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Jessica Alexander

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Chasing Chaos is a smart, compelling memoir. Jessica Alexander pulls no punches in her examination of what has become an 'industry' -- or her own role in it. From her first days as idealistic adventurer in Darfur to her more savvy self in Haiti a decade later

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with many more international disasters in-between, Alexander thoughtfully captures the ups and downs of humanitarian work on both the global and personal level.

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Chasing Chaos. :

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Jessica Alexander  
arrived in Rwanda in  
the aftermath of the  
1994 genocide as an  
idealistic intern, eager

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to contribute to the

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About the Book

Jessica Alexander  
arrived in Rwanda in  
the aftermath of the



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1994 genocide as an idealistic intern, eager to contribute to the work of the international humanitarian aid community.

Chasing Chaos □

JESSICA

ALEXANDER

Also, while Chasing Chaos has no literary pretensions, it's well-

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written. The beginning was immediately evocative for me, as I began my own international career in Sudan, albeit many years before. I could feel the extreme heat and hear the scraping of the zinc doors, and taste the very sweet tea and imagine the bleached-white sky at midday.

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□ In Chasing Chaos, Jessica Alexander serves up a sharp critique of the multi-billion dollar humanitarian aid industry, wrapped in a tender coming-of-age

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story. Her quietly evocative prose recreates the painful, poignant, and sometimes hilarious experience of marching into 'the field' of armed conflict and disaster to relieve suffering, supported by donations from those who expect heroism.

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Chasing Chaos: My  
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Chasing Chaos is  
neither an academic  
treatise nor a  
muckraking expose,  
and readers should  
not expect to find  
either prescriptions for  
or blanket  
condemnations of the  
current aid effort. The  
book is an extremely

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readable and  
engaging personal  
memoir that charts  
one young woman's  
education in the  
challenging,  
maddening, and  
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heartbreaking world of  
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1994 genocide as an  
idealistic intern, eager  
to contribute to the  
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humanitarian aid  
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Decade In And

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An experienced humanitarian worker who has helped the refugees in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Darfur and Haiti gives an insider's view of the chaos and danger involved in such a pursuit, as well as the

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often-wild social lives that some workers lead to deal with the stress. Original.

Humanitarian

Jessica Alexander arrived in Rwanda in the aftermath of the 1994 genocide as an idealistic intern, eager to contribute to the work of the international humanitarian aid

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community. But the world that she encountered in the field was dramatically different than anything she could have imagined. It was messy, chaotic, and difficult—but she was hooked. In this honest and irreverent memoir, she introduces readers to the realities of life as

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an aid worker. We watch as she manages a 24,000-person camp in Darfur, collects evidence for the Charles Taylor trial in Sierra Leone, and contributes to the massive aid effort to clean up a shattered Haiti. But we also see the alcohol-fueled parties and fleeting

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romances, the  
burnouts and self-  
doubt, and the  
struggle to do good in  
places that have long  
endured suffering.  
Tracing her personal  
journey from wide-  
eyed and naïve  
newcomer to  
hardened cynic and,  
ultimately, to hopeful  
but critical realist,  
Alexander transports



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readers to some of the most troubled locations around the world and shows us not only the seemingly impossible challenges, but also the moments of resilience and recovery.

A no-holds-barred, controversial exposé of the financial

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profiteering and ambiguous ethics that pervade the world of humanitarian aid. A vast industry has grown up around humanitarian aid: a cavalcade of organizations—some 37,000—compete for a share of the \$160 billion annual prize, with "fact-inflation" sometimes ramping

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up disaster coverage to draw in more funds. Insurgents and warring governments, meanwhile, have made aid a permanent feature of military strategy: refugee camps serve as base camps for genocidaires, and aid supplies are diverted to feed the troops. Even as humanitarian

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groups continue to assert the holy principle of impartiality, they have increasingly become participants in aid's abuses. In a narrative that is impassioned, gripping, and even darkly absurd, journalist Linda Polman takes us to war zones around the globe—from the NGO-

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dense operations in "Afghaniscam" to the floating clinics of Texas Mercy Ships proselytizing off the shores of West Africa—to show the often compromised results of aid workers' best intentions. It is time, Polman argues, to impose ethical boundaries, to question whether

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doing something is always better than doing nothing, and to hold humanitarians responsible for the consequences of their deeds.

75 brief self-care reflections to help aid workers, activists, and volunteers renew purpose and achieve fulfillment. Heal from

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Over-exhaustion,  
prevent burnout, and  
regain your motivation  
with these short  
readings from a  
psychologist who has  
spent many years in  
the field working in  
conflict and disaster  
areas. Gathered from  
Alessandra Pigni's  
interaction with  
humanitarian  
professionals and

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backed up by cutting-edge research, these concrete tools offer new perspectives and inspiration to anyone whose work is focused on helping others.

A powerful and lively work of immersive journalism, Brin-Jonathan Butler's



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story of his time  
chasing the American  
dream through Cuba  
Whether he's hustling  
his way into Mike  
Tyson's mansion for  
an interview, betting  
his life savings on a  
boxing match (against  
the favorite),  
becoming  
romantically  
entangled with one of  
Fidel Castro's

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granddaughters, or simply manufacturing press credentials to go where he wants. Brin-Jonathan Butler has always been the "act first, ask permission later" kind of journalist. This book is the culmination of Butler's decade spent in the trenches of Havana, trying to understand a

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culture perplexing to  
Westerners: one  
whose elite athletes  
regularly forgo  
multimillion-dollar  
opportunities to stay  
in Cuba and box for  
their country, while  
living in penury.  
Butler's fascination  
with this distinctly  
Cuban idealism sets  
him off on a  
remarkable journey,

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training with, befriending, and interviewing the champion boxers that Cuba seems to produce more than any other country. In the process, though, Butler gets to know the landscape of the exhilaratingly warm Cuban culture—and starts to question where he feels most

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at home. In the tradition of Michael Lewis and John Jeremiah Sullivan, Butler is a keen and humane storyteller, and the perfect guide for this riotous tour through the streets of Havana.

□ What motivates any of us to do the work we do? And more

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importantly does that work make a difference? This is the question film producer and founder of filmaid.org, Caroline Baron, reflects on when she calls Chasing Misery an "unblinking" account of what it's like to be a woman on the front lines of global humanitarian

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responses. Twenty-one first person essays and 23 stunning photographs give readers a glimpse into the lives of real women who respond to emergencies—their hopes, fears, questions, challenges, frustrations as well as glimpses of the humour, beauty, and

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hope they find in the  
midst of misery.

Humanitarians are  
required to be  
impartial,  
independent,  
professionally  
competent and  
focused only on  
preventing and  
alleviating human  
suffering. It can be  
hard living up to these



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principles when others do not share them, while persuading political and military authorities and non-state actors to let an agency assist on the ground requires savvy ethical skills. Getting first to a conflict or natural catastrophe is only the beginning, as aid workers are

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usually and immediately presented with practical and moral questions about what to do next. For example, when does working closely with a warring party or an immoral regime move from practical cooperation to complicity in human rights violations?

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Should one operate in camps for displaced people and refugees if they are effectively places of internment?

Do humanitarian agencies

inadvertently

encourage ethnic

cleansing by always

being ready to 'mop-

up' the consequences

of scorched earth

warfare? This book

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has been written to help humanitarians assess and respond to these and other ethical dilemmas.

Aid

'Fee writes with stunning honesty ... utterly breathtaking' - Bustle A beautiful memoir from an exciting young writer, Meg Fee, on finding her way in New York

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City. Full of the  
dramas and quiet  
moments that make  
up a life, told with  
humour, heart, and  
hope. In Places I  
Stopped on the Way  
Home, Meg Fee plots  
a decade of her life in  
New York City — from  
falling in love at the  
Lincoln Center to  
escaping the  
roommate (and

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(bedbugs) from hell on  
Thompson Street,  
chasing false  
promises on 66th  
Street and the wrong  
men everywhere, and  
finding true  
friendships over  
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Harlem and  
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Weaving together her  
joys and sorrows,  
expectations and

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uncertainties, aspirations and realities, the result is an exhilarating collection of essays about love and friendship, failure and suffering, and above all hope. Join Meg on her heart-wrenching journey, as she cuts the difficult path to finding herself and finding home.

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A haunting, beautiful  
first novel by the

bestselling author of A

Long Way Gone

When Ishmael Beah's

A Long Way Gone

was published in

2007, it soared to the

top of bestseller lists,

becoming an instant

classic: a harrowing

account of Sierra

Leone's civil war and



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the fate of child soldiers that "everyone in the world should read" (The Washington Post). Now Beah, whom Dave Eggers has called "arguably the most read African writer in contemporary literature," has returned with his first novel, an affecting, tender parable about

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postwar life in Sierra Leone. At the center of Radiance of Tomorrow are Benjamin and Bockarie, two longtime friends who return to their hometown, Imperi, after the civil war. The village is in ruins, the ground covered in bones. As more villagers begin to

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come back, Benjamin and Bockarie try to forge a new community by taking up their former posts as teachers, but they're beset by obstacles: a scarcity of food; a rash of murders, thievery, rape, and retaliation; and the depredations of a foreign mining company intent on

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sully the town's water supply and blocking its paths with electric wires. As Benjamin and Bockarie search for a way to restore order, they're forced to reckon with the uncertainty of their past and future alike. With the gentle lyricism of a dream and the moral clarity

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of a fable, *Radiance of Tomorrow* is a powerful novel about preserving what means the most to us, even in uncertain times. Named one of the *Christian Science Monitor's* best fiction books of 2014

Wish You Happy  
Forever chronicles  
Half the Sky founder

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Jenny Bowen's personal and professional journey to transform Chinese orphanages—and the lives of the neglected girls who live in them—from a state of quiet despair to one of vibrant promise. After reading an article about the thousands of baby girls languishing in

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Chinese orphanages,  
Bowen and her  
husband adopted a  
little girl from China  
and brought her home  
to Los Angeles, not  
out of a need to build  
a family but rather a  
commitment to save  
one child. A year  
later, as she watched  
her new daughter play  
in the grass with her  
friends, thriving in an

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environment where she knew she was loved, Bowen was overcome with a desire to help the children that she could not bring home. That very day she created Half the Sky Foundation, an organization conceived to bring love into the life of every orphan in China



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and one that has actually managed to fulfill its promise. In Wish You Happy Forever, a fish out of water tale like no other, Bowen relates her struggle to bring the concept of "child nurture and responsive care" to bemused Chinese bureaucrats and how she's actually

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succeeding. Five years after Half the Sky's first orphanage program opened, government officials began to mention child welfare and nurturing care in public speeches. And, in 2011, at China's Great Hall of the People, Half the Sky and its government partners celebrated

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the launch of The  
Rainbow Program, a  
groundbreaking  
initiative to change  
the face of orphan  
care by training every  
child welfare worker in  
the country. Thanks to  
Bowen's relentless  
perseverance through  
heartbreak and a  
dose of humor, Half  
the Sky's goal to bring  
love the lives of

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forgotten children  
comes ever closer.

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