

Picoult, J.odi (2016). *Small great things : a novel*. New York: Ballantine Books

Jodi Picoult's latest novel is about an African-American woman, Ruth Jefferson, whose husband is killed while serving in Afghanistan. Picoult opens the first chapter of the book with a quote from Benjamin Franklin, "Justice will not be served until those who are unaffected are as outraged as those who are." This is a thread woven throughout the novel. Ms. Jefferson is struggling to raise her adolescent son while working as a labor and delivery room nurse. She has had a stellar nursing career for over 20 years until a white supremacist asserts that he does not want any African-American caring for his wife and child. This one hate-inspired, irrational, racist assertion wreaks havoc on Ruth Jefferson's life. During the twists and turns of the narrative, Ruth Jefferson's experience clearly illustrates the impact and consequences of racism. The novel is easy to read, a page-turner, and gut-wrenching. I strongly recommend it for any book club selection.

This book will touch the soul of the group therapist. It gets you to experience the subtle and not so subtle dilemmas, and indecencies that any African-American might have to face because of institutionalized racism in our country.

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