



No More Mr. Nice Guy

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Frank Ritz is a television critic. His partner, Melissa Paul, is the author of pornographic novels for liberated women. He watches crap all day; she writes crap all day. It's a life. Or it was a life. Now they're fighting, locked in oral combat. He won't shut up, and she's putting her finger down her throat again. So there's only one thing to do: Frank has to go.

But go where? And do what? Frank Ritz has been in heat more or less continuously since he could speak his own name. Let him out of the house and his first instinct is to go looking for sex. Deviant sex, treacherous sex, even conventional sex, so long as it's immoderate-he's never been choosy. But what happens when sex is all you know and yet no longer what you want?

Praise from the UK for *No More Mr. Nice Guy*:

"Brilliant and funny...No More Mr. Nice Guy shows invention on every page, every paragraph. Jacobson is unique."-*Evening Standard*

"A very funny, very intelligent novel...How many of [Jacobson's] contemporaries have described the male condition with such wry, unsparing honesty?"-*Sunday Telegraph*

No More Mr. Nice Guy Details

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Author : Howard Jacobson

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From Reader Review No More Mr. Nice Guy for online ebook

Pete Wyeth says

A depressing grubby read. Frank is a sex addict how enjoys nothing in life. Not even sex. He goes from woman to woman moaning and whinging all the way. He is such boring and horrible company you'll be sick of him by page 50.

I don't know if the authors intention was to highlight a slow descent into degeneracy that comes with age. I don't really care. Germaine Greer said this novel is "one way a woman can learn what a man feels when he's making love to her". I can assure you it is not.

I enjoyed some of the turns of phrase. The writing was quite good and some of the scenes were amusing in a bleak way but don't expect to be charmed here.

Bob says

Jacobson's work in this story recalls for me the picaresque sexuality of a J.P. Donleavy tale and the soft porn ("the soft gartery sadism", as Jacobson puts it) of a Philip Roth novel, as the author's creation, Frank Ritz, bumbles through an adult rite of passage.

"When you are used to mental turbulence, and even have come to love the noise it makes, come to recognise it as a sign that you are intellectually alive, how do you go about silencing it without feeling that you have immured or even damaged your best self?" asks Frank.

The novel's excellent concluding sentence may not provide Frank clear instruction, but it does transform the story into a love story, from one of confused self love and self loathing.

Steve Petherbridge says

Frank Ritz is a middle aged television critic, probably going through a mid-life crisis, coming to terms with an existence where he is becoming invisible to the opposite sex and becoming less virile with a reduced libido. His partner, Melissa Paul, is the author of pornographic novels for very, very liberated women. He, as he describes his work, watches crap all day; she, alternatively, writes crap all day. It's something of a life. Or it was a life. He describes his past exploits quite graphically, so, be warned. By exploits, I mean those of the horizontal jogging or swinging out of the chandelier variety. Frank has turned 50 and believes that he is on a downward slide. We real over-fifties know differently....er... don't we? Frank and Mel are permanently fighting, locked in oral combat to go with their amoral relationship to date. He won't shut the f*** up and she is putting her finger down her throat again. So there's only one thing for it - Frank has to flee, or, rather he is told to flee! But go where? And do what? He embarks on a symbolic search for himself and a new path, sometimes revisiting old comrades and venues of past exploits. "Frank Ritz has been on heat more or less continuously since he could speak his own name. Let him out of the house and his first instinct is to go looking for sex. Deviant sex, treacherous sex, even straight sex, so long as it's immoderate - he's never been choosy. But what happens when sex is all you know but no longer what you want?" This is his crisis. This is the bridge he must cross. I found it an easy read, treating it as a satire of man, middle-aged, mid-life, adrift, in the extreme. Frank's brain has always been in his dick, as it is with many of us, though hopefully not as

simplistically so in most of us. But, what happens when that brain is entering a state of dementia? There is a kind of redemption and enlightenment discovered in the end, the reader thinks! A good laugh. Yes, we men can laugh at ourselves, but, don't tell the ladies!

Wileyacez says

When I was able to get into the satirical/humorous mode, I enjoyed this book a lot. Trouble was, there were times when I started to take it seriously, which ruined the fun! Frank is a walking boner--his whole life is about screwing women. He is completely (and hilariously) unable to understand why anyone else would have problems with this--notably his fiance, Mel, and his best friend. His fiance just happens to write erotic feminstia porn and keeps him under control by rubbing his nose in all of his sexual perversions by indulging him until he becomes disgusted by the perversions. The book starts when Mel kicks Frank out. From there he goes on a journey across Englad to revisit sites of past sexual adventures. Add to the mix that Frank is now 50-years-old and finally ageing out of on-demand sex. Frank simply lives in a ludicrous world of his own imagination and indulgence. Because the book is all-Frank all the time, it got to be a bit much by the end.

Frank Callaghan says

I picked this book up, quite randomly as a 3 for 2 deal, knowing nothing about the author, but noting the sticker on the front cover that said, 'Winner of the Mann Booker Prize'. Prompted by this I started reading. I had forgotten that I had read The Finkler Question by Jacobson, which was the book that won the award. Deceptive little trap on the sticker on the cover!! Another small attraction was that it was for sale, wrapped in sealed cellophane and signed by the author. Trivial, I know, but it makes you pick it up!

Had I stopped reading it before the final 2 chapters I would have given it 1 star. Had there been more writing like the final 2 chapters I would have given it 4 stars, maybe 5.

Here is an author who can write, no doubting this. His style is intellectually strong, and when it comes to humour and wit, his writing is often genuinely very funny. I have to admit, I did laugh. Not just smile, but laugh. So what's the problem?

If the competition was to see how many times he can use the 'F' word, and the 'C' word, on one page, or in one paragraph, or indeed in one sentence, then here you have a winner. If you want to have revealed the absolute detail of every sexual act undertaken by this man and have it grahically described to you, then here you certainly have it. If however you are likey to find that page after page of this material becomes at best boring, then here here you will have a book that quickly turns you off.

I am not prudish. It wasn't that it was offensive, although many might readily find it to be so, but it was gratuitous, unnecessary, extreme, unpleasant.

And yet, it was often witty. When I then got to the final 2 chapters, much of what had luridly been described before fell into place and became resolved, and I did find those last 2 chapters very clever and well written. But to get there I wonder, did he have to be quite so explicit? Did that gain him anything other than knowing that he has an extensive knowledge of sexual words and practices. I sense not.

Ryan Dash says

Did not finish. While great care was clearly given to the diction, it was too clunky for me. And the intense sense of jadedness was not promising for the rest of the book.

Akash says

I apparently mistook this book for the more popular *No More Mr. Nice Guy!* by Robert Glover.

I had read many recommendations for the Glover book and was looking forward to reading it. Throughout reading this book I was actively searching for the wisdom that others claimed they got from the book.

Zilch. Nada. Barely any relevant information that I was looking for when I bought this book. I still decided to stick through it assuming that there will be a grand reveal and I'll get some sort of an epiphany. Nope.

Having finished a book that I thought would help me out and having not found that help I jumped on to the internet to do a "post-mortem" of what I read. I actually felt that I was not smart enough to identify the metaphorical, subtle and inconspicuous message that this book had within it. Lo! and behold! I read the wrong fucking book.

So much for trying to wade my way through references that are both irrelevant and obscure to me. I still don't know if this book is above me to be able to grasp, if it has the plot or prose that only a Britisher can relate to or if it is just trash.

I'm leaning towards the last assumption.

Gwen says

As we follow Frank Ritz on his journey of exploration, we learn a great deal about him. Frank does what anyone thrown out of their house/dissmissed from a relationship would do: retrace his steps from some of his happier moments as a youth. We see Frank's younger self, through reminiscence, as well as his contemporary self. Sadly, the years do not seem to have had added much maturity to Frank, or maybe it's just that men really do ruminate about sex and female body parts all the time, and the rest of us just don't know that. A man would likely read this novel differently than I did, finding himself nodding --in agreement? in disbelief? --where I was bobbing in astonishment.

Tracy Towley says

I have read some really awful books this year, but until *No More Mr. Nice Guy* I'd managed to trudge all the way through to the end of them. It blows my mind that the author won the Man Booker prize (for another book). I cannot imagine this guy writing anything that's even worth staying awake to read, let alone worthy of a prize.

The protagonist is going through a mid-life crisis, and so he decides to track down a series of women he's had mostly unsatisfying sexual relationships with over the years. I've read other reviews that took issue with the cussing. Being 1/3 sailor myself, I didn't mind that, and I wasn't put off by the graphic sexual details either - though they were plentiful.

What did put me off, and eventually led to me putting the book down, was that this guy could write about

such sensational stuff, and somehow the result is one of the most boring books I've ever read. Seriously, a snooze fest. The writing was dull and rambling. Even the 'shocking' parts were dully told. I made it more than halfway through the book and I do not feel even the tiniest bit guilty for not finishing it. Good riddance.

Kent Winward says

Fifty year old Frank isn't doing so hot. Jacobson's novel is more mid-life meltdown than crisis. Having been made stupid by sex for his younger years, Frank, even with his ebbing libido, seems most comfortable being ridiculous in the sexual realm. As with all Jacobson's novels, the ridiculous and comic merge with the sublime to explore loss in all its facets.

John Neil says

A review comparing this favourably with my least favourite Philip Roth novel (Sabbath's Theatre) possibly ensured the same fate - boredom. Both say something about male preoccupation with sex but the topic is perhaps not interesting enough to sustain a novel. This is at least shorter.

Darryl says

Frank is a 50 year old British television critic, who has just left his partner, a highly dysfunctional author of feminist porn plagued by bulimia and neuroses. He is literally a talking and breathing penis, whose thoughts about having sex are interrupted only by eating, sleeping and other necessary bodily functions. He returns to Oxford and other towns where his sexual conquests as an adolescent and young man took place, but to his apparent surprise, he cannot relive the past. The novel is well written, but incredibly juvenile, vulgar and boring, and it may well be the worst book I've read this year.

Jeffrey Hart says

I liked this novel better than The Finkler Question, although it has some of the same problems: a self-loathing Jewish character, other people who are equally difficult to identify with, strange British yiddishisms, and lots of senseless extramarital sex. The main character is a TV critic who hates popular culture of all kinds and who is having trouble with his marriage. Totally driven by thoughts of sex, he has trouble staying focused on anything. When he gets tossed out of his house, he goes on a strange quest to the garden spots of England. In the end, he seems to find himself, but I won't tell you how.

Kameswari says

sigh. a book from a woman's point of view about men, written by a man. just wish it hadn't been so fractured in places.

B. says

It took a lot of effort to make it through this novel. I wanted to like it for it's witty and provocative nature and subject but I found myself merely disgusted. I was intrigued to read about a humorous but intelligent look into the "male condition" but I found myself simply put off by the profuse use of misogyny and view that all women are "cunts." It is troubling to think that anyone would consider this the male condition. Even if it is a humorous take on the subject, it is not a very good one. I expected better.
