



Here I Am

Jonathan Safran Foer
Farrar, Straus and Giroux

If the success of Jonathan Safran Foer's prior releases, *Everything Is Illuminated* and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*, wasn't a thorough enough testament, his third novel, *Here I Am*, validates the author's status as one of our generation's great American novelists.

Set in present-day Washington, D.C., the book follows Jacob, Julia, and their three tween sons as their suburban lives are affected by an international crisis when Israel suffers a calamitous earthquake and erupts in political turmoil. It's Foer's most complex and fictional (not to mention longest) plot yet.

And while the underlying themes may not drastically diverge from the author's go-to subject matters (cultural identity, family issues) or personal experiences (fatherhood, divorce), and the characters' perspectives may feel alien to anyone who hasn't attended Hebrew school, the story thrives on Foer's uncanny ability to cunningly fold the perceptual sets of multiple generations into a modern national epic. DAN FRAZIER