



Third Wish (2-Volume Boxed Set with CD)

Robert Fulghum

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In fairy tales, the third wish is the last one left when the first wish was foolish, and the second wish was used to undo the first wish. Now the remaining wish must be used wisely and well--with the help of co-conspirators. The main thread of *Third Wish*--like Ariadne's string guiding Theseus into the labyrinth with the Minotaur--begins at a table on a terrace on the Greek Island of Crete, winds its way into the center and back out to the same table, passing through Greece, Japan, France, England, and Seattle. Its main characters are Alice, Max-Pol, Aleko, Wonko, Zenkichi, Polydora, Alice-Alice, and Dog. Woven into the fabric of the novel are cultural history, art, philosophy, archeology, poetry, theater and music. The mode of the novel is contained in the words Slowly, Surprise, and Witness. More than anything else, *Third Wish* is a long love story--not in the usual sense--but the story of people who love life and will go to great lengths to find a flourishing Way onward.

Third Wish (2-Volume Boxed Set with CD) Details

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Author : Robert Fulghum

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Christie Bane says

I flat-out, full-on, no-holds-barred LOVED this book. Now, to people who normally like the books I like and so on, I don't expect you to like it. It's not like the normal books I love. I'm not even sure that it's good literature. Somewhere deep down I suspect it is not. But I love it. Here's why:

*It looks at love from all kinds of unusual angles. It is a love story, but not just a love story.

*I fell in love with every single place in this novel just because of the author's powerful descriptions. And these are places I had never cared about in my life -- Monet's studio in Giverny? a canal boat in England? the island of Crete? Never cared about a one of them, and now I feel my life won't be complete if I see them before I die.

*Its characters are totally original. I have never seen these people before.

*The elements of whimsy, serendipity, and imagination are completely interwoven throughout the whole book.

*It is a serious novel, but it is also a joyful novel AND it also managed to surprise me!

I don't know if soulmates exist, but I don't see how, if they do, my soulmate would NOT love this book.

Jin says

One of the most fascinating stories I have ever read. Overwhelmingly joyous, pensive, and artfully pieced together. It creates an immense sense of nostalgia for somewhere you have never even been. The gentle intertwining of 3 lives throughout the narrative is breathtaking. Every moment breathes life into the next. Every piece of art and every piece of music included expands the world of this epic journey.

I could not recommend this book highly enough. Robert Fulghum is most known for "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten" but this 'hidden' gem of a novel is a masterfully creative read.

John says

3.5 Stars. This book has quitte a staccato to this, that I cannot entirely place. But it's clearly a book by a writer, but whose vehicle is not primarily fiction. It feels like a book written by a male philosophy professor who creates "characters" to mouth and espouse his various views of life, relationships, love, etc. It has decent world building

As such, it comes off as a colossal gimmick. It's unsuccessful, but just a few degrees off in all of its efforts. Its production/appearance is nice, but not quite interesting enough to be ergonomic. The paper stock is high quality, but also reminds a bit of cardboard.

The accompanying CD is a nice idea--but doesn't feel like anything but a mediocre and slightly forced

gimmick that slows the pace of the story by making you put out a CD player (or read by your laptop).

Yet, it's got a lot of keen ideas in--but just never reaches actualization. It's like a more cheekingly postmodern version of Sophie's World.

The loved story is relatable (and touche a few neves, as I know a woman like Alice).

It's also clearly a love story by a dude--and Alice is his "manic pixie dream girl" and Max-Pohl, Alex and Wonko are all aspects of the AUTHOR. And he can't give a proper, real resolution with genuine pathos, so instead does the "opt-out" meta commentary.

As such, the ending is such a cheat--it feels unwarranted, and unearned and unclever. It's the kind of shit I'd have pulled as a freshman in college, or Grant Morrison in the 80s.

Tracy says

I really wanted to like this book more than I did, but it just felt disjointed. Fulghum spends a lot of time developing the characters, which is nice, but there are long stretches of the book that drag as a result. A plot is hinted at but never really comes together. Finally, after he's spent so much time on these characters, he abandons them suddenly for a story-outside-of-a-story about a fictional author of *Third Wish* who can't finish the book. He wraps it all up by suggesting that the characters were just parts of the author all along and it's him and his journey (of which you see a small part) that are the crux of the story. Rather than being provoked into thought by the message, I just felt cheated, as though Fulghum were really the one who didn't know where to take all these characters and used his fictional self as a device to tie a neat bow on an unruly mess of a novel.

Amber says

I loved this book, right up until the end of volume 4. Then I was pissed at the author. Things didn't get better when I got into volume 5 either. Why build up those fascinating characters and create such a beautiful story, and then end it with a book that didn't belong in the series? I am definitely not a fan of that ending. So, in the grand tradition of Fulghum's characters, I have imagined my own ending and will never read the author's ending again. His characters deserved better.

Yioula Ts. says

To βρ?κα κουραστικ?, αλλ? θα αναγνωρ?σω πως υπ?ρχουν ουκ ολ?γα σημε?α για σκ?ψη, περισυλλογ? και προσωπικ? αναζ?τηση, δοσμ?να με το ιδια?τερο ?φος του συγγραφ?α. Γι' αυτ? το τ?σο ιδια?τερο ?φος του κ?ρδισε απ? μ?vα το 3?ρι, ?μως αυτ? δεν ε?vαι ?να βιβλ?ο που

ικανοπο?ησε τη δικ? μου ευχ?...
Να περ?σω καλ?...

Viola Briatková says

nadherne

Gabriela Štefanová says

P?íjemná kniha, plná zajímavých míst a informací o nich.
Všechny hlavní postavy se mi líbí a fandím jim a zajímá m?, jak to s nimi bude dál.
Odpo?inkové ?tení.

Dond says

Oddychovka, v níž se nic moc nestane. N?kolik nepravd?podobných záplatek je na konci umocn?no ješt? nepravd?podobn?jším zvratem – taková trochu okatá zadní vrátká k dašimu pokra?ování p?íb?hu. Dá se brát jako pocta nevšedním ženám nebo nostalgická procházka po pozoruhodných evropských místech (Kréta, Barcelona, skotské kanály). Poslouchal jsem jako audio, dobrá oddechovka do auta.

Tracy says

FINALLY finished the first (of 2) volumes. The book is good, but so big, it's impossible to carry with you or read anywhere very comfortably.

7/2011:

After about 8 months of reading a few pages now and then, and getting partway into the 2nd volume - I realized I didn't remember what happened at the beginning of the book or how some of the characters met. SO - I started over. I read it faster the second time and enjoyed it more.

The last quarter of the book though was almost a different story. It seemed like he couldn't figure out how to end the story he started with, so just totally switched directions.

Glad I'm finally done with this one.

Sandy says

I really liked these books and at the same time I did not. (the novel is written in 5 books which are physically housed in 2 books) I felt certain aspects really spoke to me. It was to me kind of a waking meditation about living an artful life, bringing art to your life; being present and creative and open to possibilities. The

characters in this book travel and meander while living and talking about life, art, history, archeology, surprise and silliness, all things I really enjoy. At times I felt this was a book written just for me and other times I found the certain characters trying. The author did a few things that, to me were crazy and to be true I really have not reconciled the ending in my mind yet. This is a hard book to characterize. I enjoyed it, but at times grew tired of it, all and all I have to say I liked it, because while hanging out in these books with these somewhat eccentric characters and following along with all of their stories, it was a helpful reminder of the magic within everyday life.

Debi Patton says

936 pages, and I never knew what to expect on the next page!

Marek ?igáš says

Kniha plná láskavého humoru a ve?mi sviežeho poh?adu na život. Ni? extra sa nedeje, postavy sa ve?a zhovárajú a trávia ?as ve?mi príjemnými vecami. Možno práve preto sa to tak dobre ?íta - žiadne ve?ké udalosti, a predsa sa riešia ve?mi hlboké, priam existenciálne skuto?nosti.

Bart Breen says

Unlike most Novels you will ever read!

Third Wish is a multi-genre reading and listening experience that operates and works on several different levels.

The book is a novel, and yet in reading it and listening to the accompanying music CD (original music by the way, tied specifically to points in the book) it also is a work that encompasses the culture, music, art, architecture and society of a Greek Island. Add to that, a very well written and introspective moving through the lives and relationships of the protagonists and you have a feast for the heart and intellect that is rarely seen in fictional literary works.

It may seem odd, but this reviewer found the experience more than a little reminiscent of the classical volumes of Will and Ariel Durant in some ways. See particularly The Story of Civilization, Vol II: The Life of Greece by Will Durant.

Of course those elements are not the primary focus, but the background information and research that went into this book represent a similar thoroughness and attention to detail that sets the tone and context of this work to a remarkable degree that I've never observed in a formal fictional genre.

Add to these elements, Fulgham's introspective and spiritual approach to the characters and relationships he builds upon and you have again, a very remarkable and unique book.

5 Stars. I recommend it heartily.

Lilly says

this is the biggest book i've ever seen in my life. it should come with a sherpa.

(later)

ok, now i've read it. Fulghum writes absolutely beautifully. sometime it's almost painfully beautiful. the story of third wish is about how a group of people's lives intertwine and cross over one another, spanning the globe, so there is a bit of "six degrees of separation" going on. at the same time, it's about living in the moment, the people who do, the people who don't, how they can learn from one another. it's about greek island life. it's about kabuki theater. it's about security. it's about theater. there's a LOT going on here. fulghum knows a LOT and spends much of the time dropping random knowledge. fortunately the knowledge is interesting and relevant to the storyline, but this is no easy read, it takes commitment!

the book isn't as long as it looks - it's printed on what sometimes feels like cardboard, super thick pages with HUGE margins. but it does impress people when you lug it around ;)

i enjoyed the story, but there were a few twists and turns i didn't love. i'm off to breakfast to meet and debate them with the recommender of said book!
