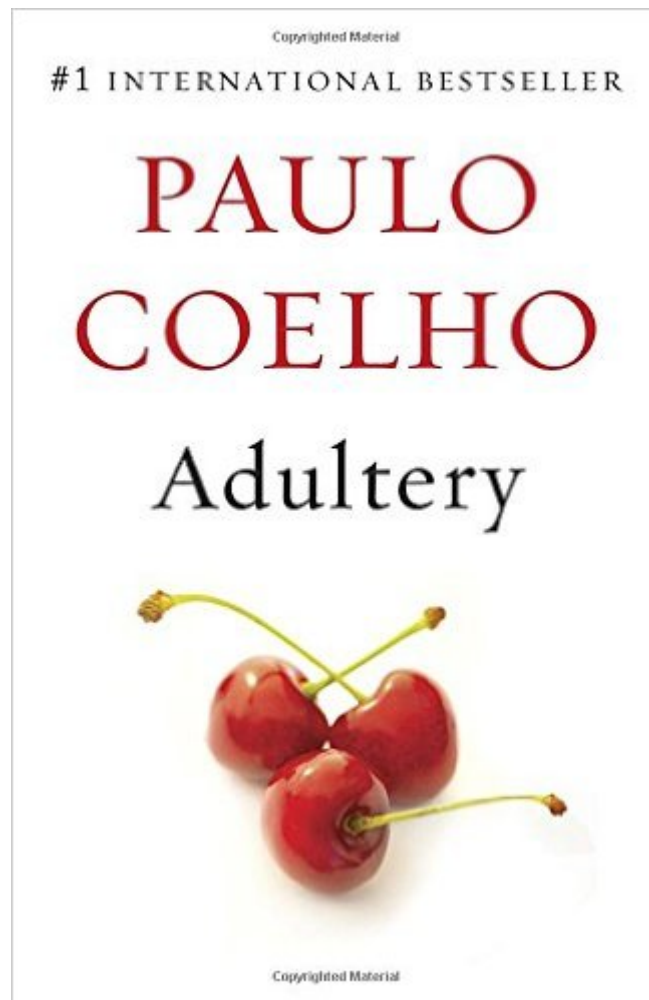


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Adultery (Vintage International)



Synopsis

I want to change. I need to change. I'm gradually losing touch with myself. *Adultery*, the provocative new novel by Paulo Coelho, best-selling author of *The Alchemist* and *Eleven Minutes*, explores the question of what it means to live life fully and happily, finding the balance between life's routine and the desire for something new.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It would be easy to assume this is simply a book about sex and adultery. But people often misunderstand the depths of those things, and thus this is a book of deeper allure and meaning. This is a story about a woman mad with loneliness and boredom and disconnection, driven to the brink and willing to risk it all to find something more "adventure, passion, redemption, herself. She is not someone you will admire, and she will seem at times superficial and disgusting, but you will understand her. And despite her wealth and ugliness, despite her weakness, her indiscretion, her bizarre thinking, you might just learn something from her. And that is why this is a book for anyone in a relationship. What relationship doesn't get ugly at times? What Coelho does so brilliantly in "Adultery" is pace its story with its main character's life, struggles, and personality. And so it feels a bit boring and stifled at first, then it shocks and overreacts, then it has trouble finding itself, and then, finally, after all those relationship troubles and veiled justifications, it lifts and soars. For these reasons, people will want to stop reading when it feels slow, trite, or impossible. But there is danger in putting a Coelho book down, for in the end he always surprises us and teaches us.

Anyone in love or after love can learn something from this book. Here are my favorite quotes: "Today I am a woman torn between the terror that everything might change and the equal terror that everything might carry on exactly the same for the rest of my days." "Apathy. Pretending to be happy, pretending to be sad, pretending to have an orgasm, pretending to be having fun, pretending that you've slept well, pretending that you're alive."

To say this is a book about a woman committing adultery is to miss the whole point of the story I feel. Linda lives in Switzerland with her husband and two children - none of whom are ever named. She has a good life, and an interesting job as a journalist and as a family they are financially secure with domestic staff to look after the children and do the housework. Who could want anything more from life? But Linda is restless and bored. It would be all too easy to dismiss Linda as shallow but she is far more than that. I'm sure many readers will put the book down in disgust saying she should count her blessings and no one could want more in life. Things are not as simple as that. Linda feels she is plodding along from day to day with nothing exciting in her life - everything is just dull. She wonders if she is depressed but she doesn't think she is. She wonders whether she needs to see a psychiatrist but doesn't think that will work either. It must be difficult to empathise with Linda unless you yourself have felt that sort of restlessness. I have felt it and it resulted in me turning my life upside down and doing some things which maybe were not a good idea though they seemed the only right thing to do at the time. What lesson you take from this strangely absorbing book - because there are lessons to be learned from it even if your life in no way resembles Linda's - are always going to be personal. But what I think is important is to not let yourself slip into a rut because if you get in too deep then the only way out is going to be to upend your life and those of the people you love.

The message of this book is clear. Feed your inner child in a healthy manner or suffer the consequences. My name is Firecat Hat. As a writer, I make a point of reviewing wonderful books by wonderful writers. Paolo Coelho is at the head of my list. I therefore read 'Adultery,' in three days. It was enlightening. And as I reflect on it, as I try to sum up this book, I see something about it worth mentioning right off the bat. And that is this. This book tends to defy categories. That is to say, this book is rather independent in its subject matter. It is broad, and - as might be expected by Paolo Coelho - has philosophical tones running underneath it all the way. But, besides that fact, what is Coelho's 'Adultery' really about? Is it about a woman on the verge of a nervous breakdown? Is it about mental illness? Is it about adultery, that taboo subject we find ugly? A subject we would like to

avoid? As I reflect on these pages, I ask myself: what is this story about, really? Well, this book, lets put it this way, lets us into the life of someone who will open up to us far more than most of our friends and family members will. The main character is telling us her story as far as she can. I don't even think she could tell her psychotherapist about her life as honestly as she can us, the readers of this book. And so the book is interesting because we are really seeing someone. A lot of people will be mad at this person because she is an adulteress. I can understand that. And that is natural from reading this book, because at times one does just shake their head and think 'Boy, she's quite lost.' But that's exactly the point.

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