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Sinopsis

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Blink is about the first two seconds of looking--the decisive glance that knows in an instant. Gladwell, the best-selling author of *The Tipping Point*, campaigns for snap judgments and mind reading with a gift for translating research into splendid storytelling. Building his case with scenes from a marriage, heart attack triage, speed dating, choking on the golf course, selling cars, and military maneuvers, he persuades readers to think small and focus on the meaning of "thin slices" of behavior. The key is to rely on our "adaptive unconscious"--a 24/7 mental valet--that provides us with instant and sophisticated information to warn of danger, read a stranger, or react to a new idea.

Gladwell includes caveats about leaping to conclusions: marketers can manipulate our first impressions, high arousal moments make us "mind blind," focusing on the wrong cue leaves us vulnerable to "the Warren Harding Effect" (i.e., voting for a handsome but hapless president). In a provocative chapter that exposes the "dark side of blink," he illuminates the failure of rapid cognition in the tragic stakeout and murder of Amadou Diallo in the Bronx. He underlines studies about autism, facial reading and cardio uptick to urge training that enhances high-stakes decision-making. In this brilliant, cage-rattling book, one can only wish for a thicker slice of Gladwell's ideas about what Blink Camp might look like.

Starred Review. Best-selling author Gladwell (*The Tipping Point*) has a dazzling ability to find commonality in disparate fields of study. As he displays again in this entertaining and illuminating look at how we make snap judgments_about people's intentions, the authenticity of a work of art, even military strategy_he can parse for general readers the intricacies of fascinating but little-known fields like professional food tasting (why does Coke taste different from Pepsi?). Gladwell's conclusion, after studying how people make instant decisions in a wide range of fields from psychology to police work, is that we can make better instant judgments by training our mind and senses to focus on the most relevant facts_and that less input (as long as it's the right input) is better than more. Perhaps the most stunning example he gives of this counterintuitive truth is the most expensive war game ever conducted by the Pentagon, in which a wily marine officer, playing "a rogue military commander" in the Persian Gulf and unencumbered by hierarchy, bureaucracy and too much technology, humiliated American forces whose chiefs were

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bogged down in matrixes, systems for decision making and information overload. But if one sets aside Gladwell's dazzle, some questions and apparent inconsistencies emerge. If doctors are given an algorithm, or formula, in which only four facts are needed to determine if a patient is having a heart attack, is that really educating the doctor's decision-making ability_or is it taking the decision out of the doctor's hands altogether and handing it over to the algorithm? Still, each case study is satisfying, and Gladwell imparts his own evident pleasure in delving into a wide range of fields and seeking an underlying truth.