

NIGHTS in *Rodanthe* is a story about pain eased by romance and lost time redeemed by a renewed spirit. Likened to Robert James Waller's *The Bridges of Madison County*, Nicholas Sparks, author of *Message in a Bottle* and *The Notebook* tells the tale of how Rodanthe, in Dare County, North Carolina, becomes a place of restoration and redemption for two hurting souls. It is a bittersweet story about finding love again, at an age when you don't expect to.

45-year-old Adrienne Willis finds herself divorced with three teenagers after her husband leaves her for a younger woman. Saddled with a bag of life's burdens she never expected to carry alone— from dealing with tough teens to caring for her chronically ill father – Adrienne struggles to make sense of her world again.

Enter Paul Flanner, a 54-year-old workaholic surgeon whose wife has left him. Bewildered by the hand life has dealt him, Paul sells his medical practice and heads off in search of some resolution for his soul.

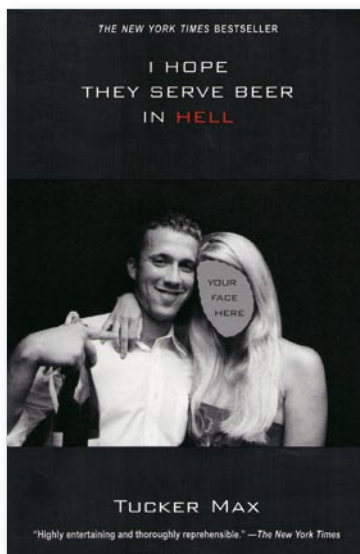


Nights in Rodanthe
by Nicholas Sparks

The story is told in flashback through Adrienne's voice as she attempts to comfort her daughter, who is grieving the loss of her husband. Love and hope seem elusive until she decides to house-sit a friend's bed-and-breakfast inn in Rodanthe, a quaint town in North Carolina, changes things forever. Paul ends up seeking solace at that very same inn, and their crossing of paths becomes a life-changing encounter for both. Each finds healing here and by helping each other discover a new take on life.

Nights in Rodanthe offers poignant assurance that having the love of that one special person can transcend the sadness of a lifetime, and that as Adrienne puts it, "love (is) the essence of a full and wonderful life."

While their physical relationship lasts only a few days, the ramifications of what they both share will last a lifetime. This story gives wounded people a hope within reach – that it is never too late for healing to happen, and that unexpected divine encounters can transform a season of pain into new beginnings. ■



I Hope They Serve Beer In Hell
by Tucker Max

FOLLOWING one man's journey from law school to a life of indulgence and debauchery, *I Hope They Serve Beer In Hell* is a no-holds-barred account of non-stop drinking and fornication. Telling it like it is, author Tucker Max recounts his true exploits that got him women – and many other things besides. If you can tolerate the unabashed sexist behaviour that is wildly celebrated here, you might find this book funny.

Lively interaction in honest conversations between the characters contributes to the humour. Max succeeds in creating gripping interplay and captures comedy with witty lines. His storytelling can be quite entertaining – probably more so for men than women.

One weekend adventure leaves a hotel lobby covered in faeces, while in another incident, Max wets his own bed and manages to get a complete stranger to pay for it. In case you are in any doubt about the type of book this New York Times

bestselling non-fiction title is, you'll get the drift from its cleverly-titled chapters like "The Blowjob Follies" to "Tucker tries buttsex; hilarity does not ensue".

Without question, immorality scars almost every page. To set the record straight, Max declares himself an "asshole" then goes on to paint himself as someone who boldly challenges social norms and pushes the limits and boundaries. Beyond all the rakish lewdness and licentiousness, Max really wants the reader to embrace the deeper meaning of this book: "Dare to be yourself!"

But seriously, with the protagonist intentionally pushing the status quo without a care for what others think or feel is to do all this without sacrificing "integrity" the challenge? Really.

I Hope They Serve Beer in Hell unravels experiences that few dare to claim, and for those few hours turning the pages, the reader can indulge in Max's "forbidden sins" vicariously. Good for a laugh – but little else. ■