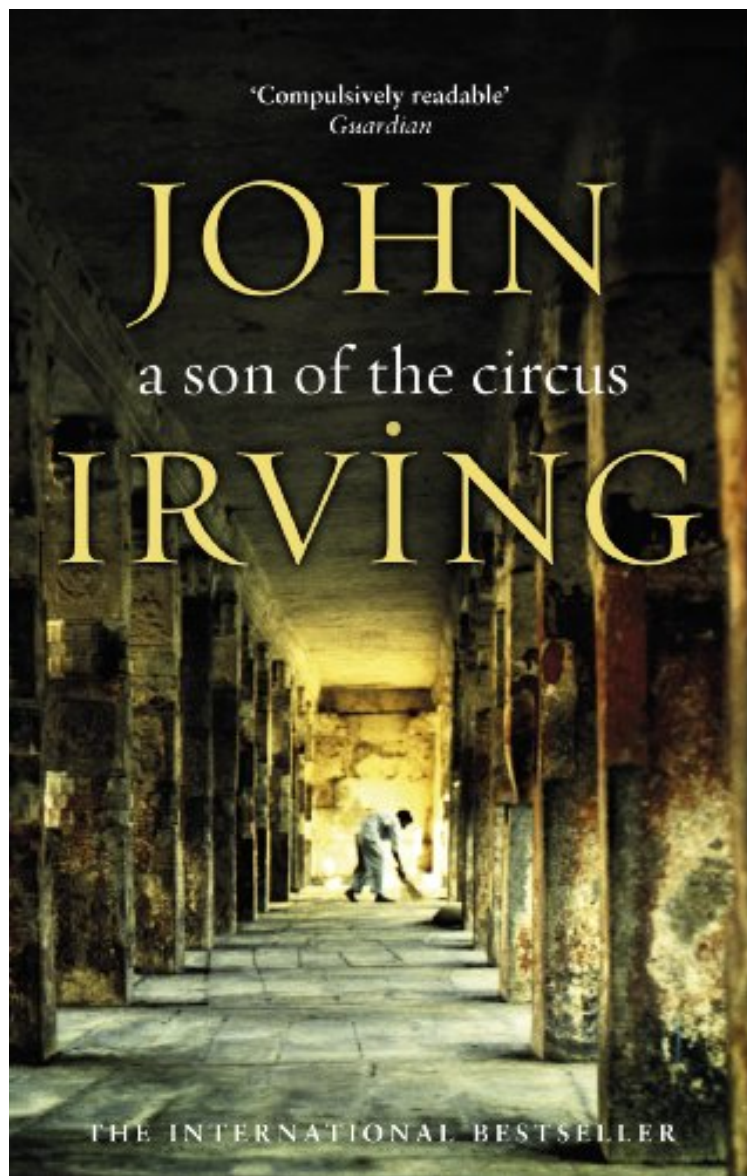


[Read ebook] A Son Of The Circus

A Son Of The Circus

Von John Irving

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Von John Irving : A Son Of The Circus before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Son Of The Circus:

Kurzbeschreibung 'The doctor was fated to go back to Bombay; he would keep returning again and again - if not forever, at least for as long as there were dwarves in the circus.' Born a Parsi in Bombay, sent to university and medical school in Vienna, Dr Farrokh Daruwalla is a Canadian citizen - a 59-year-old orthopaedic surgeon, living in Toronto. Once, twenty years ago, Dr Daruwalla was the examining physician of two murder victims in Goa. Now, two decades later, the doctor will be reacquainted with the murderer... From Publishers Weekly

Though there are flashes here of the dramatic verve of *The World According to Garp* and *Cider House Rules*, Irving's long-awaited eighth novel is generally a tedious affair: rambling; lacking suspense; devoid of energetic or lyric prose; sometimes verging on farce and other times almost as lethargic as the sultry atmosphere of Bombay, where it is set. Here Irving is concerned again with people who do not feel at home in the world: immigrants, social outcasts, pariahs because of physical handicaps, those uncomfortable with their sexual orientation. The characters include a Bombay-born physician and secret screenwriter who feels as much a foreigner in India as he does in his new home, Toronto; a movie star who is synonymous with the role he plays; his twin brother, who aspires to be a priest but doubts his vocation; assorted circus performers, dwarfs and cripples, prostitutes, transsexuals, policemen, Hollywood figures, a blonde American hippie, Jesuit missionaries and more sad folk teeming with strange quirks and shameful secrets. The plot revolves around the murders of prostitutes by a transsexual serial killer, who carves a winking elephant on their bodies, and the legacies from the past that bring the main characters to the hunt for the murderer. The hefty narrative gives Irving plenty of room to speculate on outcasts of all kinds, the volatility of sexual identity, the false lure of organized religion, the insidious evil of class distinctions, the chasm between appearance and reality. For those looking for his trademark leitmotifs, Irving provides two: falling into the net and allowed to use the lift. He titillates by equipping a character with a giant dildo. He includes a strange homage to novelist James Salter. His attempt to provoke readers into empathy for humanity's lost souls is admirable, but his novel does not engage the reader until the last hundred pages, and that may not be soon enough to satisfy those yearning for a seductive story. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Booklist Irving's eighth novel is a feast. Picking up stylistically where *A Prayer for Owen Meany* (1989) left off, Irving has perfected his impressive narrative skills and launched into unexpected territory: a murder mystery rife with antic sexuality and set in the seething city of Bombay, home of India's film industry (Bollywood), hoards of street urchins and prostitutes, and the last tattered remnants of British colonialism. Irving achieves an almost Dickensian richness with his cast of vivid and eccentric characters, loopy yet converging plot lines, moral underpinning, and predicaments both hilarious and wrenching. Dr. Farrokh Daruwalla, a dreamy fellow at home neither in his native city of Bombay, nor his adopted domicile, Toronto, is at the heart of this dynamic universe. When in Bombay, Daruwalla indulges his peculiar passions for collecting blood from dwarfs (to study their genes) and for going to the circus. When he isn't occupied with these amusements or practicing medicine, the good but distracted doctor is busy writing the screenplays for an egregious yet wildly popular series of films featuring the hero Bombay loves to hate, the sneering Inspector Dhar. The enigmatic star of these provoking movies is a magnet for trouble in the form of a dangerous admirer who has transformed himself from a boy into what passes as a woman. Dhar's life is further complicated by the arrival of his heretofore unknown identical twin. Irving's nimble humor springs from compassionate insights into cultural and sexual confusion and alienation, baffling questions of faith and purpose, and the kind of hope that thrives in even the most jaded atmosphere. Donna Seaman