

# booklife

by Publishers Weekly



Title: *Silver Bottle*

Author: Joan Spilman

Genre: Fiction/General Fiction (including literary and historical)

Audience: Adult

Word Count: 100,000

Assessment:

**Plot:** *Silver Bottle*, a book that portrays a loss of innocence, places women as the moral center of the family. Spilman creates an emotional and physical disconnect that instills a feeling of impermanence, similar to the theme of transience in Marilynne Robinson's *Housekeeping*. Like Robinson's character Sylvie, Spilman writes her characters' oddities in such a way that leaves readers wildly uneasy but unable to explain why.

**Prose/Style:** Spilman maintains exquisite narrative control throughout her novel. Her writing captures a poetic weightlessness, bound by feelings rather than structure. The isolated narratives wind around each other, tangling memories only to unravel into a precise, linear narrative.

**Originality:** In a book about lived patterns, the author depicts characters that are alone but together in kinship. Tied to one artifact that traces lineage, the book's title and returning artifact—a silver bottle—symbolizes a material and emotional connection between one family. The story pleads for reflection, as a way to let go.

**Character Development/Execution:** This book explores motherhood and delights in the dynamic of parent-child relationships. The strained moments feel sincere, bitter, yet affectionate. The author cleverly writes each characters' childhood from an aged perspective, so readers witness an adequate account of childish naivety.

Score:

- Plot/Idea: 10
- Originality: 10
- Prose: 10
- Character/Execution: 10
- Overall: 10.00

Report Submitted: May 11, 2021