



The Assistant: A Novel

By Bernard Malamud

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The Assistant, Bernard Malamud's second novel, originally published in 1957, is the story of Morris Bober, a grocer in postwar Brooklyn, who "wants better" for himself and his family. First two robbers appear and hold him up; then things take a turn for the better when broken-nosed Frank Alpine becomes his assistant. But there are complications: Frank, whose reaction to Jews is ambivalent, falls in love with Helen Bober; at the same time he begins to steal from the store.

Like Malamud's best stories, this novel unerringly evokes an immigrant world of cramped circumstances and great expectations. Malamud defined the immigrant experience in a way that has proven vital for several generations of writers.

"His best novel . . . *The Assistant* is as tightly written as a prose poem." --Morris Dickstein in *Leopards in the Temple: The Transformation of American Fiction 1945-1970*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

This new specialty-interest audio publisher is launching its line with two strong titles in addition to this one: *Betrothed* by S.Y. Agnon, read by Peter Waldren, and *Miss America, 1945: Bess Myerson and the Year that Changed Our Lives* by Susan Dworkin, read by Bess Myerson and Adam Grupper. Known especially for the craft of his short stories, Malamud (*The Fixer*; *The Natural*) published this novel in 1957. Frank Alpine is an Italian-American drifter who lands a job working for a humble Jewish grocer in Brooklyn. When he falls in love with the storekeeper's daughter, he is forced to reexamine his moral and spiritual beliefs. Guidall, one of audio's finest narrators, extracts a strong sense of atmosphere from Malamud's richly descriptive language. He throws himself into the many charged dialogue scenesAcomplete with the ethnic accents requiredAexpressing pathos and humility without overdramatizing.

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Review

"The clarity and concreteness of [Malamud's] style, the warm humanity over his people, the tender wit that keeps them first and compassionate, will delight many.... Mr. Malamud's people are memorable and real as rock." ?*William Goyen, The New York Times*

"Perfect ... A lyric marvel." -- *The Nation*

"There is a binding theme throughout the book, a search for fundamental truths through the study of ordinary people, their everyday ups and downs, their mundane pleasures and pains ... Malamud's vision, style and world are distinctively original." -- *San Francisco Chronicle*

From the Publisher

"The Assistant", by Pulitzer Prize-recipient Bernard Malamud, is considered an American literary classic. A real find for lovers of literature, praised by the Jewish Theological Seminary and Jewish Book World.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Randell Easley:

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Carolyn Baird:

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Aaron Williams:

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