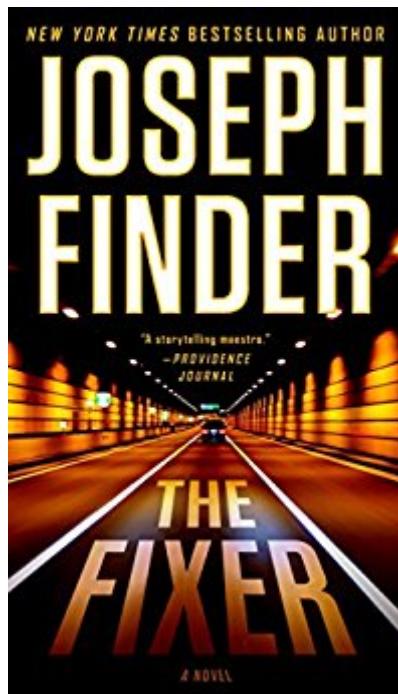


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The Fixer



Synopsis

New York Times bestselling author Joseph Finder's breakneck stand-alone thriller about the secrets families can keep—and the danger of their discovery. When former investigative reporter Rick Hoffman loses his job, fiancée, and apartment, his only option is to move back into—and renovate—the home of his miserable youth, now empty and in decay since the stroke that put his father in a nursing home. As Rick starts to pull apart the old house, he makes an electrifying discovery—millions of dollars hidden in the walls. It's enough money to completely transform Rick's life—and everything he thought he knew about his father. Yet the more of his father's hidden past that Rick brings to light, the more dangerous his present becomes. Soon, he finds himself on the run from deadly enemies desperate to keep the past buried, and only solving the mystery of his father—a man who has been unable to communicate, comprehend, or care for himself for almost 20 years—will save Rick...if he can survive long enough to do it. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Sometimes, as a reader, you come across a story that is "just right." Everything works in this

mythical book - the characters, the storyline, the dialogue and most importantly, the ending. Well, to me THE FIXER is just such a story. I found myself carrying this book around so I could read it every little chance I got. And, sadly, I'm a fast reader so I breezed through the book and am now just left with the memories of it. Sounds corny, doesn't it? But with a really good book you hate to see the ending roll around because you know it'll probably be a while before another winner shows up on your bookshelf. Rick Hoffman had been living the good life. He had a great paying job as a reporter, nice home, fancy fiancée on his arm. Then he lost his job and everything else just followed. So he ends up back in the family house that has been sitting empty for years. And the house is in terrible condition. When Rick starts poking around, trying to figure out what repairs are needed, he comes across a PILE of money hidden in the walls. And so his journey starts, trying to find out: 1. How the money got there. 2. What his father knew about the origins of the moolah. And this is a treacherous trip he embarks on because there are those out there that don't want his questions answered. But Rick has been an investigative journalist and, despite the dangers involved, wants answers. As always, author Finder writes compelling prose, drawing the reader in. I wanted the answers too as I read the story. Believable flawed characters, a relentless storyline, masterful dialogue - this is a thriller that is one of Finder's best (and that's saying a lot).

Joseph Finder's latest thriller, *The Fixer*, is about a former investigative reporter, Rick Hoffman, who winds up living in his father's abandoned house when he loses his job. But it turns out the house has secrets, and so does his father, who's been vegetating in a nursing home for some 20 years after a stroke. Of course Rick starts looking into things and winds up in trouble with various unpleasant characters who want him to mind his own business. *The Fixer* is a decent enough read, and it certainly helped pass the time on a train ride recently. But there are two things that bug me about the story. One is in fact something one of the bad guys says to Rick in the course of the story: the 20-year-old mystery he's trying to solve just doesn't seem worth risking his life for. It's not even particularly interesting. So that failing kind of undermines the whole story. The second--and here's a spoiler--is that there's a fair amount of attention given in the book to Rick's father's treatment. It turns out that there may be a way to get him to talk, and we anticipate that he'll have something very important to say as soon as he can. Maybe he'll ID the bad guys, or maybe the bad guys will find out about his treatment and make sure he's never able to say anything. But no. He dies, of natural causes of all things, and that part of the story simply evaporates. So the story is not as tight as it could be. Still, it's not the worst way to spend a few hours of your time.

I so wanted to like this book, but it was a frustrating and uneven book to read. I did make it to the end, but was skimming several pages at a time to do so. The problem was the editing. It had a good plot and good elements, but they were inconsistently and unevenly applied. For example, the device to add something that should have been introduced way earlier, "which he had previously stopped to pick up" jars you out of the chronology because the editor was too lazy to pull that snippet back where it belongs. Likewise the sister suddenly appears about two-thirds of the way through the book as a living and breathing character after nothing but an early mention (thank heavens for at least mentioning this sibling) then is relied on heavily to add life to the plot. Finally, if you have EVER fractured a rib, you know that you can barely move without absolute agony for about six weeks. You are also in danger of puncturing a lung with a rib until it heals. The main character in this book is diagnosed with three ribs completely broken through, not just fractured, yet he's immediately out and about having fights with bad guys, with not a mention of rib pain. Groan!! Either write out the rib stuff, or make it real. He'd be on his knees unable to move, let alone fist fight! The antagonist would be kicking for his ribs to finish him off. I honestly do not blame the author for these things, it has the feel of many of these devices being added in during editing but not smoothly incorporated and backfilled. Perhaps he did not read the final manuscript after copy editing was done. I don't know what the author was going through after he finished the book and before publication. All I know is that there were some flashes of brilliance followed by loss of plot movement, loss of chronology and repeated disappointment each time this happened. This is the first book I've read by Joseph Finder, I hope his other books are better edited. I will read more and expect better.

I barely made it halfway through the book before I gave up. It was too boring for me. It might be better for a male reader who had issues with his father. The plots are very slow and unbelievable. Rick Hoffman does not seem very intelligent to me and does a lot of dumb things. I just don't have the patience to muddle thru the book.

Did not like this book on many different levels. The writing was packed with cliches. The story line dragged and lacked excitement. It was hard to feel any attachment to the characters. The plot, if you can call it a plot, was crusading journalist brings down the most powerful man in Boston. Yippee! And, the conclusion was completely obvious and unimaginative. Cliff Note: don't waste your time.

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