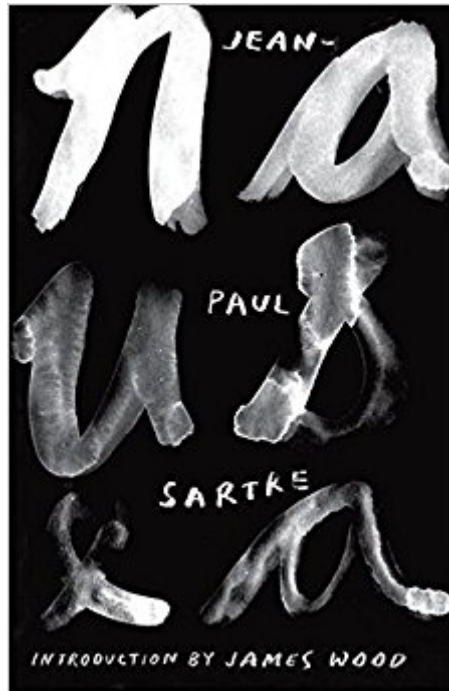




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Nausea (New Directions Paperbook)



Synopsis

Sartre's greatest novel • and existentialism's key text • now introduced by James Wood. Nausea is the story of Antoine Roquentin, a French writer who is horrified at his own existence. In impressionistic, diary form he ruthlessly catalogs his every feeling and sensation. His thoughts culminate in a pervasive, overpowering feeling of nausea which • spreads at the bottom of the viscous puddle, at the bottom of our time • the time of purple suspenders and broken chair seats; it is made of wide, soft instants, spreading at the edge, like an oil stain. • Winner of the 1964 Nobel Prize in Literature (though he declined to accept it), Jean-Paul Sartre • philosopher, critic, novelist, and dramatist • holds a position of singular eminence in the world of French letters. *La Nausée*, his first and best novel, is a landmark in Existential fiction and a key work of the twentieth century.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Hey, I'm a pessimist. There, I said it. I'm already horrified at my existence. I don't need anyone else doing it for me, but that's exactly what Jean-Paul Sartre did in Nausea, the story of a writer (Anton Roquentin) who becomes horrified by his own existence while working on a novel about a historical figure. Over the course of the novel, in true existentialist fashion, Roquentin wonders about the purpose of his life, whether or not he really has free will, the idea of • adventure, • and what it all means. In other words, if you talk to me for more than ten minutes at a time, you'll be hearing the gist of this novel. It's not the kind of book you can breeze through. It's heavy, both in subject matter and in density. I was actually surprised how much a

French history course from my college days came up here. I instantly thought of the idea of the flaneur, which was essentially a person who walked, wandered around, and just observed. Roquentin spends a lot of time as a flaneur, wandering around Paris and observing the lives of others. His perceived invisibility during his walks make him seem very much in the tradition of Baudrillard's flaneur. These are the guys that stare at you when you're out at the store. I'll be honest "I read Nausea in tandem with the Sparknotes on the novel. The novel is under 200 pages, but there's a lot to unpack in this novel, and there are a lot of cultural references that I wanted to be sure I wouldn't miss. This is the type of novel that all novels should aspire to be--every detail is significant. Roquentin looks to the Marquis de Rollebon to try to figure out his own existence, but he struggles to find anything definitive about the past, so he is forced to turn to the present.

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