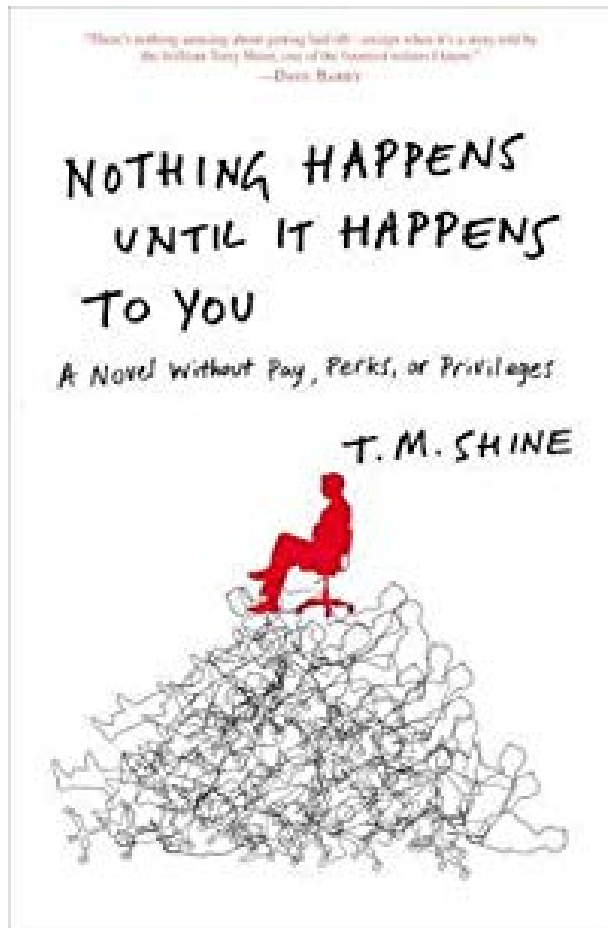


Nothing Happens Until It Happens to You: A Novel Without Pay, Perks, or Privileges



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Jeffrey Reiner is a middle manager's dream. Predictable, almost invisible, and lacking ambition, he's held the same tedious job for eighteen years, typing up the calendar listings for a South Florida weekly. As the economy and the newspaper industry crashed around him, Jeffrey kept his head comfortably in the sand until he was terminated in the middle of his lunch hour. Suddenly Jeffrey is staring at a deadline of twenty-one weeks before his severance pay and unemployment benefits dry up and he has to figure out what to do next. Plunged into the bizarre world of unemployment, Jeffrey's attempts at networking lead him to his slacker neighbors, an unorthodox state facilitator, and a 1-800 mental health counselor. What's even worse is now that he has no job to fill the daytime hours, he can't ignore the fact that his family life is unraveling: his wife communicates almost solely through detailed daily honey-do lists; his mother seems determined to get herself kicked out of her assisted-living facility; his teenage daughter has no use for him and seems wiser to the ways of the world than he'll ever be; and his son has taken up a disturbing form of pest control to help make ends meet. Even his dog finds a way to let him down. With his job search going nowhere amid the wreckage of the American economy, Jeffrey has no choice but to push beyond his comfort zone. He takes on a string of ridiculous odd jobs for a guy known as "enterprising dude" that include dressing up as the Statue of Liberty

and breeding fish in a tub of mud. But as Jeffrey stumbles from one comic catastrophe to another, he realizes that in opening up to the world, he no longer wants to go back to his safe, sheltered corner. Full of whimsy, wry humor, and surprising insight, *Nothing Happens Until It Happens to You* is a weird, wonderful journey of self-discovery that proves there's life after the pink slip after all. From the Hardcover edition.