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Rabbit Redux (Penguin Modern Classics)

Von John Updike

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Von John Updike : Rabbit Redux (Penguin Modern Classics) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rabbit Redux (Penguin Modern Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. adultery and gloom makes for a great novel!Von scottAh yes, how nice to settle in with another Rabbit novel by that patron-Saint of adultery John Updike. Here we meet a Rabbit (how sad that no one remembers or cares about his beloved nickname except Updike and us) ten years older, just as gloomy and perhaps more irascible and conservative.But I

always stand by my belief that Rabbit is more intelligent than everybody around him even when he is spouting nonsense. I have talked to a few people who think him stupid but I feel that he has a naturally expansive nature, and is not afraid to look at life at its ugliest and most awful. Of course Janice is back, and is presented as more complex and enigmatic, as she herself is involved in an affair with someone else. I thought Updike wrote of the relationship between Rabbit and his son wonderfully; one could sense acutely the admiration Nelson had for him, though at times it was difficult for them to relate. The relationship between Nelson and Rabbit reminded me of that of Peter and Caldwell in *The Centaur*. Beyond this there is a mad cast of characters and some scenes of absolutely high drama. Sad fires in the middle of the night, lessons dictated to Rabbit about the history of racism in America, stress between Rabbit and both his wife and his son, the troubled teenage girl who happens to fall into the picture and much more. I did not think this book a disappointment at all (in fact I applaud Updike's courage for attempting to follow up the brilliant *Rabbit, Run*) and also feel that this book has more narrative explosiveness and drama than did the earlier novel. It goes without saying that this book is written beautifully and filled with tons of images which my unartistic brain would never have dreamed of. From the enchanting opening scene of workers freshly emerging into the overwhelming daylight that renders them all looking like ghosts coming into focus, Updike proceeds to sprinkle the dialogue and narrative with bizarre images which compel one to stare at things anew, with wide-open eyes. It is in such little details that Updike exhibits his genius and original mind. If this were merely a novel "about life and love in America" I would have no interest in it whatsoever. The real beauty of the novel is simply Updike's shimmering prose and originality of textured thought (who else would describe a couple holding hands and walking away in the night as "a starfish leapt in the dark as they walked away" - such images make a novel).

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Documentary of a dysfunctional family Von A.J. Harry "Rabbit" Angstrom is the epitome of the guy who peaked in high school. His days of glory as a high school basketball star have dissolved into a mundane adulthood. "Rabbit Redux" opens in the summer of 1969, and while Apollo II is on its way to the moon, Ted Kennedy drives his car off a bridge on Chappaquiddick Island, nightly newscasts report death tolls in Vietnam, and race riots and war protests are blazing throughout the nation, Rabbit works solemnly as a typesetter at a printing plant. (Amusing samples of Rabbit's work are shown, including his occasional distraction-induced mistakes.) We see the development of Rabbit's relationships with his growing son Nelson, his dying mother, his doting father, and his aspiring actress sister Mim. Rabbit's wife Janice, stifled by their stagnant marriage, moves into the apartment of a man with whom she is having an affair. In the wake of her departure, Rabbit meets Skeeter, a militant black Vietnam vet, and Jill, a spoiled rich 18-year-old runaway. Jill moves into Rabbit's house and takes on an ambiguous daughter/lover role. Rabbit also reluctantly allows Skeeter, who has jumped bail on a drug possession charge, to take shelter in his house. An interesting set of archetypes is now thrust into close quarters: Rabbit's suburban apple green clapboard house representing middle class America; Rabbit, traditional average white American values; Jill, the younger white liberal (hippie) faction; and Skeeter, the black power movement. Skeeter engages Rabbit in heated debates about racism, slavery, and Vietnam, with Jill acting somewhat as a mediator. Rabbit spouts his opinions authoritatively but without much conviction. Possibly lacking the mental endurance to keep up with Skeeter's rhetoric, Rabbit's ideological conflict with Skeeter gradually gives way to concession. He learns to enjoy the presence of these two strangers in his house; it could be that Nelson, Jill, and Skeeter comprise the family he's always wanted. In his discussions with Rabbit and his lifestyle at the house, Skeeter emerges as the most complex character in the novel. Embodying the rage and confusion from centuries of oppression, he is alternately resentful, wily, domestic, pedantic, perverse, or paranoid, depending on the unpredictable trajectory of his disposition. He is as natural playing basketball with Nelson during the day as he is administering drugs to Jill in exchange for sexual favors at night. He caricatures himself as an ingratiating Uncle Tom in the presence of a cab driver, exhorts Rabbit and Nelson to read passages from his books aloud, and imagines himself a future messiah. As in "Rabbit, Run," there is a tragic climax, an event that brings this curious living arrangement to an abrupt end. As a sequel, "Rabbit Redux" reflects the time in which it was written more emphatically than "Rabbit, Run" did; the language is more explicit, the pacing is more frenetic, everybody seems just a little crazier as the country seems to be on the verge of self-destruction. Updike uses this point in history as a brilliant perspective through which to view the development of the Angstroms as characters.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Rabbit Redux is no Rabbit, Run. Von Ein Kunde I don't see why this book was a national bestseller. Rabbit, Run was a fascinating read, and that is why I felt compelled to read this book. However, I felt it was simply more of the same. Harry is confused, Janice is confused, and everyone else is unhappy. Rabbit Redux is a sad, sad book. How far can Rabbit sink? At first, I thought this book was about how he takes control of his life and refuses to be bullied anymore, but when I got to the end, I realized that he is simply a weak man, with no mind of his own. He cannot think for himself and can only go by what he has heard or seen from commentators on the news. He has been brought up to be close-minded, to think that war is good and that other races are bad. But once he lets a black semi-revolutionary named Skeeter into his life, he starts to change his way of thinking. Ordinarily, this would be good. However, in this situation, Rabbit has no grip on why he thinks the way that he does, and can only combat Skeeter's words with the weakest of arguments. By the end of Skeeter's involvement in the book, the reader is not sure whether Rabbit really believes in what Skeeter says, or if he just doesn't know what he himself thinks anymore. The author

goes a bit overboard with Skeeter's constant rantings against the whiteman, for whom he blames all of his troubles. The pages devoted to the black-white debate dragged on far too long to be of any meaningful impact, and could easily have been condensed. Finally, the development of the characters was a bit disappointing. None of their situations was ever brought to any sort of resolution. Mom and Pop Angstrom are left with their drab lives. Sister Mim continues on with her life as the easiest woman in California, after never fulfilling her dream of being an actress. Janice's lover, Charlie Stavros, is merely used as an excuse for Rabbit and Janice to break up and get back together again. Skeeter and Jill could easily have been developed more fully, but instead were exploited for their sexual curiosities and sicknesses, when they could have been used to give Rabbit a backbone and level-headed conviction through their thoughts and ways of acting, even though both are abhorribly disgusting at times. As stated earlier, Rabbit and Janice are just sad. You want to hate them, but in the end, you just pity them. They are the same losers they were in the first book. The only character with some potential is Nelson. Mocked by his grandmother, he has a good heart and is mature enough to take in all that has happened around him without snapping. Updike is still a master wordsmith in my view. His descriptive way of looking at even the simplest of things is unparalleled. He will amaze through mere words. That is why I read his books. But an objective reader would not say that this is a dazzling or brilliant portrait of Middle America, as one of the reviewers on the back cover suggested. Rabbit's average views may be that of Middle America's directionless and automaton-like Everyman, but the situations raised in the book are symptomatic of restless strife and rebellion against the hum-drum existence of everyday living. Then why do I read Updike? Because he has a unique perspective on everything, which he is all too eager to share with readers willing to receive it.

KurzbeschreibungIt's 1969, and the times are changing. America is about to land a man on the moon, the Vietnamese war is in full swing, and racial tension is on the rise. Things just aren't as simple as they used to be - at least, not for Rabbit Angstrom. His wife has left him with his teenage son, his job is under threat and his mother is dying. Suddenly, into his confused life - and home - comes Jill, an eighteen-year-old runaway who becomes his lover. But when she invites her friend to stay, a young black radical named Skeeter, the pair's fragile harmony soon begins to fail ...
...PressestimmenA masterpiece . . . Updike owns a rare verbal genius, a gifted intelligence and a sense of tragedy made bearable by wit.
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Anatole Broyard A superb performance, all grace and dazzle . . . a brilliant portrait of middle America.
LifeKurzbeschreibungIt's 1969, and the times are changing. America is about to land a man on the moon, the Vietnamese war is in full swing, and racial tension is on the rise. Things just aren't as simple as they used to be - at least, not for Rabbit Angstrom. His wife has left him with his teenage son, his job is under threat and his mother is dying. Suddenly, into his confused life - and home - comes Jill, an eighteen-year-old runaway who becomes his lover. But when she invites her friend to stay, a young black radical named Skeeter, the pair's fragile harmony soon begins to fail ...