

To Rise Again at a Decent Hour

By Joshua Ferris

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Shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize, this big, brilliant, profoundly observed novel by National Book Award Finalist Joshua Ferris explores the absurdities of modern life and one man's search for meaning.

Paul O'Rourke is a man made of contradictions: he loves the world, but doesn't know how to live in it. He's a Luddite addicted to his iPhone, a dentist with a nicotine habit, a rabid Red Sox fan devastated by their victories, and an atheist not quite willing to let go of God.

Then someone begins to impersonate Paul online, and he watches in horror as a website, a Facebook page, and a Twitter account are created in his name. What begins as an outrageous violation of his privacy soon becomes something more soul-frightening: the possibility that the online "Paul" might be a better version of the real thing. As Paul's quest to learn why his identity has been stolen deepens, he is forced to confront his troubled past and his uncertain future in a life disturbingly split between the real and the virtual.

At once laugh-out-loud funny about the absurdities of the modern world, and indelibly profound about the eternal questions of the meaning of life, love and truth, TO RISE AGAIN AT A DECENT HOUR is a deeply moving and constantly surprising tour de force.

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To Rise Again at a Decent Hour By Joshua Ferris Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of the Month, May 2014: Paul O'Rourke defines himself as three things: a dentist, a die-hard Red Sox fan, and an atheist. He's also a bit of a jerk, which is why, when someone sets up a fake website for his dental practice, Paul has trouble figuring out who is responsible. But a synopsis of *To Rise Again at a Decent Hour* can hardly do justice to a novel that is constantly changing shape and context. What begins as a stirring questioning of personal identity later evolves into a poignant meditation on the value of community, before transforming again into something entirely different. As with his previous novels, *Then We Came to the End* and *The Unnamed*, the paths of Joshua Ferris's narrative intentions are windy and at times unclear. But patient readers will find that when the author pulls the story from out of the woods, the things Ferris has to say about humanity are curiously and devastatingly observed. ---*Kevin Nguyen*

From Booklist
Ferris returns with his third novel, another dark comedy in the vein of his well-received debut, Then We Came to the End (2007). Paul O'Rourke is a Manhattan dentist so disillusioned with the world that he doesn't even like it when his favorite baseball team wins the World Series. More than anything else, he dislikes religion, other people, and the modern technology that forces him to interact with other people. He calls cell phones "me-machines" and nicknames one of his patients "Contacts" for texting during a procedure. That's why he and his staff are shocked when a website for their practice suddenly appears online. Soon after, a Facebook page pops up, followed by a Twitter profile, all impersonating Paul. Infuriated, he tracks down his imposter and uncovers a fringe religious sect that worships Amalek, the father of a biblical tribe destroyed by King David in a holy war. As he tries to recover his stolen identity, Paul begins to question who he really is. The protagonist's sharp inner dialogues are laugh-out-loud hilarious, combining Woody Allen's New York nihilism with an Ivy League vocabulary. The narrative occasionally stumbles and spins out in the novel's latter third, but Ferris' unique voice shines. --Adam Morgan

Review
"*To Rise Again at a Decent Hour* is beautifully written. It's also funny, thought-provoking, and touching. One hesitates to call it the *Catch-22* of dentistry, but it's sort of in that ballpark. Some books simply carry you along on the strength and energy of the author's invention and unique view of the world. This is one of those books."?***Stephen King***

"This is one of the funniest, saddest, sweetest novels I've read since *Then We Came to the End*. When historians try to understand our strange, contradictory era, they would be wise to consult *To Rise Again at a Decent Hour*. It captures what it is to be alive in early 21st-century America like nothing else I've read."?***Anthony Marra, author of New York Times bestseller A Constellation of Vital Phenomena***

"Gut-bustingly funny... its wit is so sharp, its fake-biblical texts ... so clever and its reach so big ... It's an eminently worthy nominee for the Booker Prize or any other... a major achievement."?***Janet Maslin, New York Times***

A "wry, intelligent novel that adroitly navigates the borderland between the demands of faith and the persistence of doubt...In seizing upon both the transitory oddities of contemporary life and our enduring search for meaning, Joshua Ferris has created a winning modern parable...He's a gifted satirist with a tender

heart, and if he continues to find targets as worthy as the ones he skewers here, his work should amuse and enlighten us for many years to come."?***Shelf Awareness***

"Enjoy the first great novel about social-media identity theft. . . . It's an atheist's pilgrimage in search not of God but of community . . . O'Rourke's search feels genuine, funny, tragic, and never dull. It'll also leave you flossing with a vengeance."?***Boris Kachka, GQ***

"[Ferris] shrewdly stages a kind of theological symposium in [an] uncomfortably intimate place, conducted halfway between levity and overeager sincerity... It's a pleasure watching this young writer confidently range from the registers of broad punchline comedy to genuine spiritual depth. The complementary notes of absurdity, alienation and longing read like Kurt Vonnegut or Joseph Heller customized for the 21st Century."?***Sam Sacks, The Wall Street Journal***

"A novel that raises questions about meaning and belonging, even if the only answer is that we will never know...This is the novel's peculiar brilliance, to uncover its existential stakes in the most mundane tasks...[a] curiously provocative novel."?***David L. Ulin, Los Angeles Times***

"*To Rise Again at a Decent Hour* reminds us that even existential suffering can prove both charming and hilarious...Ferris has written an arresting novel, a playfully ironic riff on how a man can come to know himself...the cumulative effect of the novel tugs the heart just as surely as it sparks the mind."?***Bruce Machart, Houston Chronicle***

"Brilliant...Ferris has managed to blend the clever satire of his first book...with the grinding despair of his second . . . The result is a witty story. At his best, which is most of the time, Ferris spins Paul's observations and reflections into passages of flashing comedy that sound like a stand-up theologian suffering a nervous breakdown."? ***Ron Charles, The Washington Post***

"An engrossing and hilariously bleak novel . . . This splintering of the self hasn't been performed in fiction so neatly since Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock*."?***John Freeman, Boston Globe***

"A story made exhilarating by Ferris' wickedly dark humor and keen intelligence. The brilliant prose...never preens. It simply pulls the reader along in an effortlessly smooth ride. Ferris makes the tug-of-war between Paul's searching mind and his low spirits utterly fascinating...Ferris' three novels place him in grand company among our younger novelists. . . . All the same, he's a unique American original."?***Dan Cryer, The San Francisco Chronicle***

"Ferris's trademark blend of dark satire and ominous absurdity suits his subject, and his focus on one character allows him to perform a psychological excavation of his subject in conjunction with his examination of modern life...The result is a stimulating, bittersweet read."?***Claire Fallon, The Huffington Post***

"The author has proved his astonishing ability to spin gold from ordinary air . . . Ferris's third novel falls somewhere between the voice-driven power of the first [novel] and the idea-driven metaphor of the second . . . [He] remains as brave and adept as any writer out there."? ***Lauren Goff, The New York Times Book Review***

"[An] alternately sad and hilarious new book...*To Rise Again at a Decent Hour* showcases the wit, intelligence and keen eye for workplace absurdity the author displayed to such great effect in his first novel . . . a welcome outlet for Ferris' enormous virtuosity as a philosopher and storyteller. Ferris raises profound

questions about the role of faith, not just in belonging, but in living."? **Daniel Akst,** ***Newsday***

"[Ferris has] the keen ability to traverse the high wire of satire and lyricism, to at once write a sentence that can drop a reader's jaw, then make them giggle in the next . . . a writer perfectly at ease with both the bleakly absurd and the deeply humane, using them equally in hopeful pursuit of a redemptive truth."?***Gregg LaGambina, The A.V. Club***

"Suffice it to say that *To Rise Again at a Decent Hour* isn't just one of the best novels of the year, it's one of the funniest, and most unexpectedly profound, works of fiction in a very long time."?***Michael Schaub, NPR.org***

"With almost Pynchon-esque complexity, Ferris melds conspiracy and questions of faith in an entertaining way...Full of life's rough edges, the book resists a neat conclusion, favoring instead a simple scene that is comic perfection... Smart, sad, hilarious and eloquent, this shows a writer at the top of his game and surpassing the promise of his celebrated debut."?***Kirkus (Starred Review)***

PRAISE FOR *THE UNNAMED*:
"A stunner, an unnerving portrait of a man stripped of civilization's defenses. Ferris's prose is brash, extravagant, and, near the end, chillingly beautiful."?***The New Yorker***

"Spellbinding....*The Unnamed* unfolds in a hushed, shadowed dimension located somewhere between myth and a David Mamet play."?***Laura Miller, Salon.com***

"Arresting, ground-shifting, beautiful and tragic. This is the book a new generation of writers will answer to. No one in America writes like this."?***Gary Shteyngart, author of Super Sad True Love Story and Little Failure***

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Annette Puente:

The guide untitled To Rise Again at a Decent Hour is the e-book that recommended to you you just read. You can see the quality of the e-book content that will be shown to an individual. The language that creator use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The copy writer was did a lot of analysis when write the book, therefore the information that they share to you personally is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of To Rise Again at a Decent Hour from the publisher to make you much more enjoy free time.

Lawanda Beverly:

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Marjorie Thompson:

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David Blunt:

In this particular era which is the greater individual or who has ability in doing something more are more special than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you have to do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of several books in the top record in your reading list will be To Rise Again at a Decent Hour. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking up and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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