



Screening Room: A Memoir of the South

Alan Lightman

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Screening Room: A Memoir of the South Alan Lightman
A WASHINGTON POST NOTABLE BOOK OF THE YEAR

Alan Lightman's grandfather M.A. was the family's undisputed patriarch. It was his movie theater empire that catapulted the Lightmans, a Hungarian Jewish immigrant family, to prominence in the South; his triumphs that would both galvanize and paralyze his descendants. In this evocative personal history, the author chronicles his return to Memphis and the stifling home he had been so eager to flee forty years earlier. As aging uncles and aunts retell old stories, Alan finds himself reconsidering long-held beliefs about his larger-than-life grandfather and his quiet, inscrutable father.

The result is an unforgettable family saga set against the pulsing backdrop of Memphis—its country clubs and juke joints, its rhythm and blues, its segregated movie theaters, its barbecue and pecan pie—including encounters with Elvis, Martin Luther King Jr., and E. H. “Boss” Crump. Both intensely personal and quintessentially American, *Screening Room* finely explores the tricks of light that can make—and unmake—a man and his myth.

(With black-and-white illustrations throughout.)

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