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# Couch



## Synopsis

"Couch hits on an improbable, even fantastic premise, and then rigorously hews to the logic that it generates, keeping it afloat (at times literally) to the end." •Los Angeles Times"Delightfully lighthearted writing. . . . Occasionally laugh-out-loud funny, the enthusiastic prose carries readers through sporadic dark moments . . . Parzybok's quirky humor recalls the flaws and successes of early Douglas Adams." •Publishers Weekly"The book succeeds as a conceptual art piece, a literary travelogue, and a fantastical quest." •Willamette Week"Hundreds of writers have slavishly imitated—or outright ripped off—Tolkien in ways that connoisseurs of other genres would consider shameless. What Parzybok has done here in adapting the same old song to a world more familiar to the reader is to revive the genre and make it relevant again." •The StrangerA Spring Summer Indie Next Reading List Pick: Top 10 Reading Group Suggestions"Couch follows the quirky journey of Thom, Erik, and Tree as they venture into the unknown at the behest of a magical, orange couch, which has its own plan for their previously boring lives. Parzybok's colorful characters, striking humor, and eccentric magical realism offer up an adventuresome read." •Christian Crider, Inkwood Books, Tampa, FLA January 2009 Indie Next List Pick"This funny novel of furniture moving gone awry is a magical realism quest for modern times. Parzybok's touching story explores the aimlessness of our culture, a society of jobs instead of callings, replete with opportunities and choices but without the philosophies and vocations we need to make meaningful decisions." •Josh Cook, Porter Square Books, Cambridge, MA"A lot of people are looking for magic in the world today, but only Benjamin Parzybok thought to check the sofa, which is, I think, the place it's most likely to be found. Couch is a slacker epic: a gentle, funny book that ambles merrily from Coupland to Tolkien, and gives couch-surfing (among other things) a whole new meaning." •Paul La Farge"One of the strangest road novels you'll ever read. It's a funny and fun book, and it's also a very smart book. Fans of Tom Robbins or Christopher Moore should enjoy this." •Handee Books"It is an upholstered Odyssey unlike any other you are likely to read. It is funny, confusing in places, wild and anarchic. It is part Quixote, part Murakami, part Tom Robbins, part DFS showroom. It has cult hit written all over it." •Scott, Me and My Big MouthBenjamin Parzybok on tour:  
[http://booktour.com/author/benjamin\\_parzybok](http://booktour.com/author/benjamin_parzybok)In this exuberant and hilarious debut reminiscent of The Life of Pi and Then We Came to the End, an episode of furniture moving gone awry becomes an impromptu quest of self-discovery, secret histories, and unexpected revelations.Thom is a computer geek whose hacking of a certain Washington-based software giant has won him a little fame but few job prospects. Erik is a smalltime con man, a fast-talker who is never quite quick

enough on his feet. Their roommate, Tree, is a confused clairvoyant whose dreams and prophecies may not be completely off base. After a freak accident floods their apartment, the three are evicted—but they have to take their couch with them. The real problem? The couch—huge and orange—won’t let them put it down. Soon the three roommates are on a cross-country trek along back roads, byways, and rail lines, heading far out of Portland and deep into one very weird corner of the American dream. Benjamin Parzybok is the creator of Gumball Poetry, a journal published through gumball machines, and the Black Magic Insurance Agency, a city-wide mystery/treasure hunt. He has worked as a congressional page, a ghostwriter for the governor of Washington, a web developer, a Taiwanese factory technical writer, an asbestos removal janitor, and a potato sorter. He lives in Portland, Oregon, with the writer Laura Moulton and their two children.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Parzybok's delightfully lighthearted writing successfully diverts attention from the heavy-handed plot devices that threaten to overwhelm this ambitious debut. An apartment flood destroys almost everything owned by mismatched roommates Thom, Tree and Erik, leaving only the handmade orange couch, which the landlord demands they remove. Broke, jobless and now homeless, the roommates begin carrying their couch through the streets of Portland, Ore., and quickly discover two things: it might be magical, and Goodwill won't take it. They reluctantly embark on a hapless quest to take the couch exactly where it wants to go. Occasionally laugh-out-loud funny, the enthusiastic prose carries readers through sporadic dark moments, though it can't save a clunky

finale that leaves too many unanswered questions, including the survival of its heroes. Parzybok's quirky humor recalls the flaws and successes of early Douglas Adams. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Benjamin Parzybok created a journal published through gumball machines (Gumball Poetry) and a city-wide mystery/treasure hunt (Black Magic Insurance Agency). His previous jobs include: ghostwriter for the Governor of Washington state, web developer, Taiwanese factory technical writer, asbestos removal janitor, potato sorter, and congressional page. He lives in Portland, Oregon, with the writer Laura Moulton and their son.

This book is brilliance hidden behind a seemingly simple story line. The words just flew off the pages of this epic journey about three roommates who are going nowhere in life. After a ridiculous accident floods their apartment they are evicted and with them they must take a massive couch. On their way to drop the couch off at a thrift store they find that this couch is incredible light when walking in certain directions and with nothing better to do they let the furniture lead them on a sprawling adventure. This book was completely unpredictable and kept me guessing constantly till the end. The whole story was very exciting and the characters were so relatable that you easily became attached to them. It has a perfect blend of hilarious comedy and serious drama that will stick with you after you put it down. I really can't recommend this book enough. If you like to laugh and read something very original that's unlike anything you've read before then you should definitely pick this up.

If you purchase this book, someone probably told you about it. It was really odd but, I kept wanting to read to find out what happened to our main characters. I guess that means that it was at least well written. I got to where I really liked the story but, I didn't like the end. So much build up for it to just end the way it did. Could have easily been 50-75 more pages to this book. I thought the story was really cool because it seemed pretty original to me (at least I've never heard of/seen anything like this before). I did enjoy this book but, not the best I've ever read. Worth the read, in my opinion. Just be ready for a little bit of off the wall stuff.

I've had a favorite book for 30 years, and that's "Vanity Fair," by William Makepeace Thackeray. It pretty much says it all. So, I've had little call to push books by other authors, beyond simply recommending them to a few friends. But now, I am on a mission to introduce as many people as I

can to a wonderful little fantasy called "Couch" (2008), by Benjamin Parzybok. Take heed, all you geeks. Couch is an all-too-short glimpse into the depths of geek soul. I've bought two copies so far, and I lend them out to whomever will take them. If you liked "Lord of the Rings," but prefer a bit of modern irony, angst, and uncertainty, this is your ticket. I don't know how a book so small could dig so deep. Even Thackeray would have loved this one.

A really fantastic book about something that really shouldn't be that fantastic. Somehow each page manages not only to be poetic, but humorous and highly engaging. If I had one criticism it would be that it runs a bit long, though it doesn't necessarily feel that way. I just have a short attention span.

What happens when a great joke (three young slackers carrying an orange couch down NW 23rd Avenue) turns into a spiritual quest? This book happens, and it's a wacky, thought-provoking read, studded with philosophy, magic, battle, sickness and love. Thom, Erik and Tree remain throughout three young Portland dudes; the software guy, the ladies' man, and the fey artist with the mysterious money sources. But they accept that they've been chosen by the couch to cross continents and oceans in search of fundamental truth. If you can buy this premise and just...relax, you'll greatly enjoy this book.

2 days on a hammock with "oxy cotton" and dogfish head and the novel "couch" were a wonderful twisty escape from a summer of renovation and things I refuse to describe in an review. Just stick to an arbitrary rule and your life will change!

everybody who like fantasy sci fi needs to read this. It is about three guys that are left homeless by a flood and decide to travel all around the world with their bright neon orange couch. so original and weird but well written but not so well written that you need a dictionary or scratch your head wondering what the heck they are talking about. The cover went perfect with story, I thought.

Parzybok's characters evolve and grow, in ordinary human ways, and in inexplicable, magical ways. No easy, happy ending here, but hope is held out in the end.

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