



The Life of God (as Told by Himself)

Franco Ferrucci , Raymond Rosenthal (Translator)

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At the center of Franco Ferrucci's inspired novel is a tender, troubled God. In the beginning is God's solitude, and because God is lonely he creates the world. He falls in love with earth, plunges into the oceans, lives as plant and reptile and bird. His every thought and mood serve to populate the planet, with consequences that run away from him—sometimes delightfully, sometimes unfortunately.

When a new arrival emerges from the apes, God believes he has finally found the companion he needs to help him make sense of his unruly creation. Yet, as the centuries pass, God feels more and more out of place in the world he has created; by the close of his memoir, he is packing his bags.

Highly praised and widely reviewed, *The Life of God* is a playful, wondrous, and irresistible book, recounting thousands of years of religious and philosophical thought.

"A supreme but imperfect entity, the protagonist of this religiously enlightened and orthodoxically heretical novel is possessed by a raving love for his skewed, unbalanced world. . . . Blessed are the readers, for this tale of God's long insomnia will keep them happily awake. . . . Extraordinary." —Umberto Eco

"The Life of God is, in truth, the synthesis of a charming writer's . . . expression of his boundless hopes for, and poignant disappointments in, his own human kind." —Jack Miles, *New York Times Book Review*

"Rather endearing. . . . This exceedingly amusing novel . . . is a continuous provocation and delight; there isn't a dull page in it." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"A smart and charming knitting of secular and ecclesiastic views of the world. . . . The character of God is likable—sweet, utterly human. . . . The prose is delightful . . . the writing is consistently witty and intelligent and periodically hilarious." —Allison Stark Draper, *Boston Review*

"'God's only excuse is that he does not exist,' wrote Stendhal, but now Franco Ferrucci has provided the Supreme Being with another sort of alibi." —James Morrow, *Washington Post Book World*

The Life of God (as Told by Himself) Details

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Author : Franco Ferrucci , Raymond Rosenthal (Translator)

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Rick Edwards says

In Italian the book is called *Il Mondo Creato*. The English edition departs somewhat from the Italian original, thanks to a close collaboration between author Franco Ferrucci and translator Raymond Rosenthal. Ferrucci writes not only novels but also criticism, and this light-hearted yet fearless narration of the relation between the Creator and "his" world reads like a critical history of culture. "God," as Ferrucci has portrayed the deity, moves back and forth between the wider cosmos and earthy particularities. "God" may enter the life of a Russian peasant suffering from civil war, or enter into friendly conversation with Albert Einstein--initially during the great physicist's childhood but on more than one later occasion, to stimulate his theoretical mentation. He's the male half of a deeply loving older couple in Portugal, and he's arguing with Moses. You can imagine the possibilities; many of them he explores to great hilarity or profound observations about the human condition.

"God" is unhappy that humans invent war, until becoming immersed in it through the person of a combatant the deity is consumed by it. I encourage you to snag a copy and settle back to enjoy it. (My recent reading, by the way, was a second time through. My notes indicate I read it originally in 2005.)

Toria Burrell-Hrencecin says

Full title = "The Life of God (as told by himself)". Philosophical and compelling. This book should become a classic if it hasn't done so already. It's the sort of book I can imagine on reading lists in schools and colleges. It is a mind-blowing, deeply thought-provoking book, following and challenging the history of creation and mankind, right up to present day, with plenty of nail-biting yarns along the way!. You will be drawn in by the humble, bewildered character, God, who longs to communicate with man and find out what he's doing here on earth, and why these creatures worship him so much, when he, God, is just as flawed, imperfect and base as man himself. It's God's own personal journey (like all of us) trying to make sense of life, trying to follow different philosophies, trying to understand man and at the same time, falling in love with beauty, nature and all the pleasures that life entices us with. Ferrucci shows an extensive knowledge of history, philosophy and religion, but he also writes a compelling story too.

Banu Karayel says

Uzun zamandır elimden bırakmaktan okuduğum bunun gibi bir kurgu olmamı??. Eksikliği vardı elbet nihayetinde tüm bir evrenin hikayesi (yahut orijinal ismindeki gibi... tanrının hikayesi) eksiksiz, gediksiz yazılmazdı, olağan?r. Ama zaten kim taahhüt etti ki eksiksiz bir metin ortaya çıkacak diye. Her varoluştaki oldu?u gibi kusurlar?yla güzeldi hem de pek çok... ^^

Regan says

Philosophical, historical, theological, reflective ROMP. What a book! This turned up in the discard shelf for

my library and I stumbled upon it. I'm having it added back into circulation. Maybe no one else will find it but I hope so. This book is a creative riot and an utter riot about creation.

Loved this book. No need to be a religious sort to enjoy this. Hopefully the religious sorts won't be offended by this utterly enchanting, endearing, humorous take on the life of God.

I was enraptured from the beginning of the book. Didn't enjoy some of the more tedious middle sections but came back into for the last chapters. I'm a secular sort but reading the epilogue had me so sad and humored and amused and ultimately yes, hopeful maybe for our humankind. Improve - that's the philosophical message and hope for humanity woven into these musings. And really, all I thought at the end was a hope that we keep excelling....

Louise Dickens says

I don't think this is the sort of book that you can read only once. Deeply philosophical and wondrously thought-provoking, I'm not going to pretend that I fully understand and appreciate the themes and messages of the author.

I initially found the narrative of God refreshing, liberating and entertaining. Ferrucci's God awoke one day in an isolated void of nothingness. Completely alone and unable to remember anything prior to his awakening, God in his infancy is confused and unhappy wandering blind in the darkness of nothingness. Overcome with feelings of abandonment and sorrow he lets out a cry, which exploded into fragments and fell as a solitary, burning ball; God had created the sun.

The first part of this story makes for great reading, and Ferrucci paints clear and detailed visions of beauty in your mind (which is a talent to be admired).

God consciously experiments with creation, and quickly learns that he cannot make and unmake as he pleases; once something has been created it cannot be destroyed and will evolve and develop beyond God's control. God also learns that his mere emotions and thoughts can unintentionally spark creation, when he discovers that insects appear as the reality and embodiment of his anxieties.

It's amazing how thought-provoking this book is. And for me, it made me realise the power behind language and words – and I thought to myself how easy it is to believe things, just because you read them. Obviously, I was aware that this book was a work of fiction – completely (yet brilliantly) made up and untrue...but I found myself thinking “What if we've got it all wrong?” anyway. I couldn't help it.

And if it's so easy to be led by written words, and influenced by them – then it makes you think about the true origins of the Bible. Those who believe the Bible so readily would have believed it whatever it had said – how do we know that it is the truth? What if the Bible was a fictitious tale written a long time ago for the amusement of people who didn't have anything better to do at the time?

I don't want to start a religious debate here. I'm just saying, it's awe-inspiring and scary really, how reading a book can make you question real life – and the meaning behind it. I guess that's one of the reasons why I love books so much.

However, I have to say that after the initial flood of inspiration and life-pondering, this book starts to drag a

little bit. It isn't the easiest of reads so that probably didn't help (and that probably is due to the fact that the original language of this book was Italian, and so this is more an adaptation than a true translation), and it jumps very quickly without any seeming connection from character to character, as God 'possesses'(for want of a better word) the random lives of humans (and animals).

When at first, God encounters Moses and then later Jesus, it is an interesting alternative view of the story we all have learnt from the Bible. But after God has 'bumped' into Buddha, Einstein, Mussolini and every other famous character from history it becomes more annoying (and less believable) and you can't help but feel disappointed by the lack of originality from Ferrucci. Other reviewers have claimed these frequent historical 'nods' amusing, but I found it boring after a while; "here we go again".

The older God gets and the more humans evolve, the more unhappy God gets. He cannot get them to understand who he is and what he wants, and that's partly because he doesn't understand himself. All those who encounter God, end up extremely dissatisfied with him, because God is unsure, unconfident and doesn't have any of 'the answers'. Towards the end of the book, God understands that the world he has created is imperfect because it is a reflection of his self, and he decides to leave and try again elsewhere.

I have to say the ending wasn't as strong as I would have expected (from the strong opening) and I felt slightly deflated – but was that the point? I admit that I'm going to have to re-read the book again to grasp a better understanding of it. I'm really interested in hearing other people's thoughts of this book, please do comment if you've read it!

Anja Lysholm says

This was one of the first "real" books I ever read as a young child or teenager, and I loved it. I think I've actually read it twice, and I'd like to read it again now as an adult.

Emilie Nouveau says

This book was an occasionally interesting musing on God and humanity, but I feel like it didn't hold my interest largely because the main character, while being immortal, was just as human and fallible as the old gods of various pantheons, but more passive. He understood his creations even less than they understood each other, and with so much time to spend among them seemed to understand them even less as time went on. In the end, it felt like reading a memoir of someone hitchhiking through the world with Alzheimer's and no sense of direction.

As much as I wanted to love this book, I just didn't find anything new in it. There were tiny moments throughout that held me, but I think it would have worked much better pared down to the more essential stories instead of attempting to meander through most of western history.

Charlie says

some sort of vague spoilers ahead..

I don't know...it's kinda of a mixed bag with this book. I thought the author's take on God was really interesting, his personality, the manner in which he does or does not interact with the earth's timeline. God is presented here initially with the immense power to create and influence, but then seems to vanish into the background into his own life, as his creations begin to operate on their own terms (man foremost of all). I like the representation of God as lonely and esoteric, definitely humanizing him and making him easier to identify with. another bit I really liked was how God copes with encountering people's wildly inaccurate ideas about him, particularly in relation to his views on sex and desire and shellfish. God is presented here as a sexual and romantic being, which i thought was interesting as well. one of the most compelling sections was where God falls in love with a human woman, and forgets his responsibilities as a deity. Some of the most thought provoking treatment was with regard to his interactions with Moses, and his characterization of Moses in general as sort of a megalomaniac. As a recovering Catholic, these bits are what appealed to me.

That being said, it's a little slow in parts. I thought it was incredibly interesting all through the book until after biblical times. After the death of Christ, the book tends to wander a bit, lacking much direction (maybe that was a style choice?). I found myself plodding through the book after that, wanting to see it through to the end, hoping it will get better.

That being said, the last 10-20 pages or so were gripping. So that's something. I was wondering, in those boring parts that came before it, how it would end. It reached a satisfying, poetic, philosophical end.

a tl;dr review? Blasphemy, blasphemy all over, but the kind that I feel humans were built for. The kind that makes you really ponder what is expected of human animals. Some bits worth reading, some bits worth skipping, all in all, the book is perhaps more satisfying and enjoyable to think about after the fact than to actually read. a worthwhile way to pass the time.

Yasemin ?ahin says

Tanr?'n'n evreni yarat?'m sürecini masals? bir üslupla anlatm?? yazar. Birçok filozof, bilgin, bilim adam?'n'n ve din adam?'n'n içerisinde vücut bularak ve birço?unun da yan? ba??nda biterek, yaratt?klar? veya dü?ündükleri ?eyleri gözlemleme hatta yarat?c? süreçte pay? oldu?unu vurgulama tela??ndayd? pek çok kez. Bir noktada Tanr? olmasayd? bunlar olmazd?, yarat?lamazd?, dü?ünülemezdi derken; bir noktada da müdahale edemedi?i, pi?man oldu?u, kendisinin bile ?a??rd??? olaylar?n olageldi?ini aktarmaya çal??m??. Einstein'dan, Feud'a, Mussolini'den, Musa'ya, ?sa'ya, bir kertenkeleden, ku?a, Emerson'dan, Dickinson'a, Moby Dick'e varana dek okurken keyiflendi?imiz, bildi?imiz, tan?'d???m?z için mutlu oldu?umuz herkesin ya kendisi ya da yan? ba??ndaki ki?i oluyor Tanr?. Çiçekleri sularken suyu fazla verip, sel; mobilyalar? ta??y?p, çekmeceleri kapat?rken depreme sebep oluyor...Üzülüyor sonra...Evren art?k onun denetiminden ç?k?yor ve etraf? son bir kolaçan etmek istiyor. Gittikçe, uzakla?t?kça elektrik sinyallerine kar??m?? dualar duyuyorum diyor, kelimeleri anlamakta güçlük çekiyormu?...

Visceraangel says

I will never find a book to love as much as I did this one. My friend Dawn picked it up for me on a hunch. Good hunch!

Starlight says

Read it. Seriously. I think this is my favorite book in the whole wide world.

Kynan says

The Author is Franco Ferrucci and it is beautifully written with many parts that can stand alone as parables. The main character is more human than God-like despite actually being God.

Lifeonholidae says

This is an ontological mind bust. If you want a book that will trouble you, confuse you, love you and teach you read this. It is the fictional autobiography of God. However this is not the God we (westerners and easterners alike) have in mind. This a tender, self-conscious God somewhere hovering in the plot line of an episode of "Freaks and Geeks." As a side note the author of this book is Franco Ferrucci NOT Raymond Rosenthal. He did however help translate this book from the italian with the author Ferrucci.

Marvin says

This is delightful in both tone & substance, & is intellectually challenging. It tells of God's encounters with humankind, from two delightful sections on the creation and God's dealings with Moses to recent dealings. After the initial leisurely accounts, the encounters become much briefer & less satisfying, but still rewarding. God is constantly on the lookout for humans who recognize him in their lives, but then is baffled by the attributes & actions they attribute to him. Like the George Burns characterization of God in Oh, God! (but with considerably more sophistication), Ferrucci's God wants humans to take responsibility for completing (even improving on) his creation.

Marcia says

Regardless of your religious views--or lack-there-of, you will find something thought-provoking,insightful, amusing or delightful in this novel.
