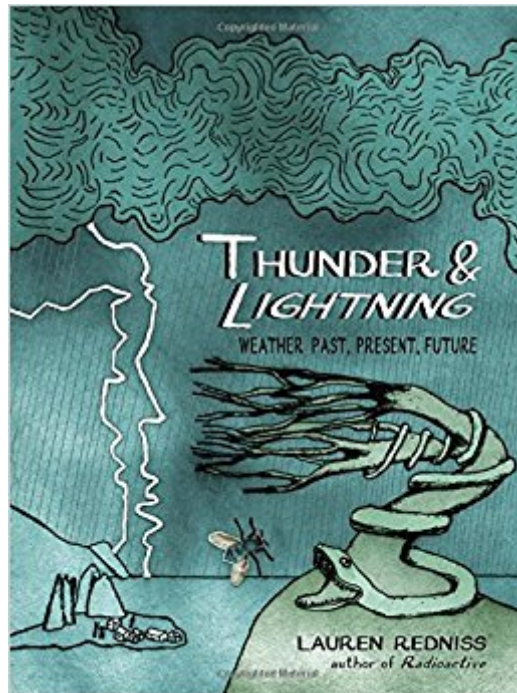


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# Thunder & Lightning: Weather Past, Present, Future



## Synopsis

From the National Book Award finalist Lauren Redniss, author of *Radioactive*, comes a dazzling fusion of storytelling, visual art, and reportage that grapples with weather in all its dimensions: its danger and its beauty, why it happens and what it means. WINNER OF THE PEN/E. O. WILSON LITERARY SCIENCE WRITING AWARD • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY • SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE, KIRKUS REVIEWS, • AND • SHELF AWARENESS Weather is the very air we breathe • it shapes our daily lives and alters the course of history. In *Thunder & Lightning*, Lauren Redniss tells the story of weather and humankind through the ages. This wide-ranging work roams from the driest desert on earth to a frigid island in the Arctic, from the Biblical flood to the defeat of the Spanish Armada. Redniss visits the headquarters of the National Weather Service, recounts top-secret rainmaking operations during the Vietnam War, and examines the economic impact of disasters like Hurricane Katrina. Drawing on extensive research and countless interviews, she examines our own day and age, from our most personal decisions • Do I need an umbrella today? • to the awesome challenges we face with global climate change. Redniss produced each element of *Thunder & Lightning*: the text, the artwork, the covers, and every page in between. She created many of the images using the antiquated printmaking technique copper plate photogravure etching. She even designed the book's typeface. The result is a book unlike any other: a spellbinding combination of storytelling, art, and science. Praise for *Thunder & Lightning* • "[An] aesthetically charged and deeply researched account . . . a wild rainstorm of a book, pelting the reader with ideas and inspiration. • Nature • "A gorgeous and illuminating illustrated study of weather in all its tempestuous variety . . . Redniss's combo of fact, folklore, and vibrant etched copperplate prints enthralls. • "O: The Oprah Magazine • "Eerily beautiful . . . Contains plenty of scientific explanation (including more than a few nods toward global warming), but also far-flung personal stories that illuminate the beauty, wonder and chaos inherent in the elements. • "The New York Times • "Magical . . . Redniss has . . . shown us how human beings live with nature • fighting, coexisting, taming, predicting via leech barometer and radar and intuition. • "The New York Times Book Review • "[A] twenty-first-century genius . . . Redniss is inventing a new literary genre. . . . The reader willing to put herself fully in Redniss's hands will be rewarded with a delicious feeling of being enveloped by a phenomenon that eclipses the chiming trivialities of daily life. • "Elle • "Lends a graphic-novel-like allure to some of nature's most curious paradoxes. • "Vogue • "Redniss is one of the most creative science writers of

our time—her combination of beautiful artwork, reporting, and poetic prose brings science to life in ways that words alone simply cannot. —Rebecca Skloot —“Redniss combines her own dual punch of expressive art and impressive erudition to give an entirely new take on all that happens above our heads. This is an illuminated book that is also an illuminating one. —Adam Gopnik —“A strange and wonderful thing, the work of a first-class mind that refuses to submit to any categories or precedent. —Dave Eggers —“Beautiful and totally original. —Elizabeth Kolbert

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

—“[An] aesthetically charged and deeply researched account . . . a wild rainstorm of a book, pelting the reader with ideas and inspiration. —Nature —“A gorgeous and illuminating illustrated study of weather in all its tempestuous variety . . . [Lauren] Redniss’s combo of fact, folklore, and vibrant etched copperplate prints enthralls. —O: The Oprah Magazine —“Eerily beautiful . . . If weather is our favorite default conversational subject, [Redniss] takes anything but a default approach. Thunder & Lightning contains plenty of scientific explanation (including more than a few nods toward global warming), but also far-flung personal stories that illuminate the beauty, wonder and chaos inherent in the elements. —The New York Times —“Magical . . . Redniss has . . . shown us how human beings live with nature—fighting, coexisting, taming, predicting via leech barometer and radar and intuition. . . . She is, to use a contemporary word, a curator: arranging information with a distinct aesthetic and a point of view. —The New York Times Book

Review *Elle* “[A] twenty-first-century genius . . . Lauren Redniss is inventing a new literary genre. The artist brings her intrepid reporting and sharp intelligence to subjects as wide-ranging as Marie Curie, gay soldiers in WWII, and now stormy weather. . . . [Redniss is] a reporter, a painter, a social historian, a biographer, and a feminist who creates stories and tableaux that are published as books, which are at once sexual and prim, grotesque and romantic, scientific and soft. . . . The reader willing to put herself fully in Redniss’s hands will be rewarded with a delicious feeling of being enveloped by a phenomenon that eclipses the chiming trivialities of daily life.”

*Elle* • “From Superstorm Sandy to the California drought, weather is a constant presence in our lives, shaping the way we think, feel—and vote. Lauren Redniss’s latest, *Thunder & Lightning: Weather Past, Present, Future*, takes a deep dive into human efforts to grapple with the elements, with forays into mythology, commerce and politics. Combining etchings and text—the National Book Award-nominated author and artist designed her own font for the book—*Thunder & Lightning* lends a graphic-novel-like allure to some of nature’s most curious paradoxes.”

*Vogue* “Lauren Redniss is one of the most creative science writers of our time—her combination of beautiful artwork, reporting, and poetic prose brings science to life in ways that words alone simply cannot. *Thunder & Lightning* is a fascinating meditation on how climate affects the earth’s landscape and the lives inhabiting it, but also how the landscape of a book—the layout of its text, the images on its pages—impacts the telling of a story. This is an important book about a topic that couldn’t be more important to us all.”

*Rebecca Skloot* “In *Thunder & Lightning*, Lauren Redniss combines her own dual punch of expressive art and impressive erudition to give an entirely new take on all that happens above our heads. This is an illuminated book that is also an illuminating one.”

*Adam Gopnik* “Lauren Redniss’s *Thunder & Lightning* is such a strange and wonderful thing, the work of a first-class mind that refuses to submit to any categories or precedent. It’s the way you wish science would always be taught—with a mix of stories and facts, legend and hard science.”

*Dave Eggers* “Beautiful and totally original.”

*Elizabeth Kolbert*

Lauren Redniss is the author of *Century Girl: 100 Years in the Life of Doris Eaton Travis*, *Last Living Star of the Ziegfeld Follies* and *Radioactive: Marie & Pierre Curie, A Tale of Love and Fallout*, a finalist for the National Book Award. She teaches at Parsons the New School for Design.

Love this book and I would recommend this to any teacher who wants to encourage reading, required reading for any high school student. Must read for everyone of any age who loves geography, science, history, biography. Love the illustrations, Thoughtful, interesting and I learned something new on almost every page. I wonder if her art work is available for sale in print form?

I can't believe all the low reviews for this book. It's fantastic, but it's certainly not for everyone. This book is filled with art, both in the graphical illustrations that fill every page, as well as the way the stories and facts pertaining to weather have been presented. The layout itself is beautiful. I loved reading all of the stories and tidbits about weather, presented from a variety of disciplines and perspectives. No, this book is not a novel, and doesn't read like one. Yes, it's a bit abstract. That's part of its beauty. Yes, there is nudity in several of the illustrations. No, it's not [even remotely] pornographic, and I'd have no problem with children of any age looking through this book. Again, this book is not for everyone. But if you like the art, and might enjoy reading interesting history about global weather events and related cultural and other things that you would likely never come across otherwise, give the book a chance. I found reading through it to be a beautiful experience.

Wow! Amazing illustrations. And bizarre stories. I bought it for my teenager, but I'm enjoying it myself.

I got this book for book club. It looked like a children's book but the pictures and writing was obviously for an adult. The more I read it, the more I loved it. If you like surprises this is a good book for you.

Brilliant book in terms of the research, writing and amazing illustrations

This book pulls you in like a tornado and takes you on a whirlwind journey that leaves you feeling inspired, enlightened and more connected to life.

This is not quite what I was expecting, but it's a beautiful and intriguing work. I was expecting it to be more science-y and less story-telling-y. It's a lot more about how we FEEL about the weather and events associated with the weather, and how people EXPERIENCE the weather than an Explanation of weather per se. (And I was expecting more of the latter.) So, if you take this as a work of art-science or science-art that immerses in the phenomenon of weather and explores it with you

and shows you some things you didn't know -- if you're ready for that -- it's remarkable and wonderful. There are 12 Chapters here, on Chaos, Cold, Rain, Fog, Wind, Heat, Sky, Dominion, War, Profit, Pleasure, and Forecasting, and several pages of footnotes/references at the end. It's not quite a coffee-table book, in that it's fun to flip through the pictures, but they're tied to the stories... I think one might want to nestle in and read a story at a time as the best way to enjoy this book.

A present for someone I know who loves the weather, likes to study it, and so on. She absolutely LOVED this book - it was a big hit.

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