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***Joseph Anton. A Memoir*, by Salman Rushdie, Random House,
2012**

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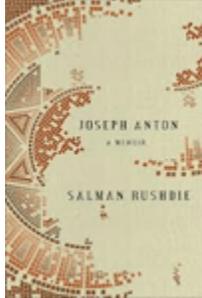
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Recommended Readings



Joseph Anton. A Memoir

by Salman Rushdie, Random House, 2012

Reviewed by Eloise Sureau-Hale

In his latest book, Salman Rushdie is Joseph Anton, a name chosen to protect himself, when a fatwa was pronounced against him and his *Satanic Verses* in 1989.

Written in the third person narrative rather than the first person perspective, thus allowing some distance, Rushdie candidly recalls his life, his career and the events that have led him to publish his infamous *Satanic Verses* and the wave of hatred that have ensued in the Muslim World. The text allows the reader to enter Rushdie's personal life; his inspirations; his relationship with his father Anis, his tumultuous marriages, and his personal shock at the realization that his book, to some extent, had been misread, misinterpreted, and misused.

Joseph Anton is not only a biographical work. It is a powerful study of a man facing a death sentence. Moreover, the text examines the struggles faced everyday by foreigners like Rushdie who will never really be at home in their adopted country, while estranged from their birth place. It also examines friendship and family ties. Who can he count on? What will his life be like from now on?

This is by far one of the best books of the year, rich in imagery in a subtle language with a touch of humor. It is however to be noted that *Joseph Anton. A Memoir* will be easier to follow and to comprehend for a reader already familiar with Rushdie's most important works, namely *Midnight's Children* and *The Satanic Verses* to name only the recurring titles (although his whole bibliography is mentioned at some point or another). For those familiar with Rushdie's novels and for the curious in search of a rich life story, this is a great read!

- Eloise Sureau-Hale is Associate Professor of French at Butler University.