

# A Prayer for Owen Meany

To Download this book in many format Visit :

<https://wocoentala.org/source1/e312b904bbde4dd23590c72afcd464aa>

## A PBS Great American Read Top 100 Pick

I am doomed to remember a boy with a wrecked voice—not because of his voice, or because he was the smallest person I ever knew, or even because he was the instrument of my mother's death, but because he is the reason I believe in God; I am a Christian because of Owen Meany.

In the summer of 1953, two eleven-year-old boys—best friends—are playing in a Little League baseball game in Gravesend, New Hampshire. One of the boys hits a foul ball that kills the other boy's mother. The boy who hits the ball doesn't believe in accidents; Owen Meany believes he is God's instrument. What happens to Owen after that 1953 foul ball is extraordinary.

Owen Meany is a dwarfish boy with a strange voice who accidentally kills his best friend's mom with a baseball and believes—accurately—that he is an instrument of God, to be redeemed by martyrdom. John Irving's novel, which inspired the 1998 Jim Carrey movie *Simon Birch*, is his most popular book in Britain, and perhaps the oddest Christian mystic novel since Flannery O'Connor's work. Irving fans will find much that is familiar: the New England prep-school-town setting, symbolic amputations of man and beast, the Garp-like unknown father of the narrator (Owen's orphaned best friend), the rough comedy. The scene of doltish the doltish headmaster driving a trashed VW down the school's marble staircase is a marvelous set piece. So are the Christmas pageants Owen stars in. But it's all, as *Highlights* magazine used to put it, "fun with a purpose." When Owen plays baby Jesus in the pageants, and glimpses a tombstone with his death date while enacting *A Christmas Carol*, the slapstick doesn't cancel the fact that he was born to be martyred. The book's countless subplots add up to a moral argument, specifically an indictment of American foreign policy—from Vietnam to the Contras.

The book's mystic religiosity is steeped in Robertson Davies's Deptford trilogy, and the fatal baseball relates to the fatefully misdirected snowball in the first Deptford novel, *Fifth Business*. Tiny, symbolic Owen echoes the hero of Irving's teacher Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*—the two characters share the same initials. A rollicking entertainment, *Owen Meany* is also a meditation on literature, history, and God. --Tim Appelo

I have been a voracious reader since childhood, and while I've read and loved many, many books, I can honestly say that *A Prayer for Owen Meany* is my all-time favorite! It is such an extraordinarily funny, moving and heartbreaking story and then ending is the best and most satisfying one I've ever read. The highlight of my first year working for Ballantine Books was attending a reading John Irving gave for the paperback publication. Owen Meany has a very memorable voice when you read the book, so you can imagine how exciting it was for me to hear my favorite author read my favorite book and DO THE VOICE OF OWEN MEANY!

M. Coolman

Ballantine Publicity

Other Books

John Irving as a Nineteenth Century Writer.

???.???