

## *Happy Jack*

### Synopsis

JACK HAZELWOOD is a homeless middle-aged black man living out of a rusted van. He also stars as a child guest on *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson*, risks his life to save the people of Dauphin Island, Alabama, during two major hurricanes, and counsels Kim Jong-un through the loss of his father on the way to succeeding him as Supreme Leader of North Korea.

So go the days of a man who seems larger than life in the tradition of a Deep South mythic hero, but who is in fact overwhelmed by the woes of the world around him.

Jack's story is told inside the frame of a biography by JAMES "FISH" FISHMAN, a former CNN newscaster. From Hurricane Ivan to Hurricane Katrina to the BP oil spill, Fish's CNN assignments allow him to observe Jack's Herculean feats and extreme acts of kindness. Fish explains in his author's forward that those encounters allowed him to uncover Jack's secret. He has a gift (or a curse) – the psychic power to know what people around him need to be happy and the uncontrollable compulsion to provide it to them.

Jack rebuilds homes after the storm, sells his own things to buy total strangers the frivolous things they crave, strives to the point of exhaustion to be everyone's best friend, covers up unhappy realities. He never says 'no.' In short, whether it's changing lives or just bringing a smile to someone's face, Jack makes everyone happy, in doing so to the exclusion of himself.

Fish unfolds Jack's extraordinary life, from his struggles as an adolescent coping with a supernatural power that makes him as addictive to others as any drug through his years trying (and failing) to hide away as a hermit living in an old van parked among the secluded dunes of Dauphin Island. Fish's CNN profile on the unintentional hero reveals his whereabouts to DR. ARCHAMBEAU, a con artist and a chameleon who aims to use Jack's special talent for personal gain by turning Happy Jack into nothing more than a for-profit drug therapy for the masses. From uplifting successes to near fatal failures, Jack toils away doing what he can for the most depraved and downtrodden people of New Orleans until one patient – a Haitian immigrant sex addict named ANGELIQUE – forges a close enough relationship with Jack to help him break free of the psychological cage Dr. Archambeau has trapped him in.

Depressed over losing Jack and his journalistic integrity, Fish embarks on a quest to rediscover both in time to help Angelique stop Dr. Archambeau's final con – a plot to kill an old rival and frame Jack for the murder. The experience provides Fish the insight to tell the world the real story of Happy Jack – a tale that is at once an epic adventure, a meditation on how to find happiness, and an examination of the greed and selfishness that drive human relationships.