hampshire mill town and moves to Florida. Lured there by the shallow promises of a shady brother, Bob tries to do what is wanted of him, but messes up at every turn. And then he falls in love with Vanise, a young Haitian woman. Some strong language and explicit descriptions of sex.

 [Download from BARD: Continental Drift](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.23867)

 Also available on cassette RC023867

**The Elegance of the Hedgehog** By Muriel Barbery

Read by Gabriella Cavallero Reading time 8 hours, 50 minutes

Middle-aged widow Renee Michel, a closet intellectual, works as a concierge for a small luxury apartment building in Paris. Twelve-year-old tenant Paloma realizes the absurdity of life and plans on suicide. But when Kakuro Ozu moves in, he befriends and transforms them both. Translated from the French. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: The Elegance of the Hedgehog](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.68224)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB068224

**A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier** By Ishmael Beah

Read by Dominic Hoffman Reading time 7 hours, 58 minutes

The author recalls experiences as a war refuge and as a thirteen-year-old soldier forced to join the Sierra Leone army. Beah describes participation in mass slaughters, his rehabilitation, immigration to America, and involvement with UNICEF. Commercial audiobook. Violence, strong language, and some descriptions of sex. 2007.

 [Download from BARD: A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Solider](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.63512)

 Also available on cassette RC063512

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17077](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR017077

**The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments : Translated Out of the Original Tongues with the Former Translations Diligently Compared and Revised**

Read By Alexander Scourby Reading time 79 hours, 2 minutes

The King James Version of the Old and New Testaments as read by Alexander Scourby in the early 1950s. Combined reissue of RC 40842 and RC 40843. 1611.

 [Download from BARD: The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.68777)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB068777

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR14943](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR014943 (24 vols.)

**People of the Book a Novel** By Geraldine Brooks

Read by Lisette Lecat Reading time 16 hours, 16 minutes

Australian book conservator Hanna Heath analyzes a Hebrew manuscript created in medieval Spain and saved from destruction in 1990s Sarajevo. Hanna's discoveries--an insect wing, salt crystals, and wine and blood stains--reveal the codex's past and the lives of its guardians. Some descriptions of sex and some violence. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: People of the Book](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.66059) a Novel

 Also available on digital cartridge DB066059

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17613](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR017613

**The Great Santini** By Pat Conroy

Read by Roy Avers Reading time 16 hours, 49 minutes

Marine Lieutenant Colonel W.P. (Bull) Meecham rules his family with absolute power. Fortunately for their kids, his wife Lillian is able to keep a cool head or they would be in real trouble, especially Ben. Yet all of them endure Meecham's tyranny in the name of family harmony and loyalty to the Corps. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. 1976.

 [Download from BARD: The Great Santini](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.30051)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB030051

 Also available on cassette RC030051

**Charlie and the Chocolate Factory** By Roald Dahl

Read by John Polk Reading time 3 hours, 24 minutes

Charlie Bucket's tour of Mr. Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory sends him on adventures beyond his wildest dreams. For grades 4-7. 1964.

 [Download from BARD: Charlie and the Chocolate Factory](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.33498)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB033498

 Also available on cassette RC033498

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR11466](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR001461 OR BR011466

**The Year of Magical Thinking** By Joan Didion

Read by Anne Hancock Reading time 5 hours, 26 minutes

Writer reflects on her emotional response to the unexpected death of her husband, John Gregory Dunne, after a visit to their comatose daughter. Discusses the shock of suddenly facing a crisis, the memory of their time together as a family, and the meaning of marriage. Nat'l Book Award. Bestseller. 2005.

 [Download from BARD: The Year of Magical Thinking](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.61740)

 Also available on cassette RC061740

**Murder in the Cathedral** By T.S. Eliot

Read by George Holmes Reading time 2 hours, 2 minutes

A verse play by Nobel Prize-winner T.S. Eliot (1888-1965) about the 1170 murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket, at the royal behest of Henry II. Concerns issues of faith, politics, and the common good. 1935.

 [Download from BARD: Murder in the Cathedral](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.55554)

 Also available on cassette RC055554

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR14494](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR014494

**The Pillars of the Earth** By Ken Follett

Read by Merwin Smith Reading time 40 hours, 34 minutes

Historical novel set in twelfth century England. Philip, prior of the monastery at Kingsbridge, and Tom, a master mason, would like to build a new cathedral. They are helped along when Tom's stepson torches the current cathedral. They are hindered, however, by a powerful and jealous bishop, and Ellen--who witnessed an ancient treachery. Some violence, some strong language, and some descriptions of sex.

 [Download from BARD: the Pillars of the Earth](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.30999)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB030999

 Also available on cassette RC030999

**Howards End** By E.M. Forster

Read by Andrew Sofer Reading time 12 hours, 19 minutes

Members of three different social classes intermingle at Howards End, a country house owned by the Wilcox family. The aristocratic Wilcoxes; the cultured, idealistic Schlegel sisters; and impoverished, unemployed bank clerk Leonard Bast find their lives shaped by romance, societal barriers, and violence. Includes a 2007 afterword. 1910.

 [Download from BARD: Howards End](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.34285)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB034285

 Also available on cassette RC034285

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18502](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR018502

**Lord of the Flies** By William Golding

Read by Christopher Walker Reading time 7 hours, 18 minutes

With horrifying implications, this novel relates the experiences of a group of English boys who are wrecked on a desert island and have to establish their own system of government. For junior and senior high and older readers.

 [Download from BARD: Lord of the Flies](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.48388)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB048388

 Also available on cassette RC048388 OR RC014817

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR09480](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR009480 BR001595

**The Tin Drum** By Gunter Grass

Read by Mark Ashby Reading time 22 hours, 31 minutes

Mental institution inmate and indomitable drummer Oskar Matzerath, who chose to stop growing at age three, writes his memoirs of Danzig, Germany, during the Nazi regime. Nobel Prize-winner's 1959 novel in a 2009 translation by Breon Mitchell. Violence and descriptions of sex. 2009.

 [Download from BARD: The Tine Drum](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.671622)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB071622

 Also available on cassette RC011512

**The Coldest Winter America and the Korean War** By David Halberstam

Read by Bill Wallace Reading time 33 hours, 37 minutes

Historian's account of the Korean War highlights the strife between U.S. president Harry Truman and American commander Douglas MacArthur. Details miscalculations that led to lost battles, relates American soldiers' struggles in Siberian-cold winters, and describes the ferocity and relentlessness of Chinese troops. Violence and some strong language. Bestseller. 2007.

 [Download from BARD: The Coldest Winter America and the Korean War](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.65355)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB065355

 Also available on cassette RC065355

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR16451](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR016451

**The Talented Mr. Ripley ; Ripley Under Ground ; Ripley's Game** By Patricia Highsmith

Read by MaryBeth Wise Reading time 29 hours, 36 minutes

Three complete psychological crime novels featuring the well-mannered and unscrupulous Tom Ripley. In the first, Ripley is commissioned to persuade a young expatriate in Italy to return to his family in the States. But Ripley is so taken with Dickie Greenleaf and his comfortable existence, he decides to become Dickie--by murdering him. Some violence. 1974.

 [Download from BARD: The Talented Mr. Ripley ; Ripley Under Ground…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.50315)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB050315

Also available on cassette RC050315

**The Kite Runner** By Khaled Hosseini

Read by Richard Hauenstein Reading time 11 hours, 52 minutes

An Afghan in California recalls a fateful 1975 day in Kabul that seared his soul at age twelve--the day he won a kite tournament and abandoned a younger companion to rape. That cowardice keeps haunting him during exile in America until the opportunity for atonement arises--back in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. Violence and some strong language. Alex Award. 2003.

 [Download from BARD: The Kite Runner](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.57457)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB057457

 Also available on cassette RC057457

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR15785](https://bard.loc.gov/)

**Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)** By Jerome K. Jerome

Read by Peter Lavezzoli Reading time 5 hours, 45 minutes

Tale of three overworked Englishmen who take a boating holiday on the Thames. George, William, and the narrator--accompanied by Montmorency, the dog--anticipate the joys of long, lazy summer days but instead face uncooperative camping equipment, inclement weather, rampant hypochondria, and other disasters. 1889.

 [Download from BARD: Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog)](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.66776)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB066776

**Full Catastrophe Living Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain, and Illness** By Jon Kabat-Zinn

Read by Kurt Elftmann Reading time 19 hours, 8 minutes

Founding director of the Stress Reduction Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center describes the philosophy of mindfulness meditation developed there and the ways he believes it can improve physical and mental health. 1990.

 [Download from BARD: Full Catastrophe Living Using the Wisdom of…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.77295)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB077295

**Profiles in Courage** By John F. Kennedy

Read by Don Hagen Reading time 8 hours, 17 minutes

Biographical sketches of historic statesmen who demonstrated great political courage at crucial moments in U.S. history. Includes John Quincy Adams, Daniel Webster, and others. Written by then-senator Kennedy while convalescing from the effects of war wounds. 2003 introduction by Caroline Kennedy; 1964 foreword by Robert F. Kennedy. Pulitzer Prize. 1955.

 [Download from BARD: Profiles in Courage](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.58855)

 Also available on cassette RC058855

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR15716](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR000016 OR BR015716

**Unaccustomed Earth** By Jhumpa Lahiri

Read by Gabriella Cavallero Reading time 10 hours, 46 minutes

Eight short stories by Pulitzer Prize-winning author explore the nature of family and love. In the title story, a mother in Seattle nervously hosts her widowed father, who helps tend her garden but hides a secret. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: Unaccustomed Earth](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.66192)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB066192

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17928](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR017928

**The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo** By Stieg Larsson

Read by Mary Kane Reading time

Stockholm. Wealthy octogenarian Henrik Vanger hires disgraced journalist Mikael Blomkvist and antisocial computer hacker Lisbeth Salander to investigate the disappearance of his great-niece as a teenager forty years ago. They uncover damaging secrets about the family--and themselves. Originally published in Swedish. Violence, strong language, and explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.67759)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB067759

**The Autobiography of Malcolm X** By Malcolm X

Read by L.J. Ganser Reading time 20 hours, 2 minutes

The life of African American religious leader Malcolm X (1925-1965). The author describes his boyhood in Lansing, Michigan, street life in Harlem, conversion to the Black Muslim movement while imprisoned for robbery, and evolution into a high-profile spokesman for black dignity, power, and separatism. Foreword by Alex Haley. 1964.

 [Download from BARD: The Autobiography of Malcolm X](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.65510)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB065510

 Also available on cassette RC065510

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17499](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR004416 OR BR017499

**Death of a Salesman: Certain Private Conversations in Two Acts and a Requiem** By Arthur Miller

Read by Ralph Bell Reading time 4 hours, 3 minutes

A modern drama which indicts the optimism and materialism of American society. Willy Loman, a traveling salesman, experiences a profound sense of failure as he recognizes signs of aging in himself and decides to take stock of his accomplishments. Pulitzer Prize. 1977.

 [Download from BARD: Death of a Salesman: Certain Private…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.23130)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB023130

 Also available on cassette RC023130

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR02719](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR002719

**Gone with the Wind** By Margaret Mitchell

Read by Mitzi Friedlander Reading time 42 hours, 45 minutes

A romantic Civil War epic in which Scarlet O' Hara, a forceful and ruthless heroine, and Rhett Butler, a war profiteer, play out their tempestuous love affair against the background of the war-torn South. Pulitzer Prize. .

 [Download from BARD: Gone with the Wind](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.33082)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB033082

 Also available on cassette RC033082

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR11427](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR008519

**In Other Rooms, Other Wonders** By Daniyal Mueenuddin

Read by Barry Bernson Reading time 7 hours, 53 minutes

Eight linked stories portray feudalism in modern Pakistan as experienced by elderly landowner K.K. Harouni, his extended family, and servants. In "Lily," Harouni's son Murad marries a party girl who becomes disenchanted with farm life. Some violence, some strong language, and some descriptions of sex. National Book Award finalist. 2009.

 [Download from BARD: In Other Rooms, Other Wonders](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.72710)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB072710

**Too Much Happiness:Stories** By Alice Munro

Read by Celeste Lawson Reading time 10 hours, 28 minutes

Ten short stories about family and relationships by Canadian author and winner of the 2009 Man Booker International Prize. The title piece imagines the professional and personal life of late-nineteenth-century Russian mathematician Sophia Kovalevsky. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2009.

 [Download from BARD: Too Much Happiness](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.69954): Stories

 Also available on digital cartridge DB069954

**Dreams From My Father: a Story of Race and Inheritance** By Barack Obama

Read by Bob Moore Reading time 15 hours, 28 minutes

Obama, his father a Kenyan student and his mother a white Kansan, struggles with issues of identity and ethnicity. A Harvard Law School graduate, community organizer, and civil rights lawyer, Obama recounts a life-changing pilgrimage to Kenya to meet relatives from his father's other marriages. Some strong language.

 [Download from BARD: Dreams From My Father a Story of Race and…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.43877)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB043877

 Also available on cassette RC043877

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18106](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR018106

**New and Selected Poems** By Mary Oliver

Read by Gabriella Cavallero Reading time 2 hours, 21 minutes

Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner presents forty-two unpublished poems and sixty-nine selections from six of her past eight volumes. Her poem "Why I Wake Early," from the book of the same title, celebrates the start of a new day. Sequel to New and Selected Poems (RC 35781). 2005. Nat'l Book Award.

 [Download from BARD: New and Selected Poems](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.72765)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB072765

**The Last Lecture** By Randy Pausch

Read by John Polk Reading time 5 hours, 3 minutes

Carnegie Mellon computer professor Pausch provides personal lessons and stories for his young children to learn from as they go through life. Continues the message of his widely circulated taped lecture on achieving childhood dreams that he delivered after he learned he was dying of pancreatic cancer. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: The Last Lecture](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.66601)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB066601

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17828](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR017828

**Housekeeping** By Marilynne Robinson

Read by Erin Jones Reading time 5 hours, 53 minutes

Ruth and her younger sister, Lucille, are haphazardly raised by their extended family in the small, lakeside town of Fingerbone. Their grandmother cares for them until her death, then two bumbling great aunts take over, and finally eccentric aunt Sylvie looks after them. 1980.

 [Download from BARD: Housekeeping](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.68564)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB068564

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR16132](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR016132

**Big Russ and Me: Father and Son : Lessons of Life** By Tim Russert

Read by Gregory Gorton Reading time 10 hours, 46 minutes

Television journalist's memoir celebrating his bond with his father, "Big Russ," a WWII veteran whom Russert calls "endlessly hardworking and eternally optimistic." Author recollects his own 1950s Buffalo childhood in a close-knit Irish Catholic neighborhood and recalls teachers who inspired him throughout his life. Bestseller. 2004.

 [Download from BARD: Big Russ and Me: Father and Son: Lessons of Life](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.58298)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB058298

 Also available on cassette RC058298

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR15446](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.58298)

 Also available in braille BR015446

**The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency** By Alexander McCall Smith

Read by Mitzi Friedlander Reading time 7 hours, 28 minutes

Mma "Precious" Ramotswe opens a detective agency in Botswana when she inherits her father's cattle. People consult her about straying husbands, fraudulent business associates, and missing children. Along the way she learns their life stories and tales of Africa. Bestseller. 1998.

 [Download from BARD: The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Agency](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.55503)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB055503

 Also available on cassette RC055503

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR15865](https://bard.loc.gov/)

**Olive Kitteridge** By Elizabeth Strout

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee Reading time 10 hours, 1 minute

Thirteen stories set in a small community on the Maine coast are linked by the presence of Olive Kitteridge, retired teacher and pharmacist's wife. In "Tulips" Olive struggles in the aftermath of her husband's stroke and with their son's response to his father's nursing-home confinement. Some strong language. Pulitzer Prize. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: Olive Kitteridge](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.67392)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB067392

**Brooklyn a Novel** By Colm Tóibín

Read by Colleen Delany Reading time 8 hours, 15 minutes

1950s. Young Eilis Lacey emigrates from Enniscorthy, Ireland, to Brooklyn, New York, encouraged by her family and with a priest's help. Eilis is lonely and homesick but takes night courses, meets an Italian boy, and adjusts to American life--until a tragedy occurs back home. Some explicit descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2009.

 [Download from BARD: Brooklyn a Novel](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.69470)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB069470

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18385](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR018385

**My Father’s Tears and Other Stories** By John Updike

Read by Luke Daniels Reading time 8 hours, 51 minutes

Eighteen short stories ponder life and old age. In the title piece, a student leaving for Harvard recalls his dad's emotional response at the local train station. In "Free," widowed Henry visits a former lover and misses his wife. Strong language and some descriptions of sex. Commercial audiobook. 2009.

 [Download from BARD: My Father’s Tears and Other Stories](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.69372)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB069372

 [Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR18508](https://bard.loc.gov/)

 Also available in braille BR018508

**Girls Like Us Carole King, Joni Mitchell, and Carly Simon--and the Journey of a Generation** By Shelia Weller

Read by Mary Kane Reading time 23 hours, 34 minutes

Intertwined biographies of singer-songwriters of the sixties and seventies. Discusses King's 1971 Grammy sweep for Tapestry, Simon's number-one hit "You're So Vain," and Mitchell's self-proclaimed pure opera of the soul in Blue. James Taylor figures as Mitchell's lover, Simon's husband, and collaborator for all three. Strong language. Bestseller. 2008.

 [Download from BARD: Girls Like Us Carole King, Joni Mitchell, and…](http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.nls/db.66664)

 Also available on digital cartridge DB066664