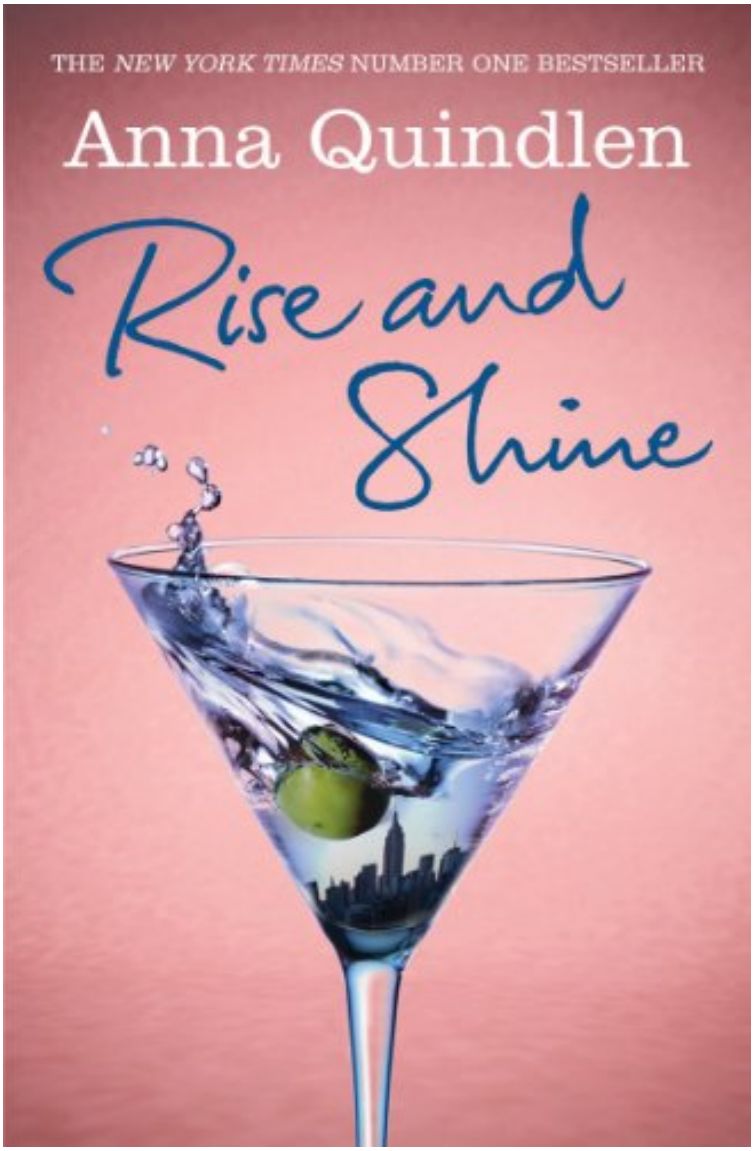
Rise and Shine



Par Anna Quindlen
**Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #244943 dans eBooksPubli le: 2011-05-19Sorti le: 2011-05-19Format: Ebook Kindle

[PDF] Rise and Shine

Par Anna Quindlen : Rise and Shine before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Rise and Shine:

Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurIt's an otherwise ordinary Monday when Meghan Fitzmaurice's perfect life hits a wall. A household name as the host of 'Rise and Shine', the country's highest-rated morning talk show, Meghan cuts to a commercial break, but not before she mutters two forbidden words into her open mike.In an instant, it's the end of an era - not only for Meghan, who is unaccustomed to dealing with adversity, but also for her younger sister, Bridget, a social worker in the Bronx who has always lived in Meghan's long shadow. The effect of Meghan's on-air foible reverberates through their lives, affecting Meghan's son, husband, friends, and fans, as well as Bridget's perception of her sister, their complex childhood, and herself. What follows is a story about how the Fitzmaurice women adapt, survive, and manage to bring the whole teeming world of

New York to heel, by dint of their smart mouths, quick wits, and their powerful connection, one that even the worst tragedy cannot shatter.ExtraitFrom time to time some stranger will ask me how I can bear to live in New York City. Sometimes it happens when I am on vacation, passing the time in a buffet line filled with the sunburned and the semidrunk. Sometimes it comes up at a professional conference, drinking coffee in the corner of a hotel meeting room with a clutch of social workers, most of them wearing the dirndl skirts and dangling earrings of the socially conscious woman of a certain age. My aunt's friends will ask, although they live only a half hour north, up the Saw Mill Parkway, but in a state of bucolic isolation that might as well be Maine. Even in New York itself I will sometimes hear the question, from the ld men on the Coney Island boardwalk who knew Irving Lefkowitz when he was a bar mitzvah boy and who, from their benches on the Brooklyn beach, envision the long and slender island of Manhattan as an urban Titanic, sinking beneath the weight of criminals, homosexuals, and atheists, sailing toward certain disaster. "And you live there why, sweetheart?" one of them once asked me with an openmouthed squint, his neck thrust forward from the V of a ratty cardigan so that he looked like a Galpagos tortoise with a wool-Dacron argyle shell. Sometimes, if I'm tired, I just shrug and say I like it here. Sometimes, if I'm in a foul mood or have had a bit too much to drink, which often amounts to the same thing, I will say I live in New York because it is the center of the universe. Most of the time I say my sister lives here and I want to be near her, and her husband, who is like a brother to me, and her son, whom I covertly think of as at least partly my own. The old men like that answer. They make a humming sound of approbation and nod their mottled hairless heads. A good girl. A family person. They peer up at Irving. The next question will be about marriage. We flee to Nathan's for a hot dog. I do like it here. It is the center of the universe. And I do want to be near my sister, as I always have been. We have our rituals. Every Saturday morning, unless she is covering the Olympics, the Oscars, a disaster, or an inauguration, my sister and I go running together in the park and have breakfast either at her apartment or at the Greek diner down the street from mine. She will tell you she is forced to set a slower pace because I don't exercise enough. She sees this as evidence of my essential sloth. I see it as emblematic of our relationship. Our aunt Maureen says that I was a baby so plump and phlegmatic that the only reason I learned to walk was so I could follow my older sister. Some of my earliest memories are of wandering down a street of old Dutch Colonials and long-leafed pines, the backs of a covey of eight-year-old girls half a block in front of me, the demand from the one at their center carrying on the breeze: "Bridget! Go home! Go home now! You can't come!" I'm always a little breathless when I run with Meghan on Saturday mornings. But I'm accustomed to it now. "Listen and learn," she has said to me since we were in high school, and I always have. "How weird is it that we were at the same dinner party last night?" she said one overcast March morning as we began to trot down the park drive in tandem, and I tried not to hear that long-ago plaint in her comment: Go home, Bridget! You can't come. It had indeed been strange to enter a vast living room, beige velvet and Impressionist paintings, and see her at one end nursing a glass of sparkling water. Our hostess had attempted to introduce us, since no one ever suspected Meghan and I were related. Then she had disappeared to hand off the bunch of anemones bound with ribbons I had given her at the door. "God, flowers, Bridge?" my sister said, running around a stroller-size class of new mothers trying to trim their baby bodies. "I couldn't believe you brought flowers to a dinner party. That's the worst. With everything else you have to do when people are showing up, you have to stop to find a vase and fill a vase and cut the stems and then find a place for them and if they're blue, Jesus, I never know where to put them in our apartment, and then-" "How is it possible that you can make bringing someone flowers sound like the Stations of the Cross?" "Sometimes I just leave them on the kitchen counter and toss them with the leftovers." I knew this was not exactly true; Meghan had long had staff to toss the leftovers, and the people from Feeding Our People, the big society starvation charity, sent over a van to pick up the excess food from her larger dinner parties. "Just bring wine. Even if they don't want to use it they can put it away for cocktail parties. Or wait and send an orchid plant the next day. I don't know why, but every damn living room on the East Side has to have an orchid plant. I think they're creepy, like big white bugs. They don't look like flowers at all." "I thought you loved them. You always have one on that chest under the windows." "What can I tell you? I'm a slave to fashion." We always see the same people when we run: the soap opera actor with the carefully tinted hair and heavily muscled legs, the small woman with the spiky gray hair who had the ropy muscles and sharp bones of a marathoner, the Chinese couple who wore identical fashionable warm-up suits and ran with a pair of borzois. One of our regular anorexics streaked past us, collarbone draped in the shroud of an extra-large Harvard sweatshirt. "You know that woman who does the financial news? Grace Shelton?" Meghan said. "The one with that great haircut?" "I don't understand why everyone says that. That haircut is not that great." "Okay,

fine. What's the point?" "Someone told me that she doesn't eat anything except apples and Triscuits." "That can't be true." "Probably not, but you never know." A runner in front of us turned and began to run backward. Meghan dipped her head so that the bill of her cap covered her face. "I want to go back to the dinner gift issue," I said. "How much does an orchid plant cost?" "A hundred and fifty dollars. You have to send the ones with two stems." "Jesus Christ. That's a lot of money for a stranger who invites you to dinner." "Accepted and acknowledged," Meghan said. Like the aunt who raised us, Meghan has a variety of expressions that she uses constantly and whose meaning is somewhat obscure on their face. This one has endured for decades. I think it was even beneath her yearbook picture. Once she told me it meant "I know but I don't care." On the sidewalk, glittery with mica in the late winter sunlight, a solitary glove lay, palm up, as though pleading for spare change. Meghan barely broke stride as she lifted it and blew through the doors of her building. "Good morning, Ms. Fitzmaurice," the doorman said. The modern honorific was articulated plainly, a sound like a buzzing bee. The building staff know our Meghan. "Can you see if someone dropped this?" she said, handing over the glove. "It's a shame this late in the season for somebody to find out they're one short." "Of course," he replied. "I'm such a good citizen," she muttered as we got into the elevator and Meghan took off the baseball cap that shaded her face so conveniently. "Oh, get over yourself," I said. "I am so over myself." "As if." We are creatures of habit, Meghan and I. At the diner we have western omelets and rye toast; at her house we have oatmeal and orange juice. This works fine because we live in the city of habit. New York is so often publicly associated with creativity and innovation that outsiders actually come to believe it. The truth is that behavior here is as codified as the Latin Mass. The dinner party the night before had been no exception. The dining room walls glazed red, the tone-on-tone tablecloths, the low centerpiece of roses and some strange carnivorous-looking tulips. The single man on one side of me. "I hear you're a social worker," he said as we both lifted our napkins and placed them on our laps, as so many had said before him. That was best case, of course. At the home of one donor to the women's shelter where I work, two men who were equity traders spent an entire dinner talking to each other about the market within spitting distance-literally-of my face, bent so close above my dinner that I couldn't reach my bread plate. At the duplex apartment of a woman who worked with my brother-in-law at Sensenbrenner Lamott, I'd turned to the man on my left and asked, "How do you know Amelia?" and watched his face crumble and tears run into his beard. Everyone at the table ignored the display as he talked of his wife, who had been our hostess's college roommate and who had left him for a well-connected lesbian who lived in London. With very little help from me he worked his way through their college years, marriage, apartment renovation, career changes, and the dinner party (of course) where he himself had been the lesbian's dinner partner, the hostess having mistaken her for a more conventional single woman. He had invited the woman to their home for brunch because the two shared an interest in Fiesta ware, an interest his wife had never, in his words, "given a tinker's damn about." ("Oh, God, he's gay himself," Meghan had said at our next breakfast. "What kind of straight man even knows what Fiesta ware is?") In the face of his grief and rage, the table had fallen silent except for the torrent of words from one stay-at-home mother, who was doing a monologue about her child's learning disabilities. It wasn't always that bad, of course. I once dated a professor at NYU for almost a year after I met him at a dinner party given by a woman who'd graduated from Smith and whom I met at an alumnae phonathon. I developed a firm friendship with a lighting tech who works on Broadway shows, an Irish expat named Jack who was seated next to me at a neighbor's annual Fourth of July potluck. That was a good dinner, excellent company, excellent food. There were figs with goat cheese stuffed inside, and pumpkin bisque, and rack of lamb with broccoli rabe. The men all run together in my head, all the lawyers/filmmakers/academics/brokers/editors with whom I've been paired. But I almost always remember the food, even the bad food. There was a lot of that in the early days, before all around me grew rich while I moved from a studio to a bigger studio to a small one-bedroom to a one-bedroom with a window in the kitchen, that window that will be presented by brokers to apartment supplicants as though it were a fresco by Michelangelo. As, by Manhattan standards, it is. For some of us the kitchen with the window means we have finally arrived at some precarious level of prosperity. For others it was a momentary triumph, a way station between the first book proposal and the third bestseller, the summer associate's job and the partnership, the husband who teaches comparative lit at Columbia and the one who runs the big brokerage house. One moment a kitchen with a blessed window, the next a kitchen with two imported dishwashers, two glass-fronted fridges, terra-cotta floors, stainless countertops, an extra-deep sink, a tap over the restaurant range for the pasta pots, designed in consultation with the caterers because they use it more than the homeowners. The kitchen is always hidden in the back of the apartment, away from the pricey views of Central Park and

the master bedroom with the cherry chest at the foot of the bed that holds the television, which rises up out of the chest at the touch of a bedside button. It's funny how everyone feels they need to hide the TVs and the food, since both are the things they talk about most often. Meghan's kitchen has a flat-screen television, although Meghan hates to watch TV when she is not working. "Where's Evan?" I mumbled with my mouth full. "Evan? Evan who? Oh, you mean my husband? That is his name, isn't it? Evan." "I'm sorry I asked," I said. "Evan is at the office. The office here, not the office in London or the one in Tokyo, although God knows he's spent enough time in both in the last six months. When he's in New York, he usually comes home when I'm already asleep. I turn over and look and say to myself, Yep, that's him. Every dinner party now, he says, I'm exhausted, can you go without me? And people accuse me of being a workaholic. Which reminds me: Where the hell do the guys keep the Tupperware?" Only the team of Robert and John, who made the meals, served the meals, and cleaned up after the meals, had a clue where anything was stored in Meghan and Evan's kitchen. Except for Leo, my nephew, he of the take-out Chinese and late-night ramen noodles, of the endless bowls of Count Chocula and the ice cream eaten straight from the container. He'd shown me where the Tupperware was one night when we'd eaten enough rice pudding to kill us both. "In the square cabinet over the wine fridge," I said. Another reason not to bring flowers: the lady of the house doesn't know where the vases are kept. If she had to find the vacuum cleaner or the Windex, the world would stop on its axis. "Why do you need Tupperware?" I asked. "We're doing a Tupperware party on the air on Monday morning, and apparently I'm going to have to do something called burping the Tupperware. We talked ad nauseam about whether it would be better if it was clear that I didn't know what the hell burping the Tupperware meant or if I burped it convincingly. With authority, I think they said. I opted for authority." "Of course you did. On the other hand, it's hard to figure how anyone can look authoritative with Tupperware. I mean-Tupperware. Who cares?" My sister gave me a long level look, her lip slightly raised on one side. "Maybe you're preaching to the converted here?" "Hey, who am I to talk? I spent yesterday trying to break up a bootleg sneaker ring that apparently is being fronted by two of the women living in our shelter. The precinct was nice about it, but they said either we could shut down the Nike Air operation or they could shut us down."From the Hardcover edition.From Publishers WeeklyBridget Fitzmaurice, the narrator of Quindlen's engrossing fifth novel, works for a women's shelter in the Bronx; her older sister, Meghan, cohost of the popular morning show Rise and Shine, is the most famous woman on television. Bridget acts as a second mother to the busy Meghan's college student son, Leo; Meghan barely tolerates Bridget's significant other, a gritty veteran police detective named Irving Lefkowitz. After 9/11 (which happens off-camera) and the subsequent walking out of Meghan's beleaguered husband, Evan, Meghan calls a major politician a "fucking asshole" before her microphone gets turned off for a commercial, and Megan and Bridget's lives change forever. As Bridget struggles to mend familial fences and deal with reconfigurations in their lives wrought by Meghan's single phrase, Quindlen has her lob plenty of pungent observations about both life in class-stratified New York City and about family dynamics. The situation is ripe with comic potential, which Bridget deadpans her way through, and Quindlen goes along with Bridget's cool reserve and judgmentalism. The plot is very imbalanced: a couple of events early, then virtually nothing until a series of major revelations in the last 50 or so pages. The prose is top-notch; readers may be more interested in Quindlen's insights than in the lives of her two main characters. (Aug. 28)