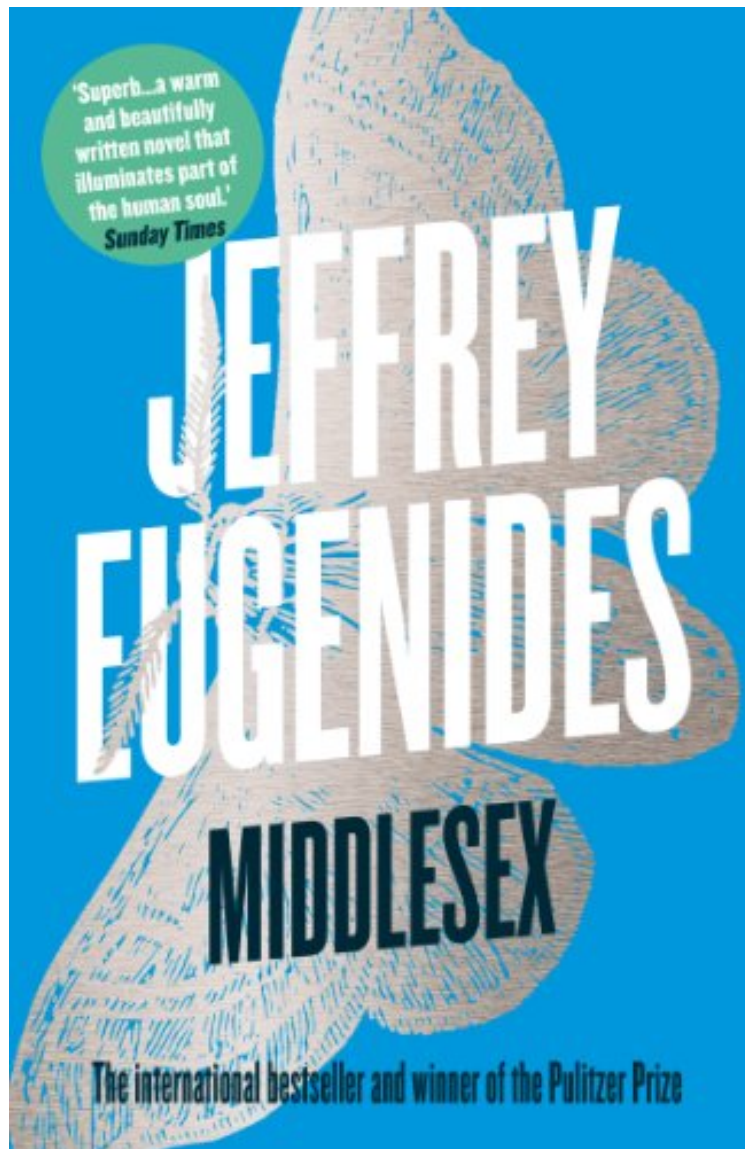


(Ebook free) Middlesex

Middlesex

Von Jeffrey Eugenides
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Von Jeffrey Eugenides : Middlesex before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Middlesex:

Kurzbeschreibung "I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974." So begins the breathtaking story of Calliope Stephanides and her truly unique family secret, born on the slopes of Mount Olympus and passed on through three generations. Growing up in 70s Michigan, Calliope's special inheritance will turn her into Cal, the narrator of this intersex, inter-generational epic of immigrant life in 20th century America. *Middlesex* won the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. "I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day in January of 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974." And so begins *Middlesex*, the mesmerizing saga of a near-mythic Greek American family and the "roller-coaster ride of a single gene through time." The odd but utterly believable story of Cal Stephanides, and how this 41-year-old hermaphrodite was raised as Calliope, is at the tender heart of this long-awaited second novel from Jeffrey Eugenides, whose elegant and haunting 1993 debut, *The Virgin Suicides*, remains one of the finest first novels of recent memory. Eugenides weaves together a kaleidoscopic narrative spanning 80 years of a stained family history, from a fateful incestuous union in a small town in early 1920s Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit; from the early days of Ford Motors to the heated 1967 race riots; from the tony suburbs of Grosse Pointe and a confusing, aching adolescent love story to modern-day Berlin. Eugenides's command of the narrative is astonishing. He balances Cal/Callie's shifting voices convincingly, spinning this strange and often unsettling story with intelligence, insight, and generous amounts of humor: Emotions, in my experience aren't covered by single words. I don't believe in "sadness," "joy," or "regret." I'd like to have at my disposal complicated hybrid emotions, Germanic traincar constructions like, say, "the happiness that attends disaster." Or: "the disappointment of sleeping with one's fantasy." ... I'd like to have a word for "the sadness inspired by failing restaurants" as well as for "the excitement of getting a room with a minibar." I've never had the right words to describe my life, and now that I've entered my story, I need them more than ever. When you get to the end of this splendorous book, when you suddenly realize that after hundreds of pages you have only a few more left to turn over, you'll experience a quick pang of regret knowing that your time with Cal is coming to a close, and you may even resist finishing it--putting it aside for an hour or two, or maybe overnight--just so that this wondrous, magical novel might never end. --Brad Thomas Parsons.co.uk *Middlesex* is a significantly more ambitious and much odder novel than Jeffrey Eugenides' resonant debut, *The Virgin Suicides* (on DVD), which was a bittersweet paean to adolescent love. This is a sprawling family saga, bursting with life, which spans three generations and crosses several continents. At its core, however, is another unorthodox but exquisite coming-of-age story. The book's wily narrator and central character, Calliope Stephanides (named after the muse of epic poetry) is a hermaphrodite raised as a girl who comes to realise she is happier as a boy and is now living as a man in contemporary Berlin. Cal's tale begins, appropriately enough, in Greece (or more precisely Asia Minor)--an Aegean Strasbourg whose sovereignty is claimed by Greece and Turkey. In 1922 brother and sister Lefty and Desdemona Stephanides escaped their war-torn homeland and arrived, as man and wife, in Detroit, America. It is this coupling that ultimately begets their grandchild Calliope and her ambiguous sexuality, as she, or rather by then he, sanguinely notes: Some people inherit houses; others painting or highly insured violin bows. Still others get Japanese tansu or a famous name. I got a recessive gene on fifth chromosome and some very rare family jewels indeed. As Cal recounts the experiences of the Stephanides clan in their new land--from the Depression to Nixon--he unfurls his own symbiotic odyssey to a new sex. Cal's narrative voice is arch, humorous and self aware, continually drawing attention to its authorial sleights of hand, but never exasperating. This is big, brainy novel--*The Oracle of Delphi* puts in an unlikely appearance in the middle of a teenage tryst--but one full of compassion. Eugenides' astonishingly rich story persistently engages the heart as well as the mind. --Travis Elborough