



Personal Days: A Novel

By Ed Park

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In an unnamed New York-based company, the employees are getting restless as everything around them unravels. There's Pru, the former grad student turned spreadsheet drone; Laars, the hysterical whose work anxiety stalks him in his tooth-grinding dreams; and Jack II, who distributes unwanted backrubs—aka "jackrubs"—to his co-workers.

On a Sunday, one of them is called at home. And the Firings begin. Rich with Orwellian doublespeak, filled with sabotage and romance, this astonishing literary debut is at once a comic delight and a narrative tour de force. It's a novel for anyone who has ever worked in an office and wondered: "Where does the time go? Where does the life go? And whose banana is in the fridge?"

Praise for PERSONAL DAYS

"Witty and appealing...Anyone who has ever groaned to hear 'impact' used as a verb will cheer as Park skewers the avatars of corporate speak, hellbent on debasing the language....Park has written what one of his characters calls 'a layoff narrative' for our times. As the economy continues its free fall, Park's book may serve as a handy guide for navigating unemployment and uncertainty. Does anyone who isn't a journalist think there can't be two books on the same subject at the same time? We need as many as we can get right now." —***The New York Times Book Review***

"Never have the minutiae of office life been so lovingly catalogued and collated." —"Three First Novels that Just Might Last," —***Time***

A "comic and creepy début...Park transforms the banal into the eerie, rendering ominous the familiar request "Does anyone want anything from the outside world?" —***The New Yorker***

"The modern corporate office is to Ed Park's debut novel *Personal Days* what World War II was to Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*—a theater of absurdity and injustice so profound as to defy all reason....Park may be in line to fill the shoes left by Kurt Vonnegut and other satirists par excellence."—**Samantha Dunn, *Los Angeles Times***

"In *Personal Days* Ed Park has crafted a sometimes funny, sometimes

heartbreaking, but always adroit novel about office life...Sharp and lovely language." —*Newsweek*

"A warm and winning fiction debut." —*Publishers Weekly*

"I laughed until they put me in a mental hospital. But *Personal Days* is so much more than satire. Underneath Park's masterly portrait of wasted workaday lives is a pulsating heart, and an odd, buoyant hope." —**Gary Shteyngart, author of *Absurdistan***

"The funniest book I've read about the way we work now." —**William Poundstone, author of *Fortune's Formula***

"Ed Park joins Andy Warhol and Don DeLillo as a master of the deadpan vernacular." —**Helen DeWitt, author of *The Last Samurai***

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Park's warm and winning fiction debut is narrated by a collective we of youngish Manhattan office grunts who watch in helpless horror as their company keeps shrinking, taking their private world of in-jokes and nicknames along with it. The business itself remains opaque, but who eats lunch with whom, which of the two nearby Starbucks is the good Starbucks, and whose desk knickknacks have the richest iconography become abundantly clear. What starts out feeling like a cutesy set of riffs evolves into such a deft, familiar intimacy that when the next round of layoffs begins in earnest, the reader is just as disconcerted as the characters. As office survivors Lizzie, Jonah, Pru, Crease, Lars and Jason II try to figure out who's next to get the axe, mysterious clues point to a conspiracy that may involve one or more of the survivors. By the time answers arrive, Park—former *Voice Literary Supplement* editor, a founding editor of the *Believer* and the creator of the e-zine the *New York Ghost*—has built the tension masterfully. Echoing elements from Ferris's debut smash, *Then We Came to the End*, Park may have written the first cubicle cozy. (May)

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From [The New Yorker](#)

This comic and creepy début novel takes place in a Manhattan office depopulated by "the Firings," where one can "wander vast tracts of lunar workscape before seeing a window." The downsized staff huddle like the crew of a doomed spaceship, picked off one by one by an invisible predator. Crippled by computer crashes (one worker suggests that the machines are "trying to tell us about the limits of the human"), the survivors eddy in a spiritual inertia; when one of them is banished to "Siberia"—a lone desk on another floor—no one can muster the energy even to reply to her increasingly anguished e-mails, until, one day, she is simply no longer there. Park transforms the banal into the eerie, rendering ominous the familiar request "Does anyone want anything from the outside world?"

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Review

"*Personal Days* feels like a lot of jobs do. It starts off a lighthearted adventure in white-collar living, then spirals into something more sober. **[Park's] sardonic humor will ring true to cube monkeys everywhere**, and he succeeds in creating **an oddly haunting, ultimately entertaining portrait of office life** and the tenuous yet powerful relationships we build with colleagues."

—*Fast Company*

"**Hysterical...**Park's story is set in an **absurd yet believable** workplace where personnel, shutting down their computers for the weekend, earnestly consider the pop-up question, 'Are you sure you want to quit?'"

—*Wired*

"What at first appears to be a Dilbert-esque story soon twists into a **dizzying, surreal tale** in which even the card-key readers conceal sinister purposes."

—*Details*

"If you think Pam and Jim have it bad, try spending a day with Lizzie, Jonah, and Pru at their 'Office'-like company.

You'll laugh, cringe, and thank God you don't work there." — *Cosmopolitan*

"A warm and winning fiction debut." — *Publishers Weekly*

"Absolutely brilliant and lovable." —**Heidi Julavits, author of *The Uses of Enchantment***

"I laughed until they put me in a mental hospital. But *Personal Days* is so much more than satire. Underneath Park's masterly portrait of wasted workaday lives is a pulsating heart, and an odd, buoyant hope." —**Gary Shteyngart, author of *Absurdistan***

"I flew through this book, laughing all the way to the Bernhardian ending."

—**Vendela Vida, author of *Let the Northern Lights Erase Your Name***

"The funniest book I've read about the way we work now." —**William Poundstone,...**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Darlene Johnson:

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Lori Gravitt:

The book untitled Personal Days: A Novel contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains the girl idea with easy approach. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not worry, you can easy to read it. The book was published by famous author. The author provides you in the new period of literary works. You can actually read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or product, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice examine.

Ruth Ford:

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Ann McLemore:

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