



**The Best a Man Can Get:
a novel of fatherhood and
its discontents**

By John O'Farrell

A hilarious and touching debut novel—in the seriocomic Nick Hornby tradition—that demonstrates why marriage, fatherhood, and maturity don't always arrive on a synchronized schedule.

Michael Adams is a composer of advertising jingles who shares a flat with three other men in their late twenties. Days are spent lying in bed, playing computer and musical trivia games, and occasionally doing a spot of work. And, when he feels like it, he crosses the river and goes back to his unsuspecting wife and children. For Michael is living a double life. He escapes from the exhausting misery of babies by telling his wife he has to pull an all-nighter at work or travel away on business. And while she is valiantly coping on her own, he is just a few miles away in his male paradise, doing all the stupid, pointless, gloriously enjoyable stuff that most men with small children can only dream about. He thinks he can lead this double life indefinitely, until the inevitable slip exposes him and threatens to blow his marriage to kingdom come.

Available at Wayne in Fiction



Cheaper by the Dozen

By Frank Gilbreth

What do you get when you mix a blunt-talking, famous efficiency-expert father and a brilliant, compassionate psychologist mother with twelve rambunctious offspring of various sizes? You get one of America's all-time best-loved memoirs! The hilarious story of growing up Gilbreth has already delighted generations of readers—and it remains as joyous and exuberant as ever. Laugh along with the adventures of the large, irrepressible family unit that redefined the term—and proved the old adage, the more the merrier ... and scarier!

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Biography

Say When

By Elizabeth Berg

Griffin is a happy man. Settled comfortably in a Chicago suburb, he adores his 8-year-old daughter, Zoe, and his wife, Ellen—shy, bookish Ellen, who is as dependable as she is dependent on him for his stability and his talent for gently controlling the world they inhabit. But when he wakes one morning to hear of his wife's love affair with another man and her request for a divorce, Griffin's view of life is irrevocably altered. Overnight he goes from being Ellen's husband to being her roommate, from a lover to a man denied passion and companionship. Now he must either move on or fight for his marriage, forgive his wife or condemn her for her betrayal, deny or face up to his part in the sudden undoing of his seemingly perfect life.

**Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction,
Large-Type and Audio-CD**



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**Fathers
&
Fatherhood**



"To become a father is not hard,
to be a father is, however."

~ Wilhelm Busch

When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years.

~ Mark Twain, "Old Times on the Mississippi" *Atlantic Monthly*, 1874



A Tree Grows in Brooklyn

By Betty Smith

Francie Nolan, avid reader, penny-candy connoisseur, and adroit observer of human nature, has much to ponder in colorful, turn-of-the-century Brooklyn. She grows up with a sweet, tragic father, a severely realistic mother, and an aunt who gives her love too freely—to men, and to a brother who will always be the favored child. Francie learns early the meaning of hunger and the value of a penny. She is her father's child—romantic and hungry for beauty. But she is her mother's child, too—deeply practical and in constant need of truth. Like the Tree of Heaven that grows out of cement or through cellar gratings, resourceful Francie struggles against all odds to survive and thrive. Betty Smith's poignant, honest novel created a big stir when it was first published over 50 years ago. Her frank writing about life's squalor was alarming to some of the more genteel society, but the book's humor and pathos ensured its place in the realm of classics—and in the hearts of readers, young and old.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Fiction and Audio-CD

Shipping News

By Annie Proulx

When Quoyle's two-timing wife, Petal, meets her just desserts, he retreats with his two daughters to his ancestral home on the starkly beautiful Newfoundland coast, where a rich cast of local characters and family members all play a part in Quoyle's struggle to reclaim his life. As Quoyle confronts his private demons—and the unpredictable forces of nature and society—he begins to see the possibility of love without pain or misery.

Available at Wayne in Fiction and Audio-CD

Joe's War: My Father Decoded

By Annette Kobak

Raising his family in Britain during the Cold War, Joe Kobak was frequently in ill temper and given to oppressive silences. As she reached late middle age, his daughter, Annette, found she needed to pierce the veil of secrecy surrounding him—the result is this unusual, and unusually personal, account of WWII. The story belongs equally to father and daughter, as the author forges a new intimacy with Joe and receives an accelerated dose of recent European history. A Czech living in Poland when hostilities began, Joe was a bright young man with a technical cast of mind and a tenacious memory. During the war, he smuggled people out of Poland, was strafed by German fighters during the fall of France, and relayed intercepted German radio transmissions to British code breakers. Kobak uses her investigations into these experiences as an occasion to document one of the many tragedies of WWII—the prewar and wartime betrayal of the smaller Eastern European countries by France and Great Britain. Along the way we learn of the heroes of prewar Czechoslovakia, Masaryk and Beneš, and of the deep enmity between Poland and the Ukraine. Kobak interpolates a diplomatic history of the 1930s and early 1940s with her father's adventures in Eastern Europe and her own as she retraced some of Joe's wartime travels in 2001. Part memoir, part Joe's first-person narrative, part historical account, the book violates genre boundaries—but it is precisely this lack of affectedness, couched in graceful, perceptive writing, that makes it such an engrossing and informative work.

Available at Wayne in Biography

Big Russ and Me: father and son:

lessons on life

By Tim Russert

The author offers a memoir of life with his father, a proud World War II veteran, describing growing up in 1950s Buffalo, the influence of his Catholic upbringing, and the importance of hard work, responsibility, and patriotism.

Available at Wayne & Preakness in Biography, Large-Type and on Audio-Cassette



Lost Men

By Brian Leung

Leung gingerly reacquaints an estranged father and son who travel through China in this sagacious and lyrical debut novel. When Westen Chan's American mother died, his Chinese father, Xin, left him with his Caucasian great-aunt and uncle in rural Washington State, promising one day to return and take his son on a journey to Xin's village in China. More than 20 years have passed when Xin's invitation finally arrives. Westen is 32, but in many ways still childlike: insecure, resentful and stubborn. A virgin, he at least partially blames his romantic difficulties, with both men and women, on being abandoned by his father. Xin, now elderly, ill and trying to cope with his own guilt, is unsure if he can reconnect with his son. The two haltingly reintroduce and explain themselves, and while on the trip, Xin confides in Westen about the hardship he left behind in his village and shares ancient traditions. The stories of the two men, told in an alternating first person, become increasingly gripping: "Be careful about judging people without knowing all their history," says Xin, who also bears an unopened letter from Westen's mother to her son. Throughout, Leung handles the complex father-son relationship with care, and does a marvelous job negotiating the two men's fraught cultural and emotional legacies.

Available at Wayne in Fiction

