



The Pale King

By David Foster Wallace

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The agents at the IRS Regional Examination Center in Peoria, Illinois, appear ordinary enough to newly arrived trainee David Foster Wallace. But as he immerses himself in a routine so tedious and repetitive that new employees receive boredom-survival training, he learns of the extraordinary variety of personalities drawn to this strange calling. And he has arrived at a moment when forces within the IRS are plotting to eliminate even what little humanity and dignity the work still has.

The Pale King remained unfinished at the time of David Foster Wallace's death, but it is a deeply compelling and satisfying novel, hilarious and fearless and as original as anything Wallace ever undertook. It grapples directly with ultimate questions--questions of life's meaning and of the value of work and society--through characters imagined with the interior force and generosity that were Wallace's unique gifts. Along the way it suggests a new idea of heroism and commands infinite respect for one of the most daring writers of our time.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Wallace's finest work as a novelist...when Wallace steers the tanker back to its theme--the struggle to extract meaning from each second that passes, no matter how empty or lonely or indistinguishable from the second that came before it--*The Pale King* achieves power levels that Wallace never reached in his first two novels....His ability to render the fine finials and fractals and flourishes of a mind acting upon itself, from moment to moment, using only the blunt, numb instruments of language, has few if any equals in American literature."? **Lev Grossman, TIME**

"Deeply sad, deeply philosophical...By turns breathtakingly brilliant and stupefying dull--funny, maddening and elegiac...in almost everything Wallace wrote, including THE PALE KING, he aimed to use words to lasso and somehow subdue the staggering, multifarious, cacophonous predicament that is modern American life."? **Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times**

"Feverishly encompassing, sharply comedic, and haunting...this is not a novel of defeat but, rather, of oddly heroic persistence....electrifying in its portrayal of individuals seeking unlikely refuge in a vast, absurd bureaucracy. In the spirit of Borges, Gaddis, and Terry Gilliam's *Brazil*, Wallace conducts a commanding and ingenious inquiry into monumental boredom, sorrow, the deception of appearances, and the redeeming if elusive truth that any endeavor, however tedious, however impossible, can become a conduit to enlightenment."? **Donna Seaman, Booklist (starred review)**

"Nothing short of sublime--the first two chapters are a real put-the-reader-on-notice charging bull blitz, and the David Foster Wallace sections....are tiny masterpieces....achingly funny...pants-pissingly hilarious."? **Publishers Weekly**

"One of the saddest and most lovely books I've ever read...Let's state this clearly: You should read THE PALE KING....You'll be [kept up at night] because D.F.W. writes sentences and sometimes whole pages that make you feel like you can't breathe."? **Benjamin Alsup, Esquire**

About the Author

David Foster Wallace was born in Ithaca, New York, in 1962 and raised in Illinois, where he was a regionally ranked junior tennis player. He received bachelor of arts degrees in philosophy and English from Amherst College and wrote what would become his first novel, *The Broom of the System*, as his senior English thesis. He received a masters of fine arts from University of Arizona in 1987 and briefly pursued graduate work in philosophy at Harvard University. His second novel, *Infinite Jest*, was published in 1996. Wallace taught creative writing at Emerson College, Illinois State University, and Pomona College, and published the story collections *Girl with Curious Hair*, *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, *Oblivion*, the essay collections *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again*, and *Consider the Lobster*. He was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, a Lannan Literary Award, and a Whiting Writers' Award, and was appointed to the Usage Panel for The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. He died in 2008. His last novel, *The Pale King*, was published in 2011.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Elizabeth Brown:

The guide with title The Pale King contains a lot of information that you can learn it. You can get a lot of advantage after read this book. This particular book exist new knowledge the information that exist in this publication represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to yo7u to understand how the improvement of the world. This particular book will bring you throughout new era of the the positive effect. You can read the e-book on your smart phone, so you can read the idea anywhere you want.

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Eric Sanders:

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