

## The Humbling Philip Roth

The Breast Reading Myself and Others The Humbling Indignation The Ghost Writer The Great American Novel A Bright and Guilty Place The Humbling The Breast The American Trilogy, 1997-2000 Zuckerman Bound The Counterlife Nemesis The Human Stain The Dying Animal Portnoy's Complaint Novels 2001-2007 The Humbling Everyman Zuckerman Bound The Facts Exit Ghost Deception Operation Shylock Our Gang Patrimony Nemeses Shop Talk The Anatomy Lesson Goodbye, Columbus Sabbath's Theater When She Was Good Letting Go The Professor of Desire La humillación A Fanatic Heart I Married a Communist A Philip Roth Reader Leaving a Doll's House The Humbling

### The Breast

A chronicle of the passion and desire of David Kepesh and of his endeavors, from adolescent accession to middle-aged ebb, to realize and sustain, with dignity, erotic happiness and domestic security

### Reading Myself and Others

Patrimony, a true story, touches the emotions as strongly as anything Philip Roth has ever written. Roth watches as his eight-six-year-old father—famous for his vigor, his charm, and his repertoire of Newark recollections—battles with the brain tumor that will kill him. The son, full of love, anxiety, and dread, accompanies his father through each fearful stage of his final ordeal, and, as he does so, discloses the survivalist tenacity that has distinguished his father's long, stubborn engagement with life. Philip Roth is hailed by many as the reigning king of American fiction. Winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, this memoir about love, survival and memory is one of his most intimate books, but also one of his most intellectually vigorous. Patrimony is Roth's elegy to his father, written with piercing observation and wit at the height of his literary prowess.

### The Humbling

Roth comments, in selected interviews, articles, and essays, on the origins and developments of his five most recent books and on key preoccupations, preferences, experiences, and enthusiasms in his written and unwritten worlds

### Indignation

## **The Ghost Writer**

Simon Axler is one of America's leading classical stage actors, but his talent - his magic - has deserted him. All the spontaneity and unthinking impulsiveness that made him great has been replaced by a paralysing self-consciousness. Overwhelmed, Axler's wife promptly leaves him, and Axler checks into a psychiatric hospital. It is only when he begins an affair with Pegeen - formerly a lesbian of 17 years - that Axler's regeneration (and then his final catastrophe) can begin.

## **The Great American Novel**

In this memoir of personal discovery, loss and renewal, Claire Bloom looks beyond the stage and unveils her true identity. One of the most beautiful and gifted actresses of her generation, Claire Bloom's achievements in theatre and television have been celebrated throughout the world. Bloom traces her fatherless years in the 1930s to her apprenticeship in the British theatre and her rise as an actress in Charles Chaplin's *Limelight* before she was 20. She recounts professional and personal relationships with Laurence Olivier, John Gielgud, Anthony Hopkins and Paul Schofield, and tells of her long entanglement with Richard Burton. She recalls failed marriages to Rod Steiger and Hillard Eskins, and the book concludes with a stark account of the most important relationship of her life, with writer Philip Roth.

## **A Bright and Guilty Place**

Philip Roth's new novel is a candidly intimate yet universal story of loss, regret, and stoicism. The best-selling author of *The Plot Against America* now turns his attention from "one family's harrowing encounter with history" (*New York Times*) to one man's lifelong skirmish with mortality. The fate of Roth's everyman is traced from his first shocking confrontation with death on the idyllic beaches of his childhood summers, through the family trials and professional achievements of his vigorous adulthood, and into his old age, when he is rended by observing the deterioration of his contemporaries and stalked by his own physical woes. A successful commercial artist with a New York ad agency, he is the father of two sons from a first marriage who despise him and a daughter from a second marriage who adores him. He is the beloved brother of a good man whose physical well-being comes to arouse his bitter envy, and he is the lonely ex-husband of three very different women with whom he's made a mess of marriage. In the end he is a man who has become what he does not want to be. The terrain of this powerful novel -- Roth's twenty-seventh book and the fifth to be published in the twenty-first century -- is the human body. Its subject is the common experience that terrifies us all. *Everyman* takes its title from an anonymous fifteenth-century allegorical play, a classic of early English drama, whose theme is the summoning of the living to death.

## **The Humbling**

A ferocious political satire in the great tradition, *Our Gang* is Philip Roth's brilliantly indignant response to the phenomenon of Richard M. Nixon. In the character of Trick E. Dixon, Roth shows us a man who outdoes the severest cynic, a peace-loving Quaker and believer in the sanctity of human life who doesn't have a problem with killing unarmed women and children in self-defense. A master politician with an honest sneer, he finds himself battling the Boy Scouts, declaring war on Pro-Pornography Denmark, all the time trusting in the basic indifference of the voting public.

### **The Breast**

The death of his mistress sends Mickey Sabbath, an audacious libertine and onetime puppeteer, on a psychic journey into his past, in a comic novel by the PEN/Faulkner Award-winning author of *Operation Shylock*. National ad/promo.

### **The American Trilogy, 1997-2000**

A collection of three novels written in the author's sixties and seventies includes "The Plot Against America," which envisions a rise in anti-Semitism when Charles A. Lindbergh is elected president.

### **Zuckerman Bound**

Against the backdrop of the Korean War, a young man faces life's unimagined chances and terrifying consequences. It is 1951 in America, the second year of the Korean War. A studious, law-abiding, intense youngster from Newark, New Jersey, Marcus Messner, is beginning his sophomore year on the pastoral, conservative campus of Ohio's Winesburg College. And why is he there and not at the local college in Newark where he originally enrolled? Because his father, the sturdy, hard-working neighborhood butcher, seems to have gone mad -- mad with fear and apprehension of the dangers of adult life, the dangers of the world, the dangers he sees in every corner for his beloved boy. As the long-suffering, desperately harassed mother tells her son, the father's fear arises from love and pride. Perhaps, but it produces too much anger in Marcus for him to endure living with his parents any longer. He leaves them and, far from Newark, in the midwestern college, has to find his way amid the customs and constrictions of another American world. *Indignation*, Philip Roth's twenty-ninth book, is a story of inexperience, foolishness, intellectual resistance, sexual discovery, courage, and error. It is a story told with all the inventive energy and wit Roth has at his command, at once a startling departure from the haunted narratives of old age and experience in his recent books and a powerful addition to his investigations of the impact of American history on the life of the vulnerable individual.

### **The Counterlife**

David Kepesh wakes up one morning in the hospital, mysteriously altered. Through an endocrinopathic catastrophe of unprecedented proportions, he has been transformed into a 155-pound human female breast. Railing at the incomprehensible, he uses his intelligence to deny and resist the thing he has become. Ultimately, he must accept his fate. Philip Roth's *The Breast* is a funny, fantastical story and a bizarre yet daring exploration of sex and subjectivity.

### **Nemesis**

An anthology of selections from eight of Philip Roth's early novels, with a definitive version of *The Breast* and the previously uncollected story *Novotny's Pain*, alongside the essay-story *Looking At Kafka*.

### **The Human Stain**

After eleven years of solitude working on his New England mountain as a writer, Nathan Zuckerman returns to New York to confront a turbulent city in the wake of September 11, as well as the aging Amy Bellette, one-time muse to his first literary hero, E.I.

### **The Dying Animal**

Novelist Nathan Zuckerman challenges the many schemes concocted by the people around him for reversing their seemingly irreversible destinies, in this exploration of the mind of modern Israel and anti-Semitism in establishment England, and of the passion for self-transformation and the hunger for political power.

### **Portnoy's Complaint**

The legendary author's essays and interviews explore how fellow writers from Milan Kundera to Edna O'Brien are influenced by time, place, and politics. Writers are often deeply influenced by the time and place in which they live and write. In *Shop Talk*, Philip Roth, winner of a National Book Award, a Pulitzer Prize, and numerous other literary honors, explores the intimate relationship a writer's experience has with his or her work. In a series of essays, Roth recounts his intellectual encounters with writers, discussing with them the diverse regions from which they hail and pondering the influence of locale, politics, and history on their work. Featuring luminaries such as Milan Kundera discussing Czechoslovakia; Primo Levi talking about Auschwitz; Edna O'Brien reflecting on Ireland; Isaac Bashevis Singer tackling Warsaw; Aharon Appelfeld on Bukovina; and Ivan Klíma on Prague, Roth's conversations touch on the conditions that inspire great art, with artists as attuned to the subtleties of their societies as they are to the nuances of words. Also including a portrait of Bernard Malamud, a

written exchange with Mary McCarthy about Roth's *The Counterlife*, and the essay "Rereading Saul Bellow," *Shop Talk* is a "fascinating [glimpse] of some of the deans of postwar literature" (*Los Angeles Times Book Review*).

### **Novels 2001-2007**

David Kepesh is white-haired and over sixty, an eminent TV culture critic and star lecturer at a New York college, when he meets Consuela Castillo, a decorous, well-mannered student of twenty-four, the daughter of wealthy Cuban exiles, who promptly puts his life into erotic disorder. Since the sexual revolution of the 1960s, when he left his wife and child, Kepesh has experimented with living what he calls an "emancipated manhood," beyond the reach of family or a mate. Over the years he has refined that exuberant decade of protest and license into an orderly life in which he is both unimpeded in the world of eros and studiously devoted to his aesthetic pursuits. But the youth and beauty of Consuela, "a masterpiece of volupté" undo him completely, and a maddening sexual possessiveness transports him to the depths of deforming jealousy. The carefree erotic adventure evolves, over eight years, into a story of grim loss. What is astonishing is how much of America's post-sixties sexual landscape is encompassed in *THE DYING ANIMAL*. Once again, with unmatched facility, Philip Roth entangles the fate of his characters with the social forces that shape our daily lives. And there is no character who can tell us more about the way we live with desire now than David Kepesh, whose previous incarnations as a sexual being were chronicled by Roth in *THE BREAST* and *THE PROFESSOR OF DESIRE*. A work of passionate immediacy as well as a striking exploration of attachment and freedom, *THE DYING ANIMAL* is intellectually bold, forcefully candid, wholly of our time, and utterly without precedent--a story of sexual discovery told about himself by a man of seventy, a story about the power of eros and the fact of death.

### **The Humbling**

'The comedy of neuroses, as Roth practices it, has much of the elegance of an 18th-century comedy of manners, but it also allows itself plenty of latitude. *ZUCKERMAN UNBOUND* has room for farce, when Zuckerman spends a night with an Irish film star whose steady lover is Fidel Castro; as well as for a full, accomplished treatment of a grim routine, the death of a Jewish father. But mainly it has one great comic character, the sad and threatening Alvin Pepler, ex-Marine and ex-TV celebrity, now alleging the theft of his private hang-ups, which are on the same lines as Portnoy's, for use in the famous novel. In this chapter Dickens and Waugh live again' *LONDON REVIEW OF BOOKS*.

### **Everyman**

In this funny and chilling novel, the setting is a small town in the 1940s Midwest, and the subject is the heart of a wounded

and ferociously moralistic young woman, one of those implacable American moralists whose "goodness" is a terrible disease. When she was still a child, Lucy Nelson had her alcoholic failure of a father thrown in jail. Ever since then she has been trying to reform the men around her, even if that ultimately means destroying herself in the process. With his unerring portraits of Lucy and her hapless, childlike husband, Roy, Roth has created an uncompromising work of fictional realism, a vision of provincial American piety, yearning, and discontent that is at once pitiless and compassionate.

### **Zuckerman Bound**

In 'the stifling heat of equatorial Newark', a terrifying epidemic is raging, threatening the children of the New Jersey city with maiming, paralysis, life-long disability, even death. This is the startling and surprising theme of Roth's wrenching new book: a wartime polio epidemic in the summer of 1944 and the effect it has on a closely-knit, family-oriented Newark community and its children. At the centre of *Nemesis* is a vigorous, dutiful, twenty-three-year old playground director, Bucky Cantor, a javelin thrower and a weightlifter, who is devoted to his charges and disappointed with himself because his weak eyes have excluded him from serving in the war alongside his contemporaries. Focusing on Cantor's dilemmas as polio begins to ravage his playground - and on the everyday realities he faces - Roth leads us through every inch of emotion such a pestilence can breed: the fear, the panic, the anger, the bewilderment, the suffering, and the pain. Moving between the smouldering, malodorous streets of besieged Newark and Indian Hill, a pristine children's summer camp high in the Poconos - whose 'mountain air was purified of all contaminants' - Roth depicts a decent, energetic man with the best intentions struggling in his own private war against the epidemic. Roth is tenderly exact at every point about Cantor's passage into personal disaster and no less exact about the condition of childhood. Through this story runs the dark question that haunts all four of Roth's late short novels, *Everyman*, *Indignation*, *The Humbling*, and now, *Nemesis*: what choices fatally shape a life? How powerless is each of us up against the force of circumstances?

### **The Facts**

*Letting Go* is Roth's first full-length novel, published just after *Goodbye, Columbus*, when he was twenty-nine. Set in 1950s Chicago, New York, and Iowa city, *Letting Go* presents as brilliant a fictional portrait as we have of a mid-century America defined by social and ethical constraints and by moral compulsions conspicuously different from those of today. Newly discharged from the Korean War army, reeling from his mother's recent death, freed from old attachments and hungrily seeking others, Gabe Wallach is drawn to Paul Herz, a fellow graduate student in literature, and to Libby, Paul's moody, intense wife. Gabe's desire to be connected to the ordered "world of feeling" that he finds in books is first tested vicariously by the anarchy of the Herzes' struggles with responsible adulthood and then by his own eager love affairs. Driven by the desire to live seriously and act generously, Gabe meets an impassable test in the person of Martha Reganhart, a spirited,

outspoken, divorced mother of two, a formidable woman who, according to critic James Atlas, is masterfully portrayed with "depth and resonance." The complex liason between Gabe and Martha and Gabe's moral enthusiasm for the trials of others are at the heart of this tragically comic work.

### **Exit Ghost**

A rigorously unfictionalized narrative that portrays Roth unadorned -- as young artist, as student , as son, as lover, as husband, as American, as Jew -- and candidly examines how close the novels have been to, and how far from, autobiography.

### **Deception**

Presents an intimate, incisive portrait of a middle-aged American living in London and his mistress, a married Englishwoman, through a series of private, adulterous dialogues. Reprint.

### **Operation Shylock**

A Radcliffe undergraduate and a Newark public library employee engage in a summer romance

### **Our Gang**

What if a lookalike stranger stole your name, usurped your biography and went around the world pretending to be you? In this tour de force of fact and fiction, Philip Roth meets a man who may or may not be Philip Roth. Because someone with that name has been touring the State of Israel, promoting a bizarre exodus in reverse of the Jews. Roth decides to stop him—even if that means impersonating his impersonator. Suspenseful, hilarious, hugely impassioned, pulsing with intelligence and narrative energy, Operation Shylock is at once a spy story, a political thriller, a meditation on identity, and a confession. Like Pushkin and Dostoevsky before him, Philip Roth takes on the subject of the writer's double, which for Roth is inevitably bound up in Jewishness and identity. This is a bold, inventive and energetic departure from his past novels, a meta-novel, and, like all of his writing, full of ideas, wit, humor and startling observation.

### **Patrimony**

Another brilliant short novel by Philip Roth

## Nemeses

Radio actor Iron Rinn (born Ira Ringold) is a big Newark roughneck blighted by a brutal personal secret from which he is perpetually in flight. An idealistic Communist, a self-educated ditchdigger turned popular performer, a six-foot six-inch Abe Lincoln look-alike, he marries the nation's reigning radio actress and beloved silent-film star, the exquisite Eve Frame (born Chava Fromkin). Their marriage evolves from a glamorous, romantic idyll into a dispiriting soap opera of tears and treachery. And with Eve's dramatic revelation to the gossip columnist Bryden Grant of her husband's life of "espionage" for the Soviet Union, the relationship enlarges from private drama into national scandal. Set in the heart of the McCarthy era, the story of Iron Rinn's denunciation and disgrace brings to harrowing life the human drama that was central to the nation's political tribulations in the dark years of betrayal, the blacklist, and naming names. *I Married a Communist* is an American tragedy as only Philip Roth could write it.

## Shop Talk

Everything is over for Simon Axler, the protagonist of Philip Roth's startling new book. One of the leading American stage actors of his generation, now in his sixties, he has lost his magic, his talent, and his assurance. His Falstaff and Peer Gynt and Vanya, all his great roles, "are melted into air, into thin air." When he goes onstage he feels like a lunatic and looks like an idiot. His confidence in his powers has drained away; he imagines people laughing at him; he can no longer pretend to be someone else. "Something fundamental has vanished." His wife has gone, his audience has left him, his agent can't persuade him to make a comeback. Into this shattering account of inexplicable and terrifying self-evacuation bursts a counterplot of unusual erotic desire, a consolation for a bereft life so risky and aberrant that it points not toward comfort and gratification but to a yet darker and more shocking end. In this long day's journey into night, told with Roth's inimitable urgency, bravura, and gravity, all the ways that we convince ourselves of our solidity, all our life's performances—talent, love, sex, hope, energy, reputation—are stripped off. *The Humbling* is Roth's thirtieth book.

## The Anatomy Lesson

La nueva novela de Philip Roth: otro acontecimiento editorial de primer orden. Para Simon Axler, uno de los principales actores teatrales norteamericanos, todo ha terminado. Ya sexagenario, ha perdido su magia, su talento y la seguridad en sí mismo. Imagina que la gente se ríe de él, no puede fingir que es otra persona. Su mujer se ha ido, su público le ha abandonado, su agente no puede persuadirle de que vuelva a actuar. De repente, estalla otra trama: un deseo erótico fuera de lo corriente que sirve de consuelo a su vida desposeída, pero que es tan arriesgado y aberrante que no apunta hacia el alivio y la gratificación, sino a un final aún más sombrío y espantoso. Reseña: «Obliga a los lectores a adentrarse en

regiones sumamente oscuras de la experiencia humana.» El País

## **Goodbye, Columbus**

Like a latter-day Gregor Samsa, Professor David Kepesh wakes up one morning to find that he has been transformed. But where Kafka's protagonist turned into a giant beetle, the narrator of Philip Roth's richly conceived fantasy has become a 155-pound female breast. What follows is a deliriously funny yet touching exploration of the full implications of Kepesh's metamorphosis—a daring, heretical book that brings us face to face with the intrinsic strangeness of sex and subjectivity.

## **Sabbath's Theater**

A latest omnibus of definitive works by the influential 20th-century novelist is a single-volume collection of his American Trilogy novels, including *American Pastoral*, *I Married a Communist* and *The Human Stain*.

## **When She Was Good**

Now in his mid-thirties, Nathan Zuckerman, a would-be recluse despite his newfound fame as a bestselling author, ventures onto the streets of Manhattan in the final year of the turbulent sixties. Not only is he assumed by his fans to be his own fictional satyr, Gilbert Carnovsky ("Hey, you do all that stuff in that book?"), but he also finds himself the target of admonishers, advisers, and sidewalk literary critics. The recent murders of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., lead an unsettled Zuckerman to wonder if "target" may be more than a figure of speech. In *Zuckerman Unbound* the second volume of the trilogy and epilogue "Zuckerman Bound" the notorious novelist Nathan Zuckerman retreats from his oldest friends, breaks his marriage to a virtuous woman, and damages, perhaps irreparably, his affectionate connection to his younger brother and all because of his great good fortune!

## **Letting Go**

In these selections from twenty years of her best short fiction, Edna O'Brien's *A Fanatic Heart* pulls the reader into a woman's experience. Her stories portray a young Irish girl's view of obsessive love and its often wrenching pain, while tales of contemporary life show women who open themselves to sexuality, to disappointment, to madness. Throughout, there is always O'Brien's voice—wondrous, despairing, moving—examining passionate subjects that lay bare the desire and needs that can be hidden in a woman's heart.

## **The Professor of Desire**

Everything is over for Simon Axler, the protagonist of the history. One of the leading American stage actors of his generation, now in his sixties, he has lost his magic, his talent and his assurance. His Falstaff and Peer Gynt and Vanya, all his great roles, 'are melted into air, into thin air'. When he goes on stage he feels like a lunatic and looks like an idiot. His confidence in his powers has drained away; he imagines people laughing at him; he can no longer pretend to be someone else. His wife has gone, his audience has left him, his agent can't persuade him to make a comeback. Into this shattering account of inexplicable and terrifying self-evacuation bursts a counterplot of unusual erotic desire, a consolation for the bereft life so risky and aberrant that it points not towards comfort and gratification but to a yet darker and more shocking end. In this long day's journey into night, told with Roth's inimitable urgency, bravura and gravity, all the ways that we persuade ourselves of our solidity, all our life's performances - talent, love, sex, hope, energy, reputation - are stripped off.

## **La humillación**

A single-volume anthology of the author's thematically related short Nemesis stories features protagonists that grapple with universal twists of fate, from a man's lifelong skirmish with mortality in Everyman to a portrait of the strong emotions tied to a 1944 polio outbreak as chronicled in Nemesis.

## **A Fanatic Heart**

Gil Gamesh, the only pitcher who ever literally tried to kill the umpire. The ex-con first baseman, John Baal, "The Babe Ruth of the Big House," who never hit a home run sober. If you've never heard of them-or of the Ruppert Mundys, the only homeless big-league ball team in American history-it's because of the Communist plot, and the capitalist scandal, that expunged the entire Patriot League from baseball memory. In this ribald, richly imagined, and wickedly satiric novel, Roth turns baseball's status as national pastime and myth into an occasion for unfettered picaresque farce, replete with heroism and perfidy, ebullient wordplay and a cast of characters that includes the House Un-American Activities Committee.

## **I Married a Communist**

A young writer in search of a spiritual father, Nathan Zuckerman views E. I. Lonoff, who lives with his wife and his student-mistress in rural Massachusetts, as an embodiment of the ideal of artistic integrity and independence

## **A Philip Roth Reader**

The writer Nathan Zuckerman comes down with a mysterious physical affliction--pure pain, beginning in his neck and shoulders, invading his torso and taking possession of his life. Zuckerman, whose work was his life, is unable to write a line. Now his work is trekking from one doctor to the next--from orthopedist to osteopath to neurologist to psychiatrist--but none can find a cause for the pain and nobody can assuage it. So begins Philip Roth's strangely comic new novel, *The Anatomy Lesson*. In it, we find Nathan Zuckerman beset at age forty not only by his pain but by his past. He seriously wonders if he ought to be a novelist at all. At his wit's end, bewildered by both the obstinate pain and the isolating profession, and unconsolable by his "harem of Florence Nightingales"--Gloria, his accountant's wildly mothering wife; Jaga, the depressed Polish refuge from the hair-treatment clinic (to add to his suffering, Zuckerman is going bald); Diana, the distressingly self-possessed Finch College heiress; and the temptingly levelheaded painter Jenny--Zuckerman tries to pin his catastrophe on some source he can confront. There is no shortage of candidates. Zuckerman's brother blames his acerbic best-seller Carnovsky, for ruining the lives of their late parents, and will have nothing to do with him. There's the critic Milton Appel, once Zuckerman's literary conscience, now his scourge--the Grand Inquisitor of *Inquiry* magazine, the New York Jewish cultural monthly. Searching desperately for a diagnosis that will lead to a cure, Zuckerman asks himself if the pain can have been caused by his adversaries, or by his astonishingly intractable grief for his mother, or by the disgust he has come to feel for the literary vocation he once loved. And while he is wondering, his dependence on painkillers grows into an addiction to Percodan, marijuana, and hundred-proof vodka. In the last half of *The Anatomy Lesson*, Zuckerman breaks out of invalid imprisonment in his Manhattan apartment and sets off on a journey to escape the pain, the adversaries, the grief, and the career--a journey into a new existence, a search for a "second life." Persuaded that a doctor's life is everything a writer's is not, Zuckerman flies to Chicago with the intention of applying to medical school at his alma mater. Though the pain he encounters there is worse even than what he's fled, the startling quest for the second life provides some of the funniest scenes in all of Roth's fiction. With the serious playfulness and extravagant insistence characteristic of his work, Roth, in his fourteenth published book, presents an astonishing antithesis to *The Magic Mountain*: *The Anatomy Lesson* is a great comedy of illness. Roth's strength has always been the ability to depict the boisterous, the farcical, and the extreme in human behavior while revealing at the same time a world that immediately strikes the reader as real--what the English critic Hermione Lee has called, in writing of Roth's career, "a manner at once brash and thoughtfully lyrical and wry, which projects through comic expostulations and confessions of the speakers a knowing, humane authority." *The Anatomy Lesson* is one of Roth's finest achievements in this vein--a comic masterpiece and brilliant finale to the Zuckerman trilogy. *The Anatomy Lesson* was a finalist for the National Book Award and the National Book Critics Circle Award.

### **Leaving a Doll's House**

It is 1998, the year in which America is whipped into a frenzy of prurience by the impeachment of a president, and in a small New England town, an aging classics professor, Coleman Silk, is forced to retire when his colleagues decree that he is

a racist. The charge is a lie, but the real truth about Silk would have astonished his most virulent accuser. Coleman Silk has a secret. But it's not the secret of his affair, at seventy-one, with Faunia Farley, a woman half his age with a savagely wrecked past--a part-time farmhand and a janitor at the college where, until recently, he was the powerful dean of faculty. And it's not the secret of Coleman's alleged racism, which provoked the college witch-hunt that cost him his job and, to his mind, killed his wife. Nor is it the secret of misogyny, despite the best efforts of his ambitious young colleague, Professor Delphine Roux, to expose him as a fiend. Coleman's secret has been kept for fifty years: from his wife, his four children, his colleagues, and his friends, including the writer Nathan Zuckerman, who sets out to understand how this eminent, upright man, esteemed as an educator for nearly all his life, had fabricated his identity and how that cannily controlled life came unraveled. Set in 1990s America, where conflicting moralities and ideological divisions are made manifest through public denunciation and rituals of purification, *The Human Stain* concludes Philip Roth's eloquent trilogy of postwar American lives that are as tragically determined by the nation's fate as by the "human stain" that so ineradicably marks human nature. This harrowing, deeply compassionate, and completely absorbing novel is a magnificent successor to his Vietnam-era novel, *American Pastoral*, and his McCarthy-era novel, *I Married a Communist*.

### **The Humbling**

Best Book of the Year The Los Angeles Times • The Washington Post Los Angeles was the fastest growing city in the world, mad with oil fever, get-rich-quick schemes, and celebrity scandals. It was also rife with organized crime, with a mayor in the pocket of the syndicates and a DA taking bribes to throw trials. In *A Bright and Guilty Place*, Richard Rayner narrates the entwined lives of two men, Dave Clark and Leslie White, who were caught up in the crimes, murders, and swindles of the day. Over a few transformative years, as the boom times shaded into the Depression, the adventures of Clark and White would inspire pulp fiction and replace L.A.'s reckless optimism with a new cynicism. Together, theirs is the tale of how the city of sunshine went noir. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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