



Then We Came to the End: A Novel

By Joshua Ferris

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No one knows us quite the same way as the men and women who sit beside us in department meetings and crowd the office refrigerator with their labeled yogurts. Every office is a family of sorts, and the ad agency Joshua Ferris brilliantly depicts in his debut novel is family at its strangest and best, coping with a business downturn in the time-honored way: through gossip, pranks, and increasingly frequent coffee breaks.

With a demon's eye for the details that make life worth noticing, Joshua Ferris tells a true and funny story about survival in life's strangest environment--the one we pretend is normal five days a week.

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Then We Came to the End: A Novel By Joshua Ferris Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best of the Month Spotlight Title, April 2007: It's 2001. The dot-com bubble has burst and rolling layoffs have hit an unnamed Chicago advertising firm sending employees into an escalating siege mentality as their numbers dwindle. As a parade of employees depart, bankers boxes filled with their personal effects, those left behind raid their fallen comrades' offices, sifting through the detritus for the errant desk lamp or Aeron chair. Written with confidence in the tricky-to-pull-off first-person plural, the collective fishbowl perspective of the "we" voice nails the dynamics of cubicle culture--the deadlines, the gossip, the elaborate pranks to break the boredom, the joy of discovering free food in the breakroom. Arch, achingly funny, and surprisingly heartfelt, it's a view of how your work becomes a symbiotic part of your life. A dysfunctional family of misfits forced together and fondly remembered as it falls apart. Praised as "the *Catch-22* of the business world" and "*The Office* meets Kafka," I'm happy to report that Joshua Ferris's brilliant debut lives up to every ounce of pre-publication hype and instantly became one of my favorite books of the year. --*Brad Thomas Parsons*

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. In this wildly funny debut from former ad man Ferris, a group of copywriters and designers at a Chicago ad agency face layoffs at the end of the '90s boom. Indignation rises over the rightful owner of a particularly coveted chair ("We felt deceived"). Gonzo e-mailer Tom Mota quotes Walt Whitman and Ralph Waldo Emerson in the midst of his tirades, desperately trying to retain a shred of integrity at a job that requires a ruthless attention to what will make people buy things. Jealousy toward the aloof and "inscrutable" middle manager Joe Pope spins out of control. Copywriter Chris Yop secretly returns to the office after he's laid off to prove his worth. Rumors that supervisor Lynn Mason has breast cancer inspire blood lust, remorse, compassion. Ferris has the downward-spiraling office down cold, and his use of the narrative "we" brilliantly conveys the collective fear, pettiness, idiocy and also humanity of high-level office drones as anxiety rises to a fever pitch. Only once does Ferris shift from the first person plural (for an extended fugue on Lynn's realization that she may be ill), and the perspective feels natural throughout. At once delightfully freakish and entirely credible, Ferris's cast makes a real impression. (*Mar.*)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Anyone who has spent time in corporate America will recognize the inhabitants of Joshua Ferris's office: the Gossip, the Whiner, the Stapler Thief—and why not? Statistically, Americans spend more time with coworkers than with their families. Ferris, a former cubicle dweller himself, has created a rich cast of characters whose depth and realism surprised reviewers. Some admitted to initial doubts about Ferris's use of the first person plural—a collective, omniscient "we"—but all agreed that the generic narrator succeeded in pulling readers into the story. While the piercing, razor-sharp wit will keep readers laughing out loud, the plot twists and sudden character revelations make *Then We Came to the End* an insightful, intelligent commentary on humanity and individualism in the workplace. Concludes the *Los Angeles Times*: "It may even be, in its own modest way, a great American novel."

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Judith Lea:

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Clarence McKeever:

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