



Elliot Allagash

Simon Rich

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Simon Rich dazzled readers with his absurdist sense of humor in his hilarious collections **Ant Farm** and **Free-Range Chickens**. Now comes Rich's rollicking debut novel, which explores the strangest, most twisted, and comically fraught terrain of them all: high school.

Seymour Herson is the least popular student at Glendale, a private school in Manhattan. He's painfully shy, physically inept, and his new nick-name, "chunk style," is in danger of entering common usage. But Seymour's solitary existence comes to a swift end when he meets the new transfer student: Elliot Allagash, evil heir of America's largest fortune.

Elliot's rampant delinquency has already gotten him expelled from dozens of prep schools around the country. But despite his best efforts, he can't get himself thrown out of Glendale; his father has simply donated too much money. Bitter and bored, Elliot decides to amuse himself by taking up a challenging and expensive new hobby: transforming Seymour into the most popular student in the school.

An unlikely friendship develops between the two loners as Elliot introduces Seymour to new concepts, like power, sabotage, and vengeance. With Elliot as his diabolical strategist and investor, Seymour scores a spot on the basketball team, becomes class president, and ruthlessly destroys his enemies. Yet despite the glow of newfound popularity, Seymour feels increasingly uneasy with Elliot's wily designs. For an Allagash victory is dishonorable at its best, and ruinous at its worst.

Cunningly playful and wickedly funny, **Elliot Allagash** is a tale about all of the incredible things that money can buy, and the one or two things that it can't.

Elliot Allagash Details

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Author : Simon Rich

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From Reader Review Elliot Allagash for online ebook

Lucas Lanza says

Cheguei até os 80% do livro e apenas desisti. Começa interessante como uma (quase) sátira política ao retratar os bastidores da eleição para representante de turma em um high school. Tem seus momentos divertidos até metade do livro, mas depois se perde em meio ao nonsense que busca apenas mostrar como gente "podre" de rica pode ser podre por inteiro. Quando chega a isso, o livro se torna um desfile de alegorias sem nenhum atrativo especial... Tanto que perdi o interesse pra saber o que acontece no final. Tenho outros títulos mais interessantes pra ler... Passo!

Ross Bonaime says

As I work my way through the books of Simon Rich, Elliot Allagash is his first novel, after a series of fantastic short story collections. Yet Elliot Allagash still comes off like a series of anecdotes and ruminations around a single idea - much like his short stories. The idea of a rich student manipulating the activities of his high school is an excellent and fun idea that Rich pulls off well, but it's an idea I wish I could see fleshed out more. This feels like a rough outline for a TV series or film that follows these same characters around. That's not a knock against the book, although I would love to see this material adapted.

Since Rich seems more comfortable writing short stories, Allagash is written like a bunch of memories and stories remembered after the fact. Rich makes some interesting choices, especially one at the halfway point that I found jarring, considering where the story was going. But I still felt like Rich was only throwing in character growth and developments in the story only when he needed to. By the time Rich gets to the final pages, it seems like he just then realized he needed a denouement of sorts and tries to tie everything together into a nice package. It works - mostly - but it still feels rushed and mostly flies against everything we know about the Allagash character.

At times, Elliot Allagash almost reads like a high school version of *Breaking Bad*, while other times, it feels like a bunch of funny ideas about wealth and privilege. It's a solid intro for Rich into the world of novels, but it just didn't have the bite of his better short stories.

CheshRCat says

There are some minor spoilers in this review, but not large enough ones that I felt the need to click the "this review contains spoilers" button. If you are really paranoid, don't read it, I suppose.

I saw a write-up for this book in my city's newspaper, and based on what I saw in the review, immediately became desperate to read it. When I finally got my hands on a copy, I was not disappointed.

Elliot Allagash tells the story of Seymour Herson, a chubby boy in grade eight who is the lowest of the low popularity wise at his New York school. All this is changed when he meets new student Elliot Allagash. Elliot is the heir to one of the world's largest fortunes. He is arrogant, brilliant..... and a juvenile delinquent. The only reason he is at Seymour's school is because it's the only one that would take him: his father has donated an astronomical amount of money to ensure he isn't kicked out. Bored out of his tree, Elliot decides

to take up a new hobby: raising Seymour to the most popular boy in the school.

The first half of the book is light and hilarious. The two boys have a series of highly entertaining escapades, culminating in Seymour's winning the title of ninth-grade president, and ending up being the most popular kid in the school after all.

The second half, however, is much darker. In the second part of *Elliot Allagash*, we have fast-forwarded to Seymour's grade twelve year. He has gotten ahead by lying and cheating his way through every exam, under Elliot's instruction. Officially speaking, he is the *extremely* popular--but because he appears to be so perfect and good at everything, no one, in actual fact, really likes him. His relationship with his parents, which was close and loving in the first half, is now terrible, and he has no real friends except Elliot.

Managing to be both hilarious and tear-jerking, *Elliot Allagash* is a terrific read, recommended for the tween-to-infinity set. It's quick and easy to whip through, but good summer reading. Simon Rich is an excellent new author and I'll be watching for anything new he may produce!

Adriana C says

The book *Elliot Allagash* isn't typically a book I would just decide to read when I'm bored. It isn't the type of book that I'm usually interested either. I decided to read Seymour's story about Elliot for English class. Our book topic this month was humor and when I looked up books that were considered humorous, *Elliot Allagash* popped up. The previous reviews that people wrote about the book sounded quite interesting, but in a way that you would have to read the story yourself to understand, so I decided to give the book a chance.

Elliot Allagash. An insanely rich boy who has been expelled from every high school you could possibly imagine. When he begins to attend Glendale high school, the only school that would accept him, he befriends Seymour Herson. Seymour is the least popular kid at school until Elliot introduces him to revenge and sabotage. Seymour and Elliot didn't get off to the right start when Elliot pushed Seymour down the stairs. The thing is with Elliot, he does things for experiment. He'll do anything so things work out in his favor. In the beginning of the book, Seymour talks about how Elliot was always writing something inside his notebook. It was rare to see him look up from it. When Seymour finally found out what was inside, he learned that Elliot was studying who was the most to least popular in Glendale high school and also a list of all his enemies. That's when the schemes began to start. Elliot helped Seymour get on the basketball team, cheat on tests, win class president, and even get into Yale. How was he able to do all this? The simple answer was his wealth. Elliot got anything and everything he wanted, and nobody was smart enough to realize. Except Seymour of course.

Although this book is hard to relate to, the development throughout it overall is really good. There isn't really anything positive I can think of to say about the book structurally, but there were many good positive parts inside the book itself. I loved more than anything that while Elliot was practically destroying everyone else's lives, he was helping build up Seymour's. Seymour gets many benefits out of all of Elliot's actions and even though he doesn't agree with many of his choices, he's finally becoming a somebody rather than the nobody whom was called "chunk-style" by his classmates. Seymour begins to earn respect from his peers and I adored that aspect of the book.

One of the major downsides to this book is that there isn't chapters. The book kind of jumps around from story to story and I found it confusing to understand. Throughout the book, a story would be told in depth and then it would stop. There then is three dots beneath it, and a new story begins. When there are chapters I find it much easier to understand and I feel like what I'm reading ends more in a complete thought and then flows onto the next. I wouldn't say that this necessarily made the book bad, I would just say without the

transitions from topic to topic, it makes it harder to read the book. Another downside to the book is it is super unrealistic. I understand that yes, it is a fictional story however, it takes place within a real world situation. The things the Elliot and Seymour do together cannot actually happen and it makes the book hard to believe. The main thoughts that came to mind while reading Elliot Allagash were “yeah right”, “that’s not possible”, and “dude just because you’re rich doesn’t mean he’s able to pull off schemes this easy!”

Alecia says

This is another book I would like to give a 2.5/5 star rating to. Not quite a 3, but extra cred for it's very funny conceit...a brilliant, disturbed, uber rich kid (Elliot Allagash) is manipulating the protagonist, Seymour, as a kind of sport. Elliot's goal...to make Seymour, a fellow 8th grader who is extremely unpopular, into the most popular kid in school. Some of the parts are funny, but the novel as a whole is too thin and uneven to work as well as it should.

Paul Kohn says

3.5 Stars.

This was a quick, easy, amusing and enjoyable read. Got me thinking about my own time in high school. It was interesting to see how the main characters interacted with each other right through to the end.

Jason Reigstad says

This book seems a bit divisive on GoodReads, but I found it to be a worthwhile and fun read. Criticisms appear to fall largely into 2 categories. The first is expectation. His earlier books are composed of brief, 2-3 page unconnected humorous scenarios which are frequently laugh out loud funny. This book's humor is much more broadly satirical which was probably disappointing to anyone who came into this expecting the laugh at every page. The second, and in my opinion, fairer criticism is the lack of depth of the characters. For me, this was frustrating because it *felt* like the characters were more substantial, but we just weren't being given enough. Overall, though, Rich's prose is breezy and the book is pretty short, so it isn't much of a time commitment. I had fun reading it, and I suspect it would play well to a younger audience.

Aletha says

I guess I'm being pretty brutal giving this only one star but out of all the Simon Rich books I've read this one was just disappointing. It started off interesting but by the time I got halfway through it seemed like such a chore to read. Perhaps it wasn't supposed to be funny, but I don't remember laughing at anything. Maybe I was expecting the humor that I found in the other Rich books I've read.

I didn't like any of the characters, Elliot the most and Seymour especially toward the end. I agree with others who said the characters were paper thin. The ending was a little underwhelming for me as well. I think I was expecting more the whole time I was reading.

Andrew Campbell says

SNL writer (and almost impossibly young-looking) Rich displays flashes of real comic invention, but ultimately the book's milquetoast protagonist keeps the book from biting. The details of how the obscenely wealthy Allagashes flaunt and perpetuate their wealth are delightful, but the rest can be found in almost any other comic novel set in high school. (And there are a lot of those, esp. lately.)

Clyde Kim says

Moves like an indie comedy movie

If you like Wes Anderson films, this book will definitely be an appealing read. The book has a dry wit that could be found in an episode of the Office. It almost doesn't read like a common prose story. In many ways it reminds me of Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy in presentation. The main storyline is separated with the musings and stories told by the main protagonist, Seymour and occasionally by Elliott's father. The only difference is that the narrative of this book is a bit more focused (Hitchhikers Guide still rules all). If you want an easy read, that's really funny, I would highly recommend this book. Some day this will make a great film if some one adapts it.

Gretchen Rings says

An evil teenage billionaire named Elliot Allagash is poised to take over his new prep school--and the world--in this hilarious first novel by Saturday Night Live writer Simon Rich.

Bethany says

What odd little book.

CëRiSë says

I read this book based on a glowing review, and though I can't now recall the source, I was sufficiently moved to place a hold on it at the local library, and to consider buying it online in case I couldn't wait.

It was a welcome enough diversion (and thankfully arrived at the library before I was forced to purchase it), and the speediest of reads: I finished it in a single afternoon. I didn't think it was terribly funny, although there were certainly some creative bits. I think I would probably have enjoyed it quite a bit as a kid (and was made aware of my own age and generation not merely because I didn't appreciate all the pre-teen humor, but because the cultural references were from approximately 1996-7, which was when its young author, the 26-year old Simon Rich, was presumably himself at the age of his characters).

I think I'd also had the impression somehow that it was a British book, which might have made it funnier. *Angus, Thongs and Full-Frontal Snogging: Confessions of Georgia Nicolson*, the last British teen-y book I read (a gift from my sister) was a scream.

Ti.Me says

What a waste of a few hours. Oh, well.

Nicole says

This was an odd book. I liked the basic idea of it - it reminded me of one of my favorite films, *Election*, due to the setting and the general plot. It would have made a better short story or novella. There's just not quite enough "there" there to fill a whole novel, and it seems padded/repetitious. Not bad - but could've been better.
