



## Avenue of Mysteries

By John Irving

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### Avenue of Mysteries By John Irving

John Irving returns to the themes that established him as one of our most admired and beloved authors in this absorbing novel of fate and memory.

In *Avenue of Mysteries*, Juan Diego—a fourteen-year-old boy, who was born and grew up in Mexico—has a thirteen-year-old sister. Her name is Lupe, and she thinks she sees what's coming—specifically, her own future and her brother's. Lupe is a mind reader; she doesn't know what everyone is thinking, but she knows what most people are thinking. Regarding what *has* happened, as opposed to what *will*, Lupe is usually right about the past; without your telling her, she knows all the worst things that have happened to you.

Lupe doesn't know the future as accurately. But consider what a terrible burden it is, if you believe you know the future—especially your own future, or, even worse, the future of someone you love. What might a thirteen-year-old girl be driven to do, if she thought she could change the future?

As an older man, Juan Diego will take a trip to the Philippines, but what travels with him are his dreams and memories; he is most alive in his childhood and early adolescence in Mexico. As we grow older—most of all, in what we remember and what we dream—we live in the past. Sometimes, we live more vividly in the past than in the present.

*Avenue of Mysteries* is the story of what happens to Juan Diego in the Philippines, where what happened to him in the past—in Mexico—collides with his future.

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## Avenue of Mysteries By John Irving Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

**An Amazon Best Book of November 2015:** Juan Diego got his start in a Oaxacan dump, where he and his sister were self-described “dump kids.” Their mother Esperanza was a prostitute/cleaning woman, and in *Avenue of Mysteries* we revisit Esperanza, a pair of Jesuits who affected Juan Diego’s life, various circus members, Juan Diego, his sister, and others in a series of flashbacks. Having salvaged books in English and Spanish from the dump, Juan Diego taught himself to read and, ultimately, to write—he becomes a successful author, who eventually winds up in Iowa. Now in his fifties, he takes a trip to the Philippines, where he encounters a mother and her daughter, both of them fans, who insist on taking him around. If you’re a John Irving fan, some of the details to the story will sound familiar. It’s also likely you won’t have a problem with that. What I found most satisfying about Irving’s latest novel was a return of the feelings I remember from back when I first discovered his writing. This is an immersive read that delivers character, humor, and emotion. — *Chris Schluemp*

#### Review

“From the first page to the last, there is a goodness to this novel, a tenacious belief in love and the redemptive power of human connection, unfettered by institutions and conventions. This belief, combined with good old-fashioned storytelling, is surely why Irving is so often described as Dickensian. But John Irving is his own thing, and so is his new novel. *Avenue of Mysteries* is thoroughly modern, accessibly brainy, hilariously eccentric and beautifully human.” (*The New York Times Book Review*)

“An empathically imagined, masterfully told, and utterly transporting tale of transcendent sacrifice and perseverance, unlikely love, and profound mysteries.” (*Booklist (starred review)*)

“A richly detailed, imaginative and beautiful novel, with a series of events that seem equally bizarre and resoundingly universal.... It is a complex and many-layered novel that covers a lot of intellectual, moral and emotional ground, but in the end, it is the simplest, saddest and most wonderful tale of the human condition. It is about what we all fear: finding people to love, and then losing them, too.” (*The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*)

“A dream-steeped, enchanted, and often amusing tale.... Irving keeps this imaginative story, his aging novelist, his odd cast of characters, and his readers, moving on a trajectory toward collision in this unfailingly masterful narrative.” (*USA Today*)

“In its early pages especially, *Avenue of Mysteries* is laugh-out-loud funny.... Yet as funny as the new novel often is, Irving’s reconsideration of earlier themes seems more somber here. The novel explores questions of belief and disillusionment, chance and choice, the mundane and the miraculous. *Avenue of Mysteries* is a provocative and perplexing novel.” (*Bookpage*)

“Irving has always been a consummately convincing realist, in matters both great and small.... While writers of later generations seldom come close to achieving Irving’s levels of verisimilitude, his realism is transmogrified by his general whimsicality and by his attraction to baroque extrapolations of the absurd. This sort of ambition... is part of what makes Irving such a prodigious entertainer.... This novel is not autobiographical, but it does present an aging artist with a sacred wound, tremendous desire, and an endless

appetite for wonder.” (*The Boston Globe*)

“Juan Diego’s memories of adolescence around 1970 in Oaxaca compose some of the most charming scenes that Irving has ever written. He’s still an unparalleled choreographer of outrageous calamities that exist somewhere between coincidence and fate.... Those conflicting currents of spirituality flowing through *Avenue of Mysteries* add to Irving’s rich exploration of faith in several earlier novels.” (*Washington Post*)

“A vivid writer about sex.” (*The New York Times*)

“Like all of Irving’s novels, *Avenue of Mysteries* is about awakening — to the past, to hidden emotions, and to the truth and weight of trauma and childhood. Only this time, the narrative is dreamier and more ruminative.” (*Minneapolis Star Tribune*)

“The character is a captivating original; his tale includes humor, pathos, and acute observations. Once again, Irving charms by blending the fantastical with what is deeply, affectingly real.” (*People*)

“A wild and rollicking ride.... Irving plays delightful havoc with this colorful collection of humanity, beguiling us from start to finish.” (*Seattle Times*)

“This sprawling, imaginative tale about a writer whose life’s journey has all the qualities of a modern Dickens novel is vintage Irving.” (*AARP Magazine*)

“The outsize characters on the two vast alternating canvases Irving paints are more varied than the acts in a circus caravan.” (*Philadelphia Inquirer*)

“The novel is a remarkable feat... as Irving ignores the constraints of conventional fiction and tosses all of his ideas into his novelist’s blender and turns it on high.” (*Dallas Morning News*)

“Irving proves his prose still packs a punch in *Avenue of Mysteries*.... It’s good to see that this popular and insightful literary magician still has a few tricks up his sleeve.” (*Portland Press Herald*)

“*Avenue of Mysteries* is full of Irvingisms — the transvestite, the circus, the orphanage, the character who can’t speak, the car accident, the missing father, the weird Christianity. These elements are part of the fun for fans: hearing the familiar rhythm, finding the trademark components fit together in a novel way.” (*Newsday*)

“Delivers Irving’s typical blend of humor and tragedy.” (*Houston Chronicle*)

“Meaningfully dark and classically quirky.” (*Las Vegas Weekly*)

“Once again, Irving’s lyrical writing grabs readers from the first page.” (*Library Journal*)

“An entertaining, phantasmagoric look at the childhood that shaped a writer’s life.” (*St. Louis Post Dispatch*)

“The novel’s tone moves easily from drama to comedy to tragedy, the perfect mix for a film adaptation someday. Casting will probably take time — these characters are so unique. Until then, lose yourself in this tale from one of America’s pre-eminent storytellers.” (*Associated Press*)

“Have had a hard time putting down *Avenue of Mysteries*. A new John Irving novel is always like an unexpected gift.” (*Bookreporter.com*)

“Irving works his familiar themes—Catholicism, sex, death—with a light and assured touch.... A welcome return to form.” (*Kirkus Reviews*)

“In describing what Juan Diego goes through, Mr. Irving is something like a magician showing the audience how the rabbit actually pops out of the hat. Perhaps more than in any other of his books, *Avenue of Mysteries* demonstrates what is under the hood – what goes on in writers' minds.” (*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*)

#### About the Author

John Irving was born in Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1942. His first novel, *Setting Free the Bears*, was published in 1968, when he was twenty-six. He competed as a wrestler for twenty years, and coached wrestling until he was forty-seven. Mr. Irving has been nominated for a National Book Award three times—winning once, in 1980, for his novel *The World According to Garp*. He received an O. Henry Award in 1981 for his short story “Interior Space.” In 2000, Mr. Irving won the Oscar for Best Adapted Screenplay for *The Cider House Rules*. In 2013, he won a Lambda Literary Award for his novel *In One Person*. An international writer—his novels have been translated into more than thirty-five languages—John Irving lives in Toronto. His all-time best-selling novel, in every language, is *A Prayer for Owen Meany*. *Avenue of Mysteries* is his fourteenth novel.

### Users Review

#### From reader reviews:

##### **Robert Franco:**

The publication untitled Avenue of Mysteries is the publication that recommended to you to learn. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to a person. The language that writer use to explained their ideas are easily to understand. The copy writer was did a lot of analysis when write the book, so the information that they share for you is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of Avenue of Mysteries from the publisher to make you much more enjoy free time.

##### **Randall Hernandez:**

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation or go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. If you would like try to find a new activity here is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book which you read you can spent all day every day to reading a e-book. The book Avenue of Mysteries it is rather good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These folks were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space bringing this book you can buy the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from your smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book features high quality.

##### **Jenna Springer:**

Are you kind of busy person, only have 10 or maybe 15 minute in your time to upgrading your mind expertise or thinking skill even analytical thinking? Then you are having problem with the book when compared with can satisfy your small amount of time to read it because this time you only find book that need more time to be study. Avenue of Mysteries can be your answer since it can be read by you who have

those short extra time problems.

**Faye Michaels:**

What is your hobby? Have you heard in which question when you got students? We believe that that problem was given by teacher on their students. Many kinds of hobby, Everyone has different hobby. And you also know that little person like reading or as reading through become their hobby. You need to know that reading is very important in addition to book as to be the matter. Book is important thing to include you knowledge, except your teacher or lecturer. You get good news or update about something by book. Amount types of books that can you choose to adopt be your object. One of them are these claims Avenue of Mysteries.

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