



Hard Feelings

Jason Starr

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Things aren't going so well for Richie Segal. His prospects at the job are pretty miserable and, what's more humiliating, his wife's prospects at her job are pretty good. Richie knows he's a good salesman, but he just can't seem to land an account. And he's starting to drink again. And worry about whether Paula's seeing that old high school flame, or maybe someone new. It's a little early, at thirty-four, for a mid-life crisis, but that's pretty much what it feels like. And there're those unwelcome memories of the neighborhood bully, Michael Rudnick and what he did to Richie when he was thirteen. Richie Segal's feeling, well, abused.

Just when Richie's about as low as he can get, he runs into Rudnick on the street and knows exactly what he needs to do. And suddenly things seem to be going much better. That is until they get much, much worse. In the classic tradition of Jim Thompson and James M. Cain, **Hard Feelings** is novel that lets us into the mind of an ordinary guy capable of things that even he couldn't have imagined.

Hard Feelings Details

Date : Published January 8th 2002 by Vintage (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9780375727092

Author : Jason Starr

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Maddy says

PROTAGONIST: Richie Segal

SETTING: New York City

RATING: 3.25

WHY: Richie Segal was a successful salesman who changed jobs and hasn't made a sale in months. He's drinking again, but his problems really start when he accidentally sees his childhood abuser, Michael Rudnick, on the street. He rapidly spirals out of control, assaulting Rudnick and wrecking his marriage. Every page brings more disaster. It's like watching 2 trains rushing toward each other--no matter how horrible you know it's going to be, you can't stop looking.

Chelsea says

Having finished Jason Starr's too far novel I couldn't wait to jump into Hard Feelings- it lived up to my expectations so much so I inhaled the book within two days, I love Jason's books, he definitely knows how to engage his readers, you really understand the characters and I felt I knew them personally, I enjoy the build up and tension of Jason's plots and that he leaves you struggling to put the book down. Few pages suddenly turn into chapter after chapter, he's definitely one of my new favourite authors!!

Yael Maree says

Not the delivery I was hoping for with the build up.

Manuel Antão says

My first Jason Starr. I'm reading this novel in tandem with "Light's Out" and I sense a running theme.

I'm always a sucker for novels with amoral characters, or unsatisfying endings. This one has plenty of that. Richard Segal looks like a normal guy in every sense of the word. He doesn't manifest any overt psychological abnormalities in his life. At the beginning everything is running smoothly, but when problems arose, he reverted to his primal state of psychopathology.

Starr likes to draw his characters from everyday life, make everything seem pretty normal. And then he punches you in the stomach... He pushes his story lines and his characters to extremes, and takes it from there.

Character-driven fiction that starts bad and gets worse, but not necessarily with a dark, relentless tone. I don't need to like the characters I'm reading about, but I need to understand them. That's fully on display here. I like reading about fucked-up characters...

He was able to capture the perverse pleasures, edgy excitement and dark humour of what I see as twenty-first century noir. I've been into 21st-century noir fiction lately, and I was told in vigorous terms that I should start reading Jason Starr. The vigour and diversity of recent literary noir are difficult to convey in a brief review. That's also not the point here. What's definitely the point here is that Jason Starr is worth keeping an eye on.

One of Starr's strong points is his ability to make uncompromising pulp traditionalism seem both radical and fresh. More than most authors, Jason Starr uses the workplace as a setting to fuel tensions (vide Richard Segal's interactions with his boss Bob).

What definitely won me over was the abrupt ending. What a stunt. Fitting as hell.
"

Paul Bryant says

What I don't like is when I find the first chapter of the author's next book added on to the end of the book I'm reading, like a free download or like junk mail. You don't see Marcel Proust or Margaret Atwood doing that. It's really not classy.

What I do like is another tale of a guy coming apart at the seams as the pressure builds up and up and UP. We've seen it many times before, in movies like *Fargo*, *Locke* and *Bad Lieutenant*, and in novels like *Casino Moon*, *Bonfire of the Vanities* and *What I Lived For*. This one is a solid addition, nothing too fancy. But I think survivors of childhood sexual abuse might not appreciate how the horrible memories bubble up, poison and wreck the life of our unravelling computer systems salesman Richard Segal here. It's completely bleak.

Richard Segal is a very unpleasant protagonist but he suffers so much you're reading through your fingers sometimes. Jason Starr is an interesting writer – I wonder what other ideas he's had for plots? Hmm – I think I'll read the first chapter of *Tough Luck* that they were kind enough to include....

Bert says

Always guaranteed to cure a reading slump, Jason Starr writes these madly compulsive thrillers that for some reason are more addictive than cocaine flavoured humous. Once again, this is a really horrible car-crash of a novel featuring a kinda-alcoholic kinda-yuppie who you almost empathise with but who gets in the deepest shit imaginable, and that's funny...this is what Starr does best, trashy, clever, knowing and dark dark dark.

Delia says

"Hard Feelings" is the second Jason Starr novel I've read this month, and I am officially a major fan. I read this book in a single evening, and I can't remember the last time I've done that. The writing is straightforward and stripped down, never coy, overbearing, or enamored with itself. There is a lot of dark humor here, especially in the scenes of Richard struggling to thrive in his cut-throat sales job. It's painful, yet riveting to watch Richard unravel.

Roger Cottrell says

The best American crime writer operating today and this is one of his best books. You really feel that you know the seamy underside of Brooklyn or Queens when you've read a Jason Starr novel. As an admirer of the kitchen sink novels e.g. of Alan Sillitoe and Ted Lewis (as well as the crime thriller genre) and committed to fusing the two in my own work, I really like the fact that Starr's characters are usually disempowered nobodies who inhabit the real world. I've also met Jason and he's a really sound bloke. And to coin a Jason Starr joke, my mother is the OTHER IRish woman who can't cook!

John says

Dark noir like tale about a seemingly average guy with a hidden amoral streak that once exposed leads him down a violent path of destruction. Full review attached below.

<https://johngrecoauthor.com/2019/02/0...>

Ladiibbug says

Crime Fiction

Richie Segal is going through a rough patch in his life. He's a computer network salesman, and his recent job change has seen him hit a terrible sales slump. His wife, Paula, is an MBA with a new promotion. Richie and Paula are arguing alot, and are \$20,000 in debt thanks to credit cards.

Richie is seeking relief in alcohol, but that just makes everything worse.

One day at lunch Richie sees Michael Rudnick, who as a teenager bullied Richie. As memories return, Richie gets angrier and seeks revenge.

Jason Starr's hard boiled, gritty crime novels are thrilling and unpredictable. As usual, events spiral out of control, leaving you eagerly turning the pages.

Hard Feelings ends, like the other JS books I've read, with events the reader could never predict!

Electric says

falls einem die welt wieder einmal unsagbar ungerecht vorkommt ist dieses buch ein gutes gegenmittel. der unsympathler in der hauptrolle bekommt was er verdient. und wieder eine gescheiterte biographie mehr die starr hier knochentrocken in scene setzt. bei meinem dritten buch von starr hab ich allerdings dann doch das gefühl dass der gute jason nur einen charakter beschreibt, nicht mehrere...aber noch werfe ich ihm das nicht vor, dazu schreibt er einfach zu unterhaltsam. aufzeichnungen aus dem banalen psychopathen-alltag.

Jordan McPeck says

Average guy with few friends makes one bad decision after another, alienating himself even more. It all snowballs until it explodes in a spectacular ending. You feel for the guy, shouting at him as he takes the wrong fork in the road yet again. As a reader, you see what's happening, hear the self-rationalization, yet are helpless to stop it. And that's what makes this such a compelling read. I've complained about books where too much time is spent on day-to-day lives of main characters, and not enough on the crime elements of the story. Even though the same could be said about this book - nothing really criminal happens until you're about half done - the largely downward spiral of the character is what drives it. Simple plot and lean writing also keeps it speeding along. Absolute pageturner. Lent it to a guy at work the day I finished it. He read it within 24 hours. Loved it, too.

Stephen says

Cannot understand why this one doesn't have a higher score and more ratings - thought it was great and almost a 5 star read for me (take half a star off for not quite being believable). Descriptions of corporate life and dialogue with his wife all seemed very authentic and there were a couple of unexpected twists and what I thought was a great ending. Will definitely track down more by this author.

Ed Armstrong says

Richard Segal was a successful network system salesman and consultant who changed jobs and, overnight, became not so successful, successful and....well that's the story. He's married to Paula, a rising star with a Wall Street investment research firm who "has a past." Richard struggles with his alcohol addiction and, apparently, Paula struggles with a sex addiction. The couple argues frequently and the arguments inevitably involve their addictions. Jason Starr writes about middle class people living in New York City and struggling to make ends meet. The stories usually go along at an easy pace when suddenly, what seems to be an innocent plot turns ugly and the ending usually leaves the reader wondering. Hard Feelings is no different from his other novels in this regard. Be prepared to be left with an unsettled feeling when you read the last page of this novel. I will say that Starr's books do catch your attention and do compel you to keep reading. But that's what books are for: To be read and to entertain.

Scott Cumming says

In the first two Starr books I've read, through everything there were still periods where I was rooting for the main character no matter the trouble they go themselves into. In *Hard Feelings*, however, I found it difficult to muster any such support for Richie Segal. His decisions at times are mind boggling and unjustifiable and he is a difficult character to follow through a first person narrative. That difficulty is negated by the fact that Starr is a true master of suspense and once again had me rattling through his novel in around 24 hours for the third consecutive read.
