



The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (Thorndike Core)

By Junot Díaz

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Winner of:

The Pulitzer Prize

The National Book Critics Circle Award

The Anisfield-Wolf Book Award

The Jon Sargent, Sr. First Novel Prize

A Time Magazine #1 Fiction Book of the Year

One of the best books of 2007 according to: *The New York Times*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *New York Magazine*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *The Boston Globe*, *Los Angeles Times*, *The Washington Post*, *People*, *The Village Voice*, *Time Out New York*, *Salon*, *Baltimore City Paper*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, *Booklist*, *Library Journal*, *Publishers Weekly*, *New York Public Library*, and many more...

Oscar is a sweet but disastrously overweight, lovesick Dominican ghetto nerd. From his home in New Jersey, where he lives with his old-world mother and rebellious sister, Oscar dreams of becoming the Dominican J. R. R. Tolkien and, most of all, of finding love. But he may never get what he wants, thanks to the Fukú—the curse that has haunted Oscar's family for generations, dooming them to prison, torture, tragic accidents, and, above all, ill-starred love. Oscar, still waiting for his first kiss, is just its most recent victim.

Díaz immerses us in the tumultuous life of Oscar and the history of the family at large, rendering with genuine warmth and dazzling energy, humor, and insight the Dominican-American experience, and, ultimately, the endless human capacity to persevere in the face of heartbreak and loss. A true literary triumph, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* confirms Junot Díaz as one of the best and most exciting voices of our time.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best of the Month, September 2007: It's been 11 years since Junot Díaz's critically acclaimed story collection, *Drown*, landed on bookshelves and from page one of his debut novel, *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*, any worries of a sophomore jinx disappear. The titular Oscar is a 300-pound-plus "lovesick ghetto nerd" with zero game (except for Dungeons & Dragons) who cranks out pages of fantasy fiction with the hopes of becoming a Dominican J.R.R. Tolkien. The book is also the story of a multi-generational family curse that courses through the book, leaving troubles and tragedy in its wake. This was the most dynamic, entertaining, and achingly heartfelt novel I've read in a long time. My head is still buzzing with the memory of dozens of killer passages that I dog-eared throughout the book. The rope-a-dope narrative is funny, hip, tragic, soulful, and bursting with desire. Make some room for *Oscar Wao* on your bookshelf--you won't be disappointed. --*Brad Thomas Parsons*

From Publishers Weekly

SignatureReviewed by Matthew SharpeA reader might at first be surprised by how many chapters of a book entitled *The Brief and Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* are devoted not to its sci fi--and--fantasy-gobbling nerd-hero but to his sister, his mother and his grandfather. However, Junot Diaz's dark and exuberant first novel makes a compelling case for the multiperspectival view of a life, wherein an individual cannot be known or understood in isolation from the history of his family and his nation. Oscar being a first-generation Dominican-American, the nation in question is really two nations. And Dominicans in this novel being explicitly of mixed Taíno, African and Spanish descent, the very ideas of nationhood and nationality are thoughtfully, subtly complicated. The various nationalities and generations are subtended by the recurring motif of *fukú*, the Curse and Doom of the New World, whose midwife and... victim was a historical personage Diaz will only call the Admiral, in deference to the belief that uttering his name brings bad luck (hint: he arrived in the New World in 1492 and his initials are CC). By the prologue's end, it's clear that this story of one poor guy's cursed life will also be the story of how 500 years of historical and familial bad luck shape the destiny of its fat, sad, smart, lovable and short-lived protagonist. The book's pervasive sense of doom is offset by a rich and playful prose that embodies its theme of multiple nations, cultures and languages, often shifting in a single sentence from English to Spanish, from Victorian formality to Negropolitan vernacular, from Homeric epithet to dirty bilingual insult. Even the presumed reader shape-shifts in the estimation of its in-your-face narrator, who addresses us variously as folks, you folks, conspiracy-minded-fools, Negro, Nigger and plataneros. So while Diaz assumes in his reader the same considerable degree of multicultural erudition he himself possesses—offering no gloss on his many unitalicized Spanish words and expressions (thus beautifully dramatizing how linguistic borders, like national ones, are porous), or on his plethora of genre and canonical literary allusions—he does helpfully footnote aspects of Dominican history, especially those concerning the bloody 30-year reign of President Rafael Leónidas Trujillo. The later Oscar chapters lack the linguistic brio of the others, and there are exposition-clogged passages that read like summaries of a longer narrative, but mostly this fierce, funny, tragic book is just what a reader would have hoped for in a novel by Junot Diaz. Matthew Sharpe is the author of the novels *Jamestown* and *The Sleeping Father*. He teaches at Wesleyan University.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Reviewers agree that Junot Díaz's first novel was well worth the 11-year wait. Díaz established his reputation with *Drown* (1996), a collection of short stories that drew widespread praise. With *The Brief*

Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao, D'az has cemented his place in the literary stratosphere. He garners admiration for the "slangy and kinetic energy of his prose" (*New York Times*), as well as for the way he hop scotches between high- and lowbrow culture and ties together Dominican and American history (and the problems therein). Some critics cite a distracting (mysterious) narrator, too many digressions, and a difficult narrative structure. Despite these minor flaws, fans of literary fiction should dive right in.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Catherine Acevedo:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always make an effort to and must have the free time or they will get wide range of stress from both day to day life and work. So , if we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely sure. People is human not just a robot. Then we ask again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to anyone of course your answer may unlimited right. Then do you try this one, reading ebooks. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, the actual book you have read will be *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (Thorndike Core).

Natalie Althoff:

The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao (Thorndike Core) can be one of your basic books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this guide has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nevertheless delivering the information. The writer giving his/her effort to put every word into joy arrangement in writing *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (Thorndike Core) yet doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource facts that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information may drawn you into new stage of crucial imagining.

John Lambeth:

The book untitled *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* (Thorndike Core) contain a lot of information on the idea. The writer explains your ex idea with easy method. The language is very clear to see all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read it. The book was written by famous author. The author will take you in the new age of literary works. You can read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can available their official web-site and order it. Have a nice read.

Ricardo Donaldson:

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