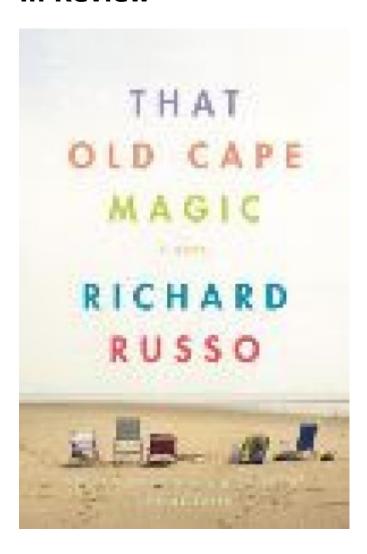
## **CC** recommends

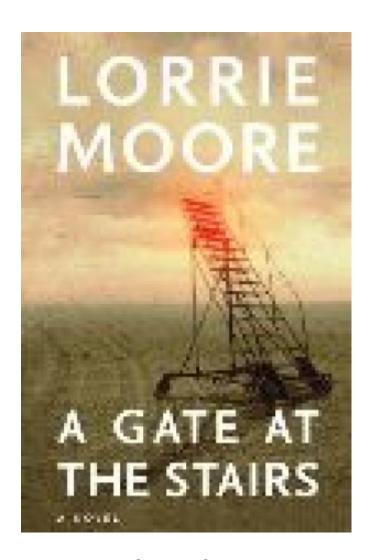
selected by Lawrence Wood in the December 15, 2009 issue

### **In Review**



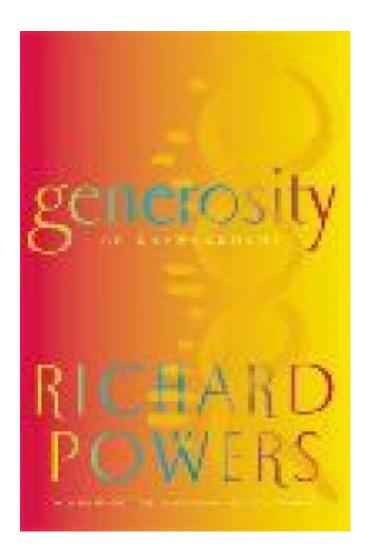
**That Old Cape Magic** 

Richard Russo Knopf



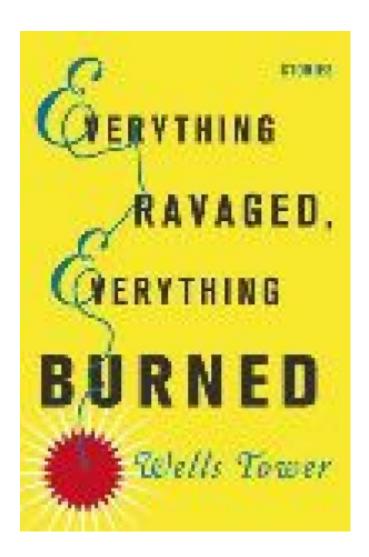
A Gate at the Stairs

Lorrie Moore Knopf



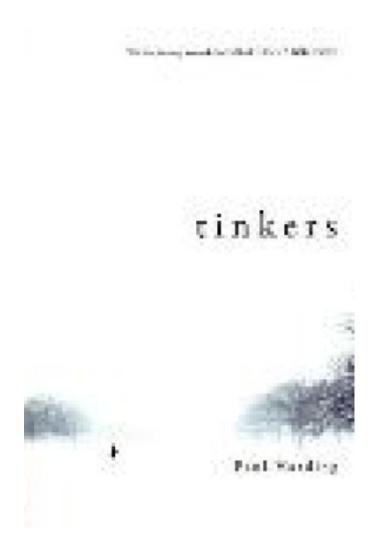
# Generosity

Richard Powers Farrar, Straus & Giroux



## **Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned**

Wells Tower Farrar, Straus & Giroux



#### **Tinkers**

Paul Harding Bellevue Literary

Russo is an old-fashioned teller of tales who can make you burst out laughing. But don't expect literary comfort food: he delights also in making readers deliciously uncomfortable. As his late-middle-aged protagonist reconsiders family life, there's plenty of occasion to squirm. (See the full-length review in this issue.)

A short-story star of the 1990s, Moore ends a long silence with this novel. The September 11 references seem forced, but the wry, self-aware characters are her specialty. At its best, this story has some trenchant things to say about race and class.

Powers is known as a cerebral writer. Here he shows his spiritual curiosity. An Algerian refugee who has seen real horrors somehow maintains unshakable

happiness. This brings her celebrity—the greatest danger yet.

No book of fiction in 2009 received more advance praise than this debut story collection. It has the same punch as Thom Jones's *The Pugilist at Rest* (written 15 years ago). Tower mixes testosterone, humor and violence, reaching a pinnacle of sorts in the long title tale about Vikings.

Harding's prose is a finely tuned, jeweled mechanism not unlike the clocks that the lead character repairs. In 192 pages Harding fits in an account of three generations and a meditation on life and death.

#### More CC recommends:

<u>Theology</u> ~ <u>History and current events</u> ~ <u>Fiction</u> <u>Poetry</u> ~ <u>Graphic novels</u> ~ <u>Children's books</u> <u>Television on DVD</u> ~ <u>Popular music</u> ~ <u>Choral music</u>