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This Book Is Overdue!: How Librarians and Cybrarians Can Save Us All

Marilyn Johnson

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Buried in information? Cross-eyed over technology? From the bottom of a pile of paper and discs, books, e-books, and scattered thumb drives comes a cry of hope: Make way for the librarians! They want to help. They're not selling a thing. And librarians know best how to beat a path through the googolplex sources of information available to us, writes Marilyn Johnson, whose previous book, The Dead Beat, breathed merry life into the obituary-writing profession. This Book Is Overdue! is a romp through the ranks of information professionals and a revelation for readers burned out on the cliches and stereotyping of librarians. Blunt and obscenely funny bloggers spill their stories in this book, as do a tattooed, hard-partying children's librarian; a fresh-scrubbed Catholic couple who teach missionaries to use computers; a blue-haired radical who uses her smartphone to help guide street protestors; a plethora of voluptuous avatars and cybrarians; the quiet, law-abiding librarians gagged by the FBI; and a boxing archivist. These are just a few of the visionaries Johnson captures here-pragmatic idealists who fuse the tools of the digital age with their love for the written word and the enduring values of free speech, open access, and scout-badge-quality assistance to anyone in need. Those who predicted the death of libraries forgot to consider that in the automated maze of contemporary life, none of us-neither the experts nor the hopelessly baffled-can get along without human help. And not just any help; we need librarians who won't charge us by the question or roll their eyes, no matter what we ask. Who are they? What do they know? And how quickly can they save us from being buried by the digital age?

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