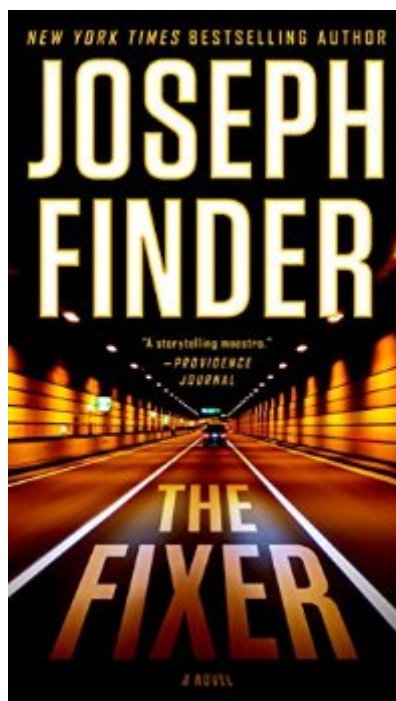


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The Fixer



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Joseph Finder's breakneck stand-alone thriller about the secrets families can keep—and the danger of their discovery. When former investigative reporter Rick Hoffman loses his job, fiancée, and apartment, his only option is to move back into—and renovate—the home of his miserable youth, now empty and in decay since the stroke that put his father in a nursing home. As Rick starts to pull apart the old house, he makes an electrifying discovery—millions of dollars hidden in the walls. It's enough money to completely transform Rick's life—and everything he thought he knew about his father. Yet the more of his father's hidden past that Rick brings to light, the more dangerous his present becomes. Soon, he finds himself on the run from deadly enemies desperate to keep the past buried, and only solving the mystery of his father—a man who has been unable to communicate, comprehend, or care for himself for almost 20 years—will save Rick...if he can survive long enough to do it. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

I'm adding a SPOILER ALERT as requested by another reviewer. Please be advised that this review and the comments following it may reveal plot points. Thank you. I had a difficult time with this novel, I didn't find the protagonist likeable or sympathetic. Rick Hoffman's father Lenny, had a stroke 18 years ago. When Rick begins a renovation on his father's home he finds millions of dollars between the walls. The first thing this supposedly former investigative journalist does, isn't to go look for whose money it is and where it came from, but rather to adopt a finders keepers attitude and spend it as if it's his own. And not in a modest way but in an unnecessarily lavish way, in an attempt to impress an old girlfriend. Later we learn that "a few weeks ago he didn't care that his father couldn't speak. the Lenny he'd grown up with was gone, replaced by a gaunt, spectral Lenny who bore no relation to his actual father. So for the last twenty years he'd parked this replacement Lenny in a nursing home, just waiting for him to die a quiet and anticlimactic death. Until it turned out that there was a lot of money at stake." Which made me dislike the guy even more than I had before. Beyond the fact that I didn't care for the protagonist I found the unraveling of the mystery to be more comic than suspenseful. There is a clue in his father's planner that someone named P was involved with the money and where it came from. Supposedly he looks into who P could be but for some reason doesn't look at his father's old computer which is still in the house.

In "The Fixer," by Joseph Finder, Rick Hoffman returns to his childhood home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, after an absence of sixteen years. The house is a wreck, with a "decaying interior," animals scurrying behind the walls, and junk piled up everywhere. Rick gloomily takes stock of what he has left after he was fired from his job and his fiancée dumped him. Unexpectedly, he stumbles on an incredible discovery that could change everything. He starts to behave like the investigative reporter he once was, and decides to dig into his father's past. He hopes to learn what secrets the former lawyer was keeping from his family. Although this book follows a well-worn formula--a young man who has a crisis of conscience seeks answers to troubling questions--it is a compelling and suspenseful page-turner. Rick, the admirable but imprudent central character, is stunned to learn that Leonard was a "fixer," someone who helped well-heeled people get out of tight spots in return for a handsome fee. In spite of everything, Rick loves his dad, who is disabled and has been unable to speak since he had a stroke eighteen years earlier. Finder writes clear, succinct, and uncluttered dialogue, keeps exposition to a minimum, and moves the action along at a steady clip. Be warned that this book requires a sizeable suspension of disbelief. For example, Rick gets his hands on crucial records that go back a long way; no one seems to throw anything out. In addition, he is able to track down key witnesses who are conveniently available when he needs important information.

Finally, our hero, who until now has not been particularly courageous, risks his life in order to expose the misdeeds of powerful and influential villains.

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