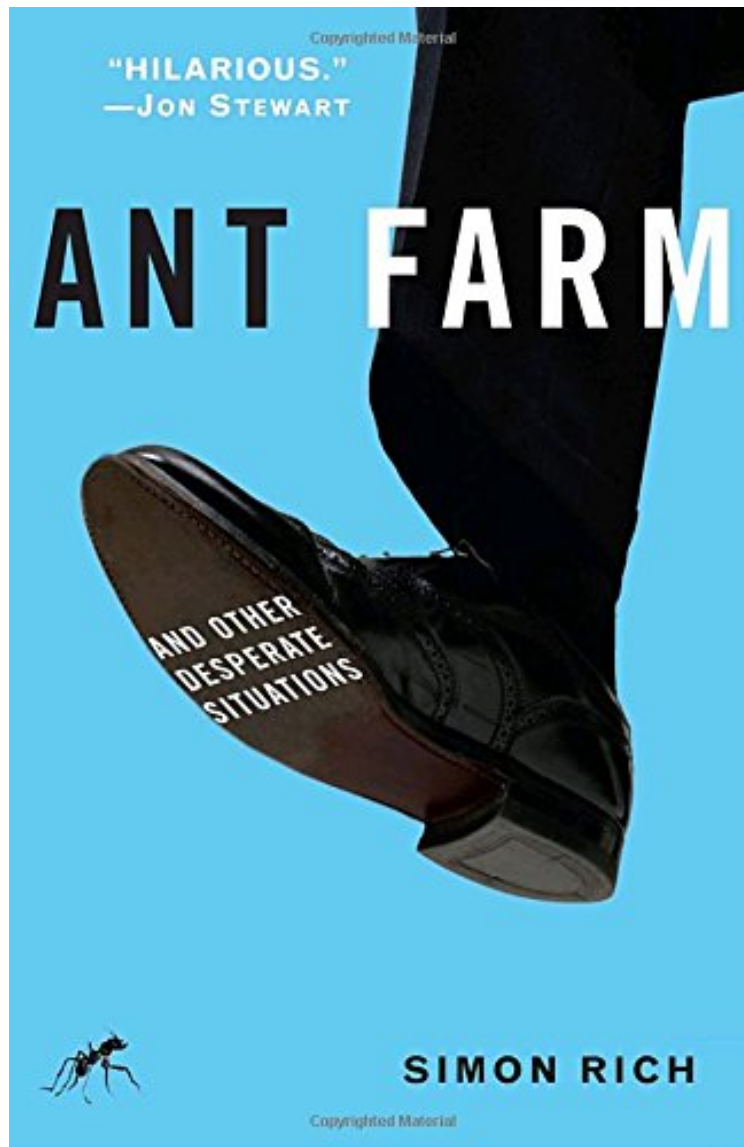


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## Ant Farm: And Other Desperate Situations

*Simon Rich*

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#178118 in Books Simon Rich 2007-04-03 2007-04-03 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.98 x .42 x 5.191, .39 #File Name: 1400065887156 pages Ant Farm And Other Desperate Situations | File size: 55.Mb

**Simon Rich : Ant Farm: And Other Desperate Situations** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ant Farm: And Other Desperate Situations:

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needed to find more from him. While this is from a bit earlier in his writing career, the wit, humor, and quirky thinking are still there. Best of all, you easily find yourself relating to his short "stories" in a way that you realize he's simply put down on paper a lot of the thoughts that we had at various stages of our lives. Thoughts that seem ridiculous to us now, but at the time made absolute sense. I would give this 5 stars, but the book tends to drift off a bit towards the end... The material at the beginning had tears rolling out of mine (and my family's) eyes as we laughed... the last half of the book is still very good, but just not quite at the same level.

In *Ant Farm*, former Harvard Lampoon president Simon Rich finds humor in some very surprising places. Armed with a sharp eye for the absurd and an overwhelming sense of doom, Rich explores the ridiculousness of our everyday lives. The world, he concludes, is a hopelessly terrifying place—with endless comic potential.—If your girlfriend gives you some “love coupons” and then breaks up with you, are the coupons still valid?—What kind of performance pressure does an endangered male panda feel when his captors bring the last remaining female panda to his cage?—If murderers can get into heaven by accepting Jesus, just how awkward is it when they run into their victims? Join Simon Rich as he explores the extraordinary and hilarious desperation that resides in ordinary life, from cradle to grave. "Hilarious." —Jon Stewart

From Publishers Weekly A contributor to *Mad*, 22-year-old Rich is a Harvard senior, a former president of the Harvard Lampoon and the son of New York Times columnist Frank Rich. Half of the short humor pieces collected here previously appeared in the Harvard Lampoon, and Rich has taken his college collage and mixed it with new material for a satirical salmagundi that bites back. Since brevity is the soul of wit, the book has 57 varieties of playlets, essays and mirthful monologues, and most are only two pages long. Imaginative premises abound, such as X-Files with dog characters. In the title piece, ants plot an escape: "We've been digging tunnels ever since we got here. We always end up hitting glass." Since a college-level audience is targeted, older readers might find some references puzzling. In his original proposal to Random House (a portion of which was printed in the *New York Observer*), he claimed that the "subject matter—horrible, inescapable doom—is well-suited for a younger audience.... I think kids will be attracted to the book's unpredictability. The tone remains constant throughout, but the topic changes every page with the abruptness of an iPod shuffle." True, these fragments are fun, and some are so abrupt they could have been iPhoned in. Others are as unpredictable as YouTube, as in your face as MySpace (which will both surely be used for online promotions). (Apr. 3) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist In this collection of comic vignettes, Rich, a Harvard senior and former president of the Harvard Lampoon, displays a knack for extracting humor from scenarios of discomfort and despair. There's the son who unwittingly exposes his single mother's promiscuity, the nerd who becomes cool in the eyes of his Bulgarian pen pal, and the factory employee who goes a little nuts on the job. Performance anxiety among pandas, small talk gone wrong, the validity of "love coupons" when a relationship goes bad—all are covered here. Readers also learn about unlikely applications of math. (Who knew solving a trigonometry problem could mitigate a murderer's wrath?) And on the liabilities of being invisible, Rich writes: "When I was a lifeguard, I never got any credit for any of my heroic rescues. It was always 'angel this' and 'angel that.'" Some of the selections are more dark than droll (a boy's discovery of his father's alcohol cache, the text message of a teenager with hepatitis C), but all have the same good-natured goal: finding levity amid the gravity of everyday life. Allison Block Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved. About the Author Simon Rich has written for *The New Yorker*, *GQ*, *Mad*, *The Harvard Lampoon*, and other magazines. He was part of the writing staff of *Saturday Night Live* and Pixar. He is the author of a novel, *Elliot Allagash*, and two humor collections, *Free-Range Chickens* and *Ant Farm*, which was a finalist for the 2008 Thurber Prize for American Humor. He lives in Brooklyn.