



## Adultery: A novel (Vintage International)

By Paulo Coelho

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*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.

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## Adultery: A novel (Vintage International) By Paulo Coelho Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“An exceptional writer.” —*USA Today*

“Propulsive. . . . A compelling tale of existential angst, marital betrayal and sexual sin.” —*The Chicago Tribune*

“Pulls at the heart, while being both enticing and erotic. . . . With thought-provoking honesty, the characters in this novel are given a voice that reverberates through time and space.” —*Bookreporter*

“*Adultery* perfectly illustrates the faint line between madness and insanity, happiness and unhappiness and the eternal search for our own ‘personal legend.’” —*Daily Express* (London)

“A novelist who writes in a universal language.” —*The New York Times*

“Spiritualists and wanderlusts will eagerly devour . . . [Coelho’s] search for all things meaningful.” —*The Washington Post*

“A cerebral and subtle writer.” —*The New York Journal of Books*

“[Coelho’s] books have had a life enhancing impact on millions of people.” —*The Times* (London)

#### About the Author

One of the most influential writers of our time, Paulo Coelho is the author of many international best sellers, including *The Alchemist*, *Aleph*, *Eleven Minutes*, and *Manuscript Found in Accra*. Translated into 80 languages, his books have sold more than 165 million copies in more than 170 countries. He is a member of the Brazilian Academy of Letters and has received the Chevalier de l’Ordre National de la Légion d’Honneur. In 2007, he was named a United Nations Messenger of Peace. Translated by Margaret Jull Costa and Zoë Perry.

[www.paulocoelhoblog.com](http://www.paulocoelhoblog.com)

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"I WAKE up and perform the usual rituals—brushing my teeth, getting dressed for work, going into the children’s bedroom to wake them up, making break- fast for everyone, smiling, and saying how good life is. In every minute and gesture I feel a weight I can’t identify, like an ani- mal who can’t quite understand how it got caught in the trap. My food has no taste. My smile, on the other hand, grows even wider so that no one will suspect, and I swallow my desire to cry. The light outside seems gray. Yesterday’s conversation did no good at all; I’m starting to think that I’m headed out of the indignant phase and straight into apathy.

And does no one notice?

Of course not. After all, I'm the last person in the world to admit that I need help.

This is my problem; the volcano has exploded and there's no way to put the lava back inside, plant some trees, mow the grass, and let the sheep out to graze.

I don't deserve this. I've always tried to meet everyone's expectations. But now it's happened and I can't do anything about it except take medication. Perhaps today I'll come up with an excuse to write an article about psychiatry and social security (the newspaper loves that kind of thing) and find a good psychiatrist to ask for help. I know that's not ethical, but then not everything is.

I don't have an obsession to occupy my mind—for exam- ple, dieting or being OCD and finding fault with the clean- ing lady who arrives at eight in the morning and leaves at five in the afternoon, having washed and ironed the clothes, and tidied the house, and, sometimes, having even done the shopping, too. I can't vent my frustrations by trying to be Super- mom, because my children would resent me for the rest of their lives.

I go off to work and again see the neighbor polishing his car. Wasn't he doing that yesterday?

Unable to resist, I go over and ask him why.

"It wasn't quite perfect," he says, but only after having said "Good morning," asking about the family, and noticing what a pretty dress I'm wearing.

I look at the car. It's an Audi—one of Geneva's nicknames is, after all, Audiland. It looks perfect, but he shows me one or two places where it isn't as shiny as it should be.

I draw out the conversation and end up asking what he thinks people are looking for in life.

"Oh, that's easy enough. Being able to pay their bills. Buying a house like yours or mine. Having a garden full of trees. Having your children or grandchildren over for Sunday lunch. Traveling the world once you've retired."

Is that what people want from life? Is it really? There's something very wrong with this world, and it isn't just the wars going on in Asia or the Middle East.

Before I go to the newspaper, I have to interview Jacob, my ex-boyfriend from high school. Not even that cheers me up. I really am losing interest in things.

I LISTEN to facts about government policy that I didn't even want to know. I ask a few awkward questions, which he deftly dodges. He's a year younger than me, but he looks five years older. I keep this thought to myself. Of course, it's good to see him again, although he hasn't yet asked me what's happened in my life since we each went our own way after graduation. He's entirely focused on himself, his career, and his future, while I find myself staring foolishly back at the past as if I were still the adolescent who, despite the braces on my teeth, was the envy of all the other girls. After a while, I stop listening and go on autopilot. Always the same script, the same promises- reducing taxes, combating crime, keeping the French (the so-called cross-border workers who are taking jobs that Swiss workers could fill) out. Year after year, the issues are the same and the problems continue unresolved because no one really cares. After twenty minutes of conversation, I start to wonder if my lack of interest is due to my strange state of mind. No. There is nothing

more tedious than interviewing politicians. It would have been better if I'd been sent to cover some crime or another. Murderers are much more real.

Compared to representatives of the people anywhere else on the planet, ours are the least interesting and the most insipid. No one wants to know about their private lives. Only two things create a scandal here: corruption and drugs. Then it takes on gigantic proportions and gets wall-to-wall coverage because there's absolutely nothing else of interest in the newspapers.

Does anyone care if they have lovers, go to brothels, or come out as gay? No. They continue doing what they were elected to do, and as long as they don't blow the national budget, we all live in peace.

The president of the country changes every year (yes, every year) and is chosen not by the people, but by the Federal Council, a body comprising seven ministers who serve as Switzerland's collective head of state. Every time I walk past the museum, I see endless posters calling for more plebiscites.

The Swiss love to make decisions—the color of our trash bags (black came out on top), the right (or not) to carry arms (Switzerland has one of the highest gun-ownership rates in the world), the number of minarets that can be built in the country (four), and whether or not to provide asylum for expatriates (I haven't kept pace with this one, but I imagine the law was approved and is already in force).

“Excuse me, sir.”

We've been interrupted once already. He politely asks his assistant to postpone his next appointment. My newspaper is the most important in French-speaking Switzerland and this interview could prove crucial for the upcoming elections.

He pretends to convince me and I pretend to believe him.

Then I get up, thank him, and say that I have all the material I need.

“You don't need anything else?” Of course I do, but it's not up to me to tell him what. “How about getting together after work?” I explain that I have to pick up my children from school, hoping that he sees the large gold wedding ring on my finger declaring: “Look, the past is the past.”

“Of course. Well, maybe we can have lunch someday.”

I agree. Easily deceived, I think: Who knows, maybe he does have something of importance to tell me, some state secret that will change the politics of the country and make the editor look at me with new eyes.

He goes over to the door, locks it, then comes back and kisses me. I return his kiss, because it's been a long time. Jacob, whom I may have once loved, is now a family man, married to a professor. And I am a family woman, married to a man who, though he inherited his wealth, is extremely hardworking.

I consider pushing him away and saying that we're not kids anymore, but I'm enjoying it. Not only did I discover a new Japanese restaurant, I'm having a bit of illicit fun as well. I've managed to break the rules and the world hasn't caved in on me. I haven't felt this happy in a long time.

I feel better and better, braver, freer. Then I do something I've dreamed of doing since I was in school.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Beverly Brown:**

This Adultery: A novel (Vintage International) book is not ordinary book, you have after that it the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper an individual read a lot of information you will get. This specific Adultery: A novel (Vintage International) without we know teach the one who examining it become critical in pondering and analyzing. Don't end up being worry Adultery: A novel (Vintage International) can bring any time you are and not make your handbag space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it inside your lovely laptop even phone. This Adultery: A novel (Vintage International) having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not really feel uninterested in reading.

#### **Mohammad Darling:**

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#### **Georgia Cunningham:**

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