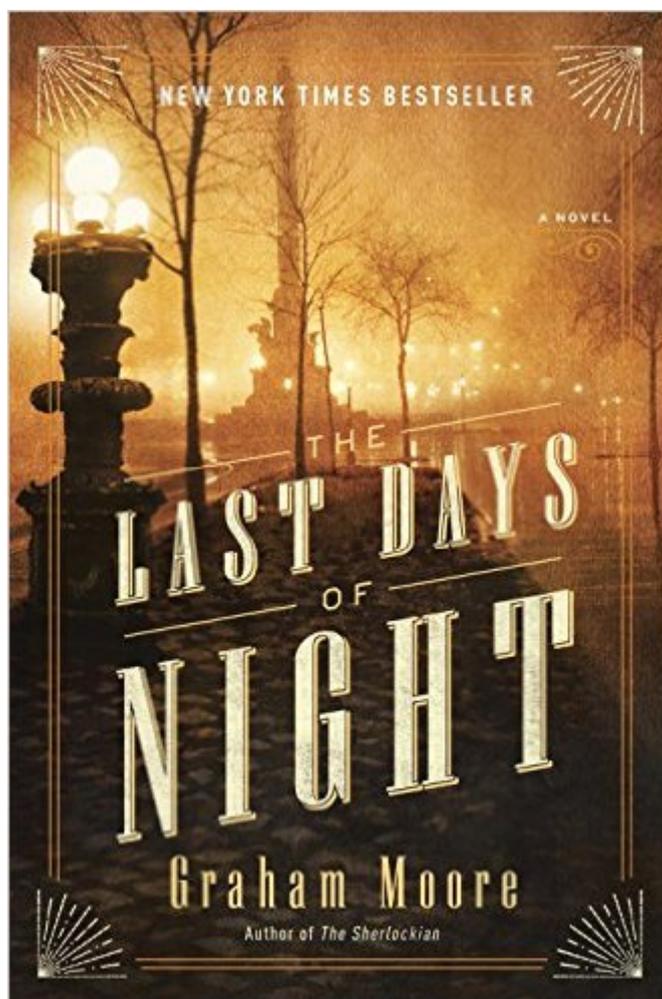


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The Last Days Of Night: A Novel



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A thrilling novel based on actual events, about the nature of genius, the cost of ambition, and the battle to electrify America—“from the Oscar-winning screenwriter of *The Imitation Game* and author of *The Sherlockian* SOON TO BE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING EDDIE REDMAYNE

New York, 1888. Gas lamps still flicker in the city streets, but the miracle of electric light is in its infancy. The person who controls the means to turn night into day will make history—and a vast fortune. A young untested lawyer named Paul Cravath, fresh out of Columbia Law School, takes a case that seems impossible to win. Paul’s client, George Westinghouse, has been sued by Thomas Edison over a billion-dollar question: Who invented the light bulb and holds the right to power the country? The case affords Paul entry to the heady world of high society—the glittering parties in Gramercy Park mansions, and the more insidious dealings done behind closed doors. The task facing him is beyond daunting. Edison is a wily, dangerous opponent with vast resources at his disposal—private spies, newspapers in his pocket, and the backing of J. P. Morgan himself. Yet this unknown lawyer shares with his famous adversary a compulsion to win at all costs. How will he do it? In obsessive pursuit of victory, Paul crosses paths with Nikola Tesla, an eccentric, brilliant inventor who may hold the key to defeating Edison, and with Agnes Huntington, a beautiful opera singer who proves to be a flawless performer on stage and off. As Paul takes greater and greater risks, he’ll find that everyone in his path is playing their own game, and no one is quite who they seem. Praise for *The Last Days of Night* • A satisfying romp . . . Takes place against a backdrop rich with period detail . . . Works wonderfully as an entertainment . . . As it charges forward, the novel leaves no dot unconnected. • “Noah Hawley, *The New York Times Book Review* • “This captivating historical novel illuminates a fascinating American moment. • “People • A fascinating portrait of American inventors . . . Moore crafts a compelling narrative out of [Paul] Cravath’s cunning legal maneuvers and [Nikola] Tesla’s world-changing tinkering, while a story line on opera singer Agnes Huntington has the mysterious glamour of *The Great Gatsby*. . . . Moore weaves a complex web. . . . He conjures Gilded Age New York City so vividly, it feels like only yesterday. • “*Entertainment Weekly* • A model of superior historical fiction . . . Graham Moore digs deep into long-forgotten facts to give us an exciting, sometimes astonishing story of two geniuses locked in a brutal battle to change the world. . . . [A] brilliant journey into the past. • “*The Washington Post* • Mesmerizing, clever, and absolutely crackling, *The Last Days of Night* is a triumph of imagination. Graham Moore has chosen Gilded Age New York as his playground, with outsized characters—Edison, Tesla, Westinghouse—as his players. The result is a beautifully researched, endlessly entertaining novel

that will leave you buzzing.âGillian Flynn, author of *Gone Girl*âs part legal thriller, part tour of a magical timeâthe age of wonderâand once youâve finished it, youâll find it hard to return to the world of now.âErik Larson, author of *The Devil in the White City*

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This novel provides a fascinating portrayal of one of the most exciting times in world history, at least when it comes to scientific invention and the birth of technology. It was enjoyable to read, to get to know the real-life characters, and at the same time learn about these historical events in a non-text-bookish way. The plot revolves around three main historical characters: Thomas Edison, George Westinghouse, and Nikola Tesla. The inventor, the businessman, and the genius. All three men were primary warriors in what became known as the "current war", i.e. the battle over whether or not A/C or D/C would win out in the end. In the middle of this tripod of giant historical figures is a young 26 year old recently graduated attorney named Paul Cravath, a name not familiar to me when I began reading this book but who I learned became one of the giants of the legal profession, largely due to his involvement in the "current war" and its successful resolution (depending on one's point of view). This is a pretty fast-paced novel with short chapters and a swift narrative style. The facts are well-researched and the author provides a welcome section at the end wherein he separates facts from fiction. There is also a nice little romance sub plot. But where the novel really shines is in how it is capable of transcending the simple facts of the events during the late 1800s when electricity was harnessed and helps us to understand the nature and value of the inventive process. A relatively brief 15 years in our history saw not only many new discoveries

related to electricity, but also the birth of new ideas on how we would go about inventing in the future. The notion of an eccentric lone inventor working in his personal lab quickly morphs into the business of inventing.

Graham Moore ("The Sherlockian," a NYT best-selling debut novel and the Academy Award-winning screenplay for "The Imitation Game") has burst onto the scene with as much success as any young writer can dream of . . . and he's earned it. With his second novel, "The Last Days of Night," he turns his brilliant pen toward one of those historical events that everyone should understand but has somehow gotten lost in the dusty corners of history: the war to bring electric light to America. Most Americans, when asked who Thomas Edison was, would probably respond with, "He's the guy who invented the light bulb." Such an answer would make Edison smile, because that's how he wanted to be remembered, in part. Edison in reality claimed to be the inventor of a gazillion other technological marvels, and that was the guiding mission of the early days of his company (you may have heard of it - General Electric). But what most Americans don't know is that the battle to bring light bulbs to the masses was as bare-knuckled and hard-fought as any business war seen in America's history. For those who think that the Microsoft-Apple war was nasty, they have no idea how Edison waged total war against his rival, George Westinghouse, in the fight to rid the world of night - the formerly-famous "War of the Currents." "The Last Days of Night" follows that fight, from a fictional perspective, through the eyes of the very real Paul Cravath, a recent Columbia Law graduate who had no clients but came to represent Westinghouse in the no fewer than 312 lawsuits(!) filed by Edison in the battle. Cravath would eventually find his name on the letterhead of the famed law firm of Cravath, Swain & Moore, which still thrives today.

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