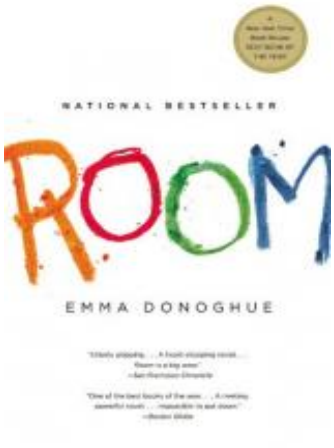
Room

by Emma Donoghue



About the Book

To 5-year-old Jack, Room is the entire world. It is where he was born and grew up; it's where he lives with his Ma as they learn and read and eat and sleep and play. At night, his Ma shuts him safely in the wardrobe, where he is meant to be asleep when Old Nick visits. Room is home to Jack, but to Ma, it is the prison where Old Nick has held her captive for seven years. Through determination, ingenuity, and fierce motherly love, Ma has created a life for Jack. But she knows it's not enough...not for her or for him. She devises a bold escape plan, one that relies on her young son's bravery and a lot of luck. What she does not realize is just how unprepared she is for the plan to actually work.

Told entirely in the language of the energetic, pragmatic 5-year-old Jack, ROOM is a celebration of resilience and the limitless bond between parent and child, a brilliantly executed novel about what it means to journey from one world to another.

Discussion Guide

1. Why do you think the entire book is told in Jack?s voice? Do you think it is effective?

2. What are some of the ways in which Jack?s development has been stunted by growing up in Room? How has he benefited?

3. If you were Ma, what would you miss most about the outside world?

4. What would you do differently if you were Jack?s parent? Would you tell Jack about the outside world from the start?

5. If Ma had never given birth to Jack, what would her situation in Room be like?

6. What would you ask for, for Sundaytreat, if you were Jack? If you were Ma?

7. Describe the dynamic between Old Nick and Ma. Why does the author choose not to tell us Old Nick?s story?

8. What does joining the outside world do to Jack? To Ma?

9. What role do you think the media play in the novel?

10. In a similar situation, how would you teach a child the difference between the real world and what they watch on television?

11. Why are we so fascinated by stories of long-term confinement?

12. What were you most affected by in the novel?

Author Bio

Born in Dublin in 1969, Emma Donoghue is an Irish emigrant twice over: she spent eight years in Cambridge doing a PhD in 18th-century literature before moving to London, Ontario, where she lives with her partner and their two children. She migrates between genres, writing for screen and stage, but she is best known for her novels, which range from the historical (THE WONDER, FROG MUSIC, SLAMMERKIN, LIFE MASK, THE SEALED LETTER) to the contemporary (AKIN, STIR-FRY, HOOD, LANDING). Her international bestseller ROOM was a *New York Times* Best Book of the Year and a finalist for the Man Booker, Commonwealth, and Orange Prizes. Donoghue also wrote the screenplays for ROOM and THE WONDER. Her most recent film (adapted with Philippa Lowthorpe from Helen Macdonald?s memoir) is H IS FOR HAWK.

Critical Praise

"Donoghue (**The Sealed Letter**) skillfully builds a suspenseful narrative evoking fear and hate and hope --- but most of all, the triumph of a mother's ferocious love. Highly recommended for readers of popular fiction."

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