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The God I Want

Infinite Ground

The acclaimed author of *Jesus' Son* and *Already Dead* returns with a beautiful, haunting, and darkly comic novel. *The Name of the World* is a mesmerizing portrait of a professor at a Midwestern university who has been patient in his grief after an

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accident takes the lives of his wife and child and has permitted that grief to enlarge him. Michael Reed is living a posthumous life. In spite of outward appearances -- he holds a respectable university teaching position; he is an articulate and attractive addition to local social life -- he's a dead man walking. Nothing can touch Reed, nothing can move him, although he observes with a mordant clarity the lives whirling vigorously around him. Of his recent bereavement, nearly four years earlier, he observes, "I'm speaking as I'd speak of a change in the earth's climate, or the recent war." Facing the unwelcome end of his temporary stint at the university, Reed finds himself forced "to act like somebody who cares what happens to him. " Tentatively he begins to let himself make contact with a host of characters in this small academic town, souls who seem to have in common a tentativeness of their own. In this atmosphere characterized, as he says, "by cynicism, occasional brilliance, and small, polite terror," he manages, against all his expectations, to find people to light his way through his private labyrinth. Elegant and incisively observed, *The Name of the World* is Johnson at his best: poignant yet un sentimental, replete with the visionary imaginative detail for which his work is known. Here is a tour de force by one of the most astonishing writers at work today.

The Throne of the Third Heaven of the Nations Millennium General Assembly

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Tree of Smoke – the name given to a ‘psy op’ that might or might not be hypothetical and might or might not be officially sanctioned – is Denis Johnson’s most gripping, visionary and ambitious work to date. Set in south-east Asia and the US, and spanning two decades, it ostensibly tells the story of Skip Sands, a CIA spy who may or may not be engaged in psychological operations against the Viet Cong -- but also takes the reader on a surreal yet vivid journey, dipping in and out of characters’ lives to reveal fundamental truths at the heart of the human condition. ‘A Catch-22 for our times’ Alan Warner, Books of the Year, Observer ‘The God I want to believe in has a voice and a sense of humour like Denis Johnson’s’ Jonathan Franzen ‘An epic of drenched sensuality and absurdly chewable dialogue, as though Don DeLillo and Joseph Heller had collaborated on a Vietnam war novel’ Steven Poole, Books of the Year, New Statesman

The Incognito Lounge

Is humanity friend or foe? War, industrialization, technological advancement. It is a common transitional period, one that provides ample opportunity for a species to destroy itself. And thus far we have survived. Now, those that observe from afar are ready for us to take the next step. But first they must be certain of our suitability, and it all comes down to one thing. Sometimes those you hate and fear the most are those you need the most. A space odyssey of earthly and alien conspiracy.

Fiskadoro

Adam Gordon is a brilliant, if highly unreliable, young American poet on a prestigious fellowship in Madrid, struggling to establish his sense of self and his relationship to art. What is actual when our experiences are mediated by language, technology, medication, and the arts? Is poetry an essential art form, or merely a screen for the reader's projections? Instead of following the dictates of his fellowship, Adam's "research" becomes a meditation on the possibility of the genuine in the arts and beyond: are his relationships with the people he meets in Spain as fraudulent as he fears his poems are? A witness to the 2004 Madrid train bombings and their aftermath, does he participate in historic events or merely watch them pass him by? In prose that veers between the comic and tragic, the self-contemptuous and the inspired, *Leaving the Atocha Station* is a portrait of the artist as a young man in an age of Google searches, pharmaceuticals, and spectacle. Born in Topeka, Kansas, in 1979, Ben Lerner is the author of three books of poetry *The Lichtenberg Figures*, *Angle of Yaw*, and *Mean Free Path*. He has been a finalist for the National Book Award and the Northern California Book Award, a Fulbright Scholar in Spain, and the recipient of a 2010-2011 Howard Foundation Fellowship. In 2011 he became the first American to win the Preis der Stadt Münster für Internationale Poesie. *Leaving the Atocha Station* is his first novel.

Hystopia

A New York Times Notable Book for 2011 One of The Economist's 2011 Books of the Year One of NPR's 10 Best Novels of 2011 Denis Johnson's *Train Dreams* is an epic in miniature, one of his most evocative and poignant fictions. Robert Grainer is a day laborer in the American West at the start of the twentieth century—an ordinary man in extraordinary times. Buffeted by the loss of his family, Grainer struggles to make sense of this strange new world. As his story unfolds, we witness both his shocking personal defeats and the radical changes that transform America in his lifetime. Suffused with the history and landscapes of the American West—its otherworldly flora and fauna, its rugged loggers and bridge builders—the new novella by the National Book Award-winning author of *Tree of Smoke* captures the disappearance of a distinctly American way of life.

Angels

Eleven stories narrated by a young recovering alcoholic, whose dependency has led him to crime, cruelty, and loss in the Midwest, depict the disparity of emotions that constitute the American experience.

Jesus' Son

The Veil

'A dazzling and savage first novel' New York Times Angels tells the story of two born losers. Jamie has ditched her husband and is running away with her two baby girls. Bill is dreaming of making it big in a life of crime. They meet on a Greyhound bus and decide to team up. So begins a stunning, tragic odyssey through the dark underbelly of America - the bars, bus stations, mental wards and prisons that play host to Jamie and Bill as they find themselves trapped in a downward spiral through rape, alcohol, drugs and crime, to madness and death. From the author of Tree of Smoke, winner of the National Book Award for Fiction

The Son

Rheinhardt, a disk jockey and failed musician, rolls into New Orleans looking for work and another chance in life. What he finds is a woman physically and psychically damaged by the men in her past and a job that entangles him in a right-wing political movement. Peopled with civil rights activists, fanatical Christians, corrupt politicians, and demented Hollywood stars, A Hall of Mirrors vividly depicts the dark side of America that erupted in the sixties. To quote Wallace Stegner, "Stone writes like a bird, like an angel, like a circus barker, like a con man, like

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someone so high on pot that he is scraping his shoes on the stars."

Tree of Smoke

Resuscitation of a Hanged Man is Denis Johnson's most fully realized novel to date, an enthralling and shattering reading experience, which probes the mysteries of faith, hope and love.

Jesus' Son

From the award-winning poet and novelist—a must-have collection of his four previous books of poetry plus a selection of new, unpublished work.

Train Dreams

Every writer knows that as rewarding as the creative process is, it can often be a bumpy road. Have hope and keep at it! Designed to kick-start creativity, this handbook from the executive director of National Novel Writing Month gathers a wide range of insights and advice for writers at any stage of their career. From tips about how to finally start that story to helpful ideas about what to do when the words just aren't quite coming out right, Pep Talks for Writers provides motivation,

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encouragement, and helpful exercises for writers of all stripes.

The Solitary Journey Home

Once upon a time there was a war . . . and a young American who thought of himself as the Quiet American and the Ugly American, and who wished to be neither, who wanted instead to be the Wise American, or the Good American, but who eventually came to witness himself as the Real American and finally as simply the Fucking American. That's me. This is the story of Skip Sands—spy-in-training, engaged in Psychological Operations against the Vietcong—and the disasters that befall him thanks to his famous uncle, a war hero known in intelligence circles simply as the Colonel. This is also the story of the Houston brothers, Bill and James, young men who drift out of the Arizona desert into a war in which the line between disinformation and delusion has blurred away. In its vision of human folly, and its gritty, sympathetic portraits of men and women desperate for an end to their loneliness, whether in sex or death or by the grace of God, this is a story like nothing in our literature. *Tree of Smoke* is Denis Johnson's first full-length novel in nine years, and his most gripping, beautiful, and powerful work to date. *Tree of Smoke* is the 2007 National Book Award Winner for Fiction.

Soul of a Whore and Purvis

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A National Book Award Finalist, Sarah Shun-lien Bynum's enchanting and inventive first novel is a groundbreaking, contemporary classic. When a girl falls into a mysterious, impenetrable sleep, the borders between her provincial French village and the peculiar, beguiling realm of her dreams begin to disappear: A fat woman sprouts delicate wings and takes flight; a failed photographer stumbles into the role of pornographer; a beautiful young wife grows to resemble her husband's viol. Madeleine, the dreamer, travels in their midst, trying to make sense of her own metamorphosis. She leaves home, joins a gypsy circus, and falls into an unexpected triangle of desire and love. Embracing the earthy and the ethereal, the comical and the poignant, *Madeleine Is Sleeping* is part fairy tale, part coming-of-age story, and above all, an adventure in the discovery of art, sexuality, community, and the self.

Already Dead

Set in Nicaragua in 1984, *The Stars at Noon* is a story of passion, fear, and betrayal told in the voice of an American woman whose mission in Central America is as shadowy as her surroundings. Is she a reporter for an American magazine as she sometimes claims, or a contact person for Eyes of Peace? And who is the rough English businessman with whom she becomes involved? As the two foreigners become entangled in increasingly sinister plots, Denis Johnson masterfully dramatizes a powerful vision of spiritual bereavement and corruption.

Resuscitation of a Hanged Man

This magnificent novel by one of America's finest writers is the epic of one man's remarkable journey, set in nineteenth-century America against the background of a vanishing people and a rich way of life. At the age of twelve, under the Wind moon, Will is given a horse, a key, and a map, and sent alone into the Indian Nation to run a trading post as a bound boy. It is during this time that he grows into a man, learning, as he does, of the raw power it takes to create a life, to find a home. In a card game with a white Indian named Featherstone, Will wins – for a brief moment – a mysterious girl named Claire, and his passion and desire for her spans this novel. As Will's destiny intertwines with the fate of the Cherokee Indians – including a Cherokee Chief named Bear – he learns how to fight and survive in the face of both nature and men, and eventually, under the Corn Tassel Moon, Will begins the fight against Washington City to preserve the Cherokee's homeland and culture. And he will come to know the truth behind his belief that “only desire trumps time.” Brilliantly imagined, written with great power and beauty by a master of American fiction, *Thirteen Moons* is a stunning novel about a man's passion for a woman, and how loss, longing and love can shape a man's destiny over the many moons of a life. From the Hardcover edition.

Matterhorn

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"Jesus' Son "is a visionary chronicle of dreamers, addicts, and lost souls. These stories tell of spiraling grief and transcendence, of rock bottom and redemption, of getting lost and found and lost again. The raw beauty and careening energy of Denis Johnson's prose has earned this book a place among the classics of twentieth-century American literature.

Syllabus of Errors

The lives of Skip Sands, a spy-in-training engaged in psychological operations against the Vietcong, and brothers Bill and James Houston, young men who drift out of the Arizona desert into a war, intertwine in a compelling novel of America during the Vietnam War.

The Laughing Monsters

THE NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER NOW A MAJOR TV SERIES starring Pierce Brosnan and co-written by Philipp Meyer The critically acclaimed, New York Times-bestselling epic, a saga of land, blood and power, follows the rise of one unforgettable Texas family from the Comanche raids of the 1800s to the oil booms of the 20th century. Eli McCullough is just twelve years old when a marauding band of Comanche storm his Texas homestead, brutally murder his mother and sister

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and take him captive. Despite their torture and cruelty, Eli - against all odds - adapts to life with the Comanche, learning their ways and language, taking on a new name, finding a place as the adopted son of the band's chief and fighting their wars against not only other Indians but white men too, which complicates his sense of loyalty, his promised vengeance and his very understanding of self. But when disease, starvation and westward expansion finally decimate the Comanche, Eli is left alone in a world in which he belongs nowhere, neither white nor Indian, civilized nor fully wild. Deftly interweaving Eli's story with those of his son Peter and his great-granddaughter JA, *The Son* maps the legacy of Eli's ruthlessness, his drive to power and his lifelong status as an outsider, even as the McCullough family rises to become one of the richest in Texas, a ranching and oil dynasty that is as resilient and dangerous as the land they claim. Yet, like all empires, the McCulloughs must eventually face the consequences of their choices. Panoramic, deeply evocative and utterly transporting, *The Son* is a masterpiece American novel - part epic of Texas, part classic coming-of-age story - that combines the narrative prowess of Larry McMurtry with the knife-edge sharpness of Cormac McCarthy. 'Stunning a book that for once really does deserve to be called a masterpiece' Kate Atkinson 'Magnificent McCarthy's Border Trilogy is a point of reference, as is *There Will Be Blood*, but it is not fanciful to be reminded of certain passages from *Moby-Dick* - it's that good' *The Times* 'Brilliant a wonderful novel' Lionel Shriver

The Stars at Noon

Originally published: United Kingdom: Atlantic Books, 2016.

The Largesse of the Sea Maiden

Twenty-five years after *Jesus' Son*, a haunting new collection of short stories on mortality and transcendence, from National Book Award winner and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist Denis Johnson NATIONAL BESTSELLER • NAMED ONE OF THE TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Dwight Garner, *The New York Times* • Maureen Corrigan, NPR's *Fresh Air* • *Chicago Tribune* • *Newsday* • *New York* • *AV Club* • *Publishers Weekly* "Ranks with the best fiction published by any American writer during this short century."—*New York* "A posthumous masterpiece."—*Entertainment Weekly* NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *The New York Times Book Review* • *The Washington Post* • NPR • *The Boston Globe* • *New York Public Library* • *Kirkus Reviews* • *Bloomberg* *The Largesse of the Sea Maiden* is the long-awaited new story collection from Denis Johnson. Written in the luminous prose that made him one of the most beloved and important writers of his generation, this collection finds Johnson in new territory, contemplating the ghosts of the past and the elusive and unexpected ways the mysteries of the universe assert themselves. Finished shortly before Johnson's

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death, this collection is the last word from a writer whose work will live on for many years to come. Praise for *The Largesse of the Sea Maiden* “An instant classic.”—*Newsday* “Exceptional luminosity . . . hits a powerful vein.”—*The New York Times Book Review* “Grace and oblivion are inextricably yoked in these transcendent stories. . . . [Johnson’s] gift is to extract the beauty in all that brokenness.”—*The Wall Street Journal* “Nobody ever wrote like Denis Johnson. Nobody ever came close. . . . We’re just left with this miraculous book, these perfect stories, the last words from one of the world’s greatest writers.”—NPR

Inner Weather

Angels puts Jamie Mays--a runaway wife toting along two kids--and Bill Houston--ex-Navy man, ex-husband, ex-con--on a Greyhound bus for a dark, wild ride cross country. Driven by restless souls, bad booze, and desperate needs, Jamie and Bill bounce from bus stations to cheap hotels as they ply the strange, fascinating, and dangerous fringe of American life. Their tickets may say Phoenix, but their inescapable destination is a last stop marked by stunning violence and mind-shattering surprise. Denis Johnson, known for his portraits of America's dispossessed, sets off literary pyrotechnics on this highway odyssey, lighting the trek with wit and a personal metaphysics that defiantly takes on the world.--Amazon.com.

Pep Talks for Writers

Intense, powerful, and compelling, *Matterhorn* is an epic war novel in the tradition of Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead* and James Jones's *The Thin Red Line*. It is the timeless story of a young Marine lieutenant, Waino Mellas, and his comrades in Bravo Company, who are dropped into the mountain jungle of Vietnam as boys and forced to fight their way into manhood. Standing in their way are not merely the North Vietnamese but also monsoon rain and mud, leeches and tigers, disease and malnutrition. Almost as daunting, it turns out, are the obstacles they discover between each other: racial tension, competing ambitions, and duplicitous superior officers. But when the company finds itself surrounded and outnumbered by a massive enemy regiment, the Marines are thrust into the raw and all-consuming terror of combat. The experience will change them forever. Written by a highly decorated Marine veteran over the course of thirty years, *Matterhorn* is a spellbinding and unforgettable novel that brings to life an entire world—both its horrors and its thrills—and seems destined to become a classic of combat literature.

The Smoke at Dawn

A reissuing of *The Incognito Lounge*, poetry by Denis Johnson.

Seek

Jesus' Son

A new collection of poetry from the winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award . . . we are fixed to perpetrate the species— I meant perpetuate—as if our duty were coupled with our terror. As if beauty itself were but a syllabus of errors. Troy Jollimore's first collection of poems won the National Book Critics Circle Award, was hailed by the New York Times as "a snappy, entertaining book," and led the San Francisco Chronicle to call him "a new and exciting voice in American poetry." And his critically acclaimed second collection expanded his reputation for poems that often take a playful approach to philosophical issues. While the poems in *Syllabus of Errors* share recognizable concerns with those of Jollimore's first two books, readers will also find a voice that has grown more urgent, more vulnerable, and more sensitive to both the inevitability of tragedy and the possibility of renewal. Poems such as "Ache and Echo," "The Black-Capped Chickadees of Martha's Vineyard," and "When You Lift the Avocado to Your Mouth" explore loss, regret, and the nature of beauty, while the culminating long poem, "Vertigo," is an elegy for a lost friend as well as a fantasia on death, repetition, and transcendence (not to mention the poet's favorite Hitchcock film). Ingeniously organized into sections

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that act as reflections on six quotations about birdsong, these poems are themselves an answer to the question the poet asks in "On Birdsong": "What would we say to the cardinal or jay, / given wings that could mimic their velocities?"

The Name of the World

From the National Book Award-winning, bestselling author of *Tree of Smoke* comes a provocative thriller set in the American West. *Nobody Move*, which first appeared in the pages of *Playboy*, is the story of an assortment of lowlifes in Bakersfield, California, and their cat-and-mouse game over \$2.3 million. Touched by echoes of Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett, *Nobody Move* is at once an homage to and a variation on literary form. It salutes one of our most enduring and popular genres—the American crime novel—but with a grisly humor and outrageousness that are Denis Johnson's own. Sexy, suspenseful, and above all entertaining, *Nobody Move* shows one of our greatest novelists at his versatile best.

A Hall of Mirrors

Twenty-five years after *Jesus' Son*, a haunting new collection of short stories on mortality and transcendence, from National Book Award winner and two-time Pulitzer Prize finalist Denis Johnson NATIONAL BESTSELLER * NAMED ONE OF THE

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TEN BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY Dwight Garner, The New York Times * Chicago Tribune * Newsday * Vulture * AV Club * Publishers Weekly "Ranks with the best fiction published by any American writer during this short century."--New York "A posthumous masterpiece."--Entertainment Weekly NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY The New York Times Book Review * The Washington Post * NPR * New York Public Library * Kirkus Reviews The Largesse of the Sea Maiden is the long-awaited new story collection from Denis Johnson. Written in the luminous prose that made him one of the most beloved and important writers of his generation, this collection finds Johnson in new territory, contemplating the ghosts of the past and the elusive and unexpected ways the mysteries of the universe assert themselves. Finished shortly before Johnson's death, this collection is the last word from a writer whose work will live on for many years to come. Praise for The Largesse of the Sea Maiden "An instant classic."--Newsday "Exceptional luminosity . . . hits a powerful vein."--The New York Times Book Review "Grace and oblivion are inextricably yoked in these transcendent stories. . . . [Johnson's] gift is to extract the beauty in all that brokenness."--The Wall Street Journal "Nobody ever wrote like Denis Johnson. Nobody ever came close. . . . We're just left with this miraculous book, these perfect stories, the last words from one of the world's greatest writers."--NPR "Johnson offers visions and sadness and laughter. But it's the sentences--those adamantine, poetic sentences--that made him one of America's great and lasting writers. It's the sentences that live on."--The Boston Globe "Johnson's fiction . . . overflows with creative energy, moving from one

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beauty to another with a mercurial, at times almost chaotic grace."--Chicago Tribune "Sly, open-ended, and meticulously wise . . . [Johnson] is a writer whose ambitions were in their own way as broad and burgeoning as Dostoyevsky's. He is for all time."--Rachel Kushner, Bookforum

Out Stealing Horses

When the ringleader of a group of former college friends dies suddenly, the survivors gather at his Catskills estate to memorialize his life, pitting Iraq war protestor Ned against his wife, who believes that the deceased did not truly value Ned's friendship.

Tree of Smoke

Two plays—hilarious and searing in equal measure—by one of our most essential and original authors In his poetry, short stories, novels, and plays, the National Book Award-winning author Denis Johnson has explored the story of America—especially of the West, land of self-made men and self-perpetuating myths—with searing honesty and genuine sympathy. These two plays, written in verse at once hypnotic and clear, confirm his position as one of our great verbal stylists and a literary conscience for our times. In *Soul of a Whore*, a lively cast of

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characters—faith healers, pimps, strippers, actual demons—converge, with unexpected hilarity, as Bess Cassandra awaits execution for the murder of her infant daughter. Purvis's seven reverse-chronological scenes catalog the fall and rise of Melvin Purvis, the G-man who brought down John Dillinger and Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd. Johnson takes us from Washington's back rooms to a Midwestern cornfield, dramatizing the seductive allure of power and our own human capacity for both pettiness and grace. In these furiously entertaining, occasionally terrifying works, Johnson chronicles and questions America's myths, heroes, and everyday realities with verve and elegance, revealing himself once again to be at the height of his linguistic and insightful powers.

Angels

We were going out stealing horses. That was what he said, standing at the door to the cabin where I was spending the summer with my father. I was fifteen. It was 1948 and one of the first days of July. Trond's friend Jon often appeared at his doorstep with an adventure in mind for the two of them. But this morning was different. What began as a joy ride on "borrowed" horses ends with Jon falling into a strange trance of grief. Trond soon learns what befell Jon earlier that day—an incident that marks the beginning of a series of vital losses for both boys. Set in the easternmost region of Norway, *Out Stealing Horses* by Per Petterson begins with an ending. Sixty-seven-year-old Trond has settled into a rustic cabin in an

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isolated area to live the rest of his life with a quiet deliberation. A meeting with his only neighbor, however, forces him to reflect on that fateful summer.

Nobody Move

Summer, 1863- The Federal triumph at Vicksburg has secured complete control of the vital Mississippi River from the Confederacy. Under the now-proven leadership of Ulysses Grant, the victorious Federal army moves eastward, intent on the capture of the rail hub of Chattanooga, with the eventual goal of a march on Atlanta. But the Confederate forces are not yet defeated. Under General Braxton Bragg, the Confederates stun the Federal army with a bloody victory at the Battle of Chickamauga. The Federal commander there, William Rosecrans, leads a chaotic retreat back into Tennessee, where the Federal army soon finds itself besieged at Chattanooga. A disgusted Abraham Lincoln implores Grant to break the siege, and if successful, continue the strategy of crushing Bragg's army. Arriving in Chattanooga, Grant begins the campaign that will break the South's grip with an audacious attack driven by the zeal of the Federal soldiers themselves- the first in a series of triumphant victories that will drive the Confederates back to their great stronghold of Atlanta. The primary voices from the Northern side include Generals Grant, William T. Sherman, and George Thomas and a young lieutenant named Sammie Willis. The voices of the Southern side include Generals Bragg, Patrick Cleburne, James Longstreet, and a young cavalry lieutenant, James Seeley, who

rides with Nathan Bedford Forrest.

Shoppers

Part political disquisition, part travel journal, part self-exploration, *Seek* is a collection of essays and articles in which Denis Johnson essentially takes on the world. And not an obliging, easygoing world either; but rather one in which horror and beauty exist in such proximity that they might well be interchangeable. Where violence and poverty and moral transgression go unchecked, even unnoticed. A world of such wild, rocketing energy that, grasping it, anything at all is possible. Whether traveling through war-ravaged Liberia, mingling with the crowds at a Christian Biker rally, exploring his own authority issues through the lens of this nation's militia groups, or attempting to unearth his inner resources while mining for gold in the wilds of Alaska, Johnson writes with a mixture of humility and humorous candor that is everywhere present. With the breathtaking and often haunting lyricism for which his work is renowned, Johnson considers in these pieces our need for transcendence. And, as readers of his previous work know, Johnson's path to consecration frequently requires a limning of the darkest abyss. If the path to knowledge lies in experience, *Seek* is a fascinating record of Johnson's profoundly moving pilgrimage.

Madeleine Is Sleeping

Hailed by the New York Times as "wildly ambitious" and "the sort of book that a young Herman Melville might have written had he lived today and studied such disparate works as the Bible, 'The Wasteland,' Fahrenheit 451, and Dog Soldiers, screened Star Wars and Apocalypse Now several times, dropped a lot of acid and listened to hours of Jimi Hendrix and the Rolling Stones," Fiskadoro is a stunning novel of an all-too-possible tomorrow. Deeply moving and provocative, Fiskadoro brilliantly presents the sweeping and heartbreaking tale of the survivors of a devastating nuclear war and their attempts to salvage remnants of the old world and rebuild their culture.

Subtle Bodies

Jesus' Son is a visionary chronicle of dreamers, addicts, and lost souls. These stories tell of spiraling grief and transcendence, of rock bottom and redemption, of getting lost and found and lost again. The raw beauty and careening energy of Denis Johnson's prose has earned this book a place among the classics of twentieth-century American literature.

Thirteen Moons

A contemporary noir, *Already Dead* is the tangled story of Nelson Fairchild Jr., disenfranchised scion to a northern California land fortune. A relentless failure, Nelson has botched nearly every scheme he's attempted to pull off. Now his future lies in a potentially profitable marijuana patch hidden in the lush old-growth redwoods on the family land. Nelson has some serious problems. His marriage has fallen apart, and he may lose his land, cash and crop in the divorce. What's more, in need of some quick cash, he had foolishly agreed to smuggle \$90,000 worth of cocaine through customs for Harry Lally, a major player in a drug syndicate. Chickening out just before bringing the drugs through, he flushed the powder. Now Lally wants him dead, and two goons are hot on his trail. Desperate, terrified and alone, for Nelson, there may be only one way out. This is Denis Johnson's biggest and most complex book to date, and it perfectly showcases his signature themes of fate, redemption and the unraveling of the fabric of today's society. *Already Dead*, with its masterful narrative of overlapping and entwined stories, will further fuel the acclaim that surrounds one of today's most fascinating writers.

Tree of Smoke

Denis Johnson's New York Times bestseller, *The Laughing Monsters*, is a high-

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suspense tale of kaleidoscoping loyalties in the post-9/11 world that shows one of our great novelists at the top of his game. Roland Nair calls himself Scandinavian but travels on a U.S. passport. After ten years' absence, he returns to Freetown, Sierra Leone, to reunite with his friend Michael Adriko. They once made a lot of money here during the country's civil war, and, curious to see whether good luck will strike twice in the same place, Nair has allowed himself to be drawn back to a region he considers hopeless. Adriko is an African who styles himself a soldier of fortune and who claims to have served, at various times, the Ghanaian army, the Kuwaiti Emiri Guard, and the American Green Berets. He's probably broke now, but he remains, at thirty-six, as stirred by his own doubtful schemes as he was a decade ago. Although Nair believes some kind of money-making plan lies at the back of it all, Adriko's stated reason for inviting his friend to Freetown is for Nair to meet Adriko's fiancée, a grad student from Colorado named Davidia. Together the three set out to visit Adriko's clan in the Uganda-Congo borderland—but each of these travelers is keeping secrets from the others. Their journey through a land abandoned by the future leads Nair, Adriko, and Davidia to meet themselves not in a new light, but rather in a new darkness.

The Largesse of the Sea Maiden

LONGLISTED FOR THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE At the bitter end of the 1960s, after surviving multiple assassination attempts, President John F. Kennedy is entering his

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third term in office. The Vietnam War rages on, and the president has created a vast federal agency, the Psych Corps, dedicated to maintaining the nation's mental hygiene by any means necessary. Soldiers returning from the war have their battlefield traumas "enfolded"—wiped from their memories through drugs and therapy—while veterans too damaged to be enfolded roam at will in Michigan, evading the government and reenacting atrocities on civilians. This destabilized version of American history is the vision of twenty-two-year old Eugene Allen, who has returned from Vietnam to write the book-within-a-book at the center of *Hystopia*. In conversation with some of the greatest war narratives, from Homer's *Iliad* to the Rolling Stones' "Gimme Shelter," David Means channels the voice of Allen, the young veteran out to write a novel that can bring honor to those he fought with in Vietnam while also capturing the tragic history of his own family. The critic James Wood has written that Means's language "offers an exquisitely precise and sensuous register of an often crazy American reality." In *Hystopia*, his highly anticipated first novel, David Means brings his full talent to bear on the crazy reality of trauma, both national and personal. Outlandish and tender, funny and violent, timely and historical, *Hystopia* invites us to consider whether our traumas can ever be truly overcome. The answers it offers are wildly inventive, deeply rooted in its characters, and wrung from the author's own heart.

Leaving the Atocha Station

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"Perfection is not the basis of what I'm talking about," says a member of the Cassandra family, which forms the center of Denis Johnson's plays, *Hellhound on My Trail* and *Shoppers Carried by Escalators Into the Flames*. The character could be speaking for his creator, because human imperfection is one of Denis Johnson's specialties -- in his critically acclaimed novels, short stories, and nonfiction, and, now, in two brilliant new plays. These two works present a dramatized field guide to some of the more dysfunctional and dysphoric inhabitants of the American West: a sexual-misconduct investigator who misconducts herself sexually; a renegade Jehovah's Witness who supports his splinter Jehovean group by dealing drugs; the Cassandra Brothers and their father and their grandmother, thrown together at a family reunion/wedding/melee at their shabby homestead in Ukiah, California. When *Shoppers Carried by Escalators Into the Flames* was performed in San Francisco in 2001, the *Chronicle* said, There's an enormous appeal in Johnson's bleak-comic vision of a semi-mythic American West. That appeal derives from the author's perfect vision of imperfection, embodied with such energy and courage in these marvelous pieces of theatre.

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