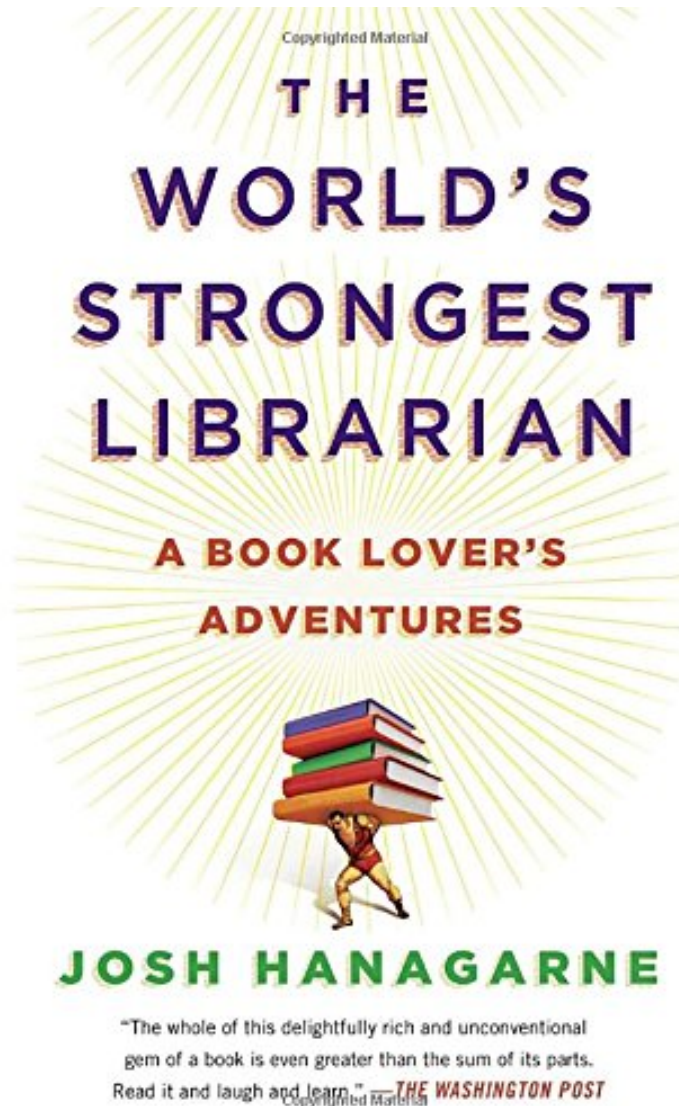


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The World's Strongest Librarian: A Book Lover's Adventures

Josh Hanagarne

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Josh Hanagarne : The World's Strongest Librarian: A Book Lover's Adventures before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The World's Strongest Librarian: A Book Lover's Adventures:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A Delight to Read By Aurora Grace I first read about this book in an e-mail. I think it was from Goodreads as part of their Best Books of the Month feature, but it could have been through Books-A-Million or Barnes and Noble. I saw a memoir about a weight-lifting bookworm and I was at once both thrilled and apprehensive. If I have two great loves in life (not counting people), it's weight-lifting and books. And

while there are books about bookworms, and books about lifters, not ONCE have I encountered a book about both of these things. It was so uniquely up my alley, and it had so much potential to be wonderful. But if it fell short of its potential, then that was it. There went my only possibility to read a book highlighting this unique combination of interests. The verdict? This book was even better than I had dared to hope for. I laughed out loud a whole bunch of times. I really mean that too, I'm not the kind of person who reads every book that is supposed to be funny and laughs out loud. Loads of books fall short of what they're aiming for, even -- perhaps especially -- books by comedians. But this book was genuinely funny, in a sometimes self-deprecating but never nasty way. Which brings me to my next point. Josh Hanagarne is such a loving person. He mentioned in his acknowledgements that his editors kept saying "It's just so refreshing to see someone write lovingly about their parents." (Yes, I loved this book so much I even read the acknowledgements word for word.) I completely agree, and will take it a couple steps further as well. Hanagarne writes about meeting his wife in a beautiful way. From the way he writes about her, you can tell that she's not exactly a siren that brings all the men running to her (29-year-old woman in the church choir, seldom wears makeup, never been kissed, and prone to talk about 401ks on the first date). But he writes about her in such a way that everyone can see how she is incredibly well-suited for him, and that he loves her not in a "she's-all-I-can-get" way, but in an "if-I-could-have-anyone-in-the-world-I'd-still-choose-her" way. I've read memoirs (and fiction books) where people fall in love, and you just don't quite buy the falling-in-love story. This one absolutely hits home; their relationship seems completely genuine (not perfect, but generally good) and a great thing for everyone to aim for. Even the library patrons Hanagarne frequently talks about, the ones with schizophrenia and other mental problems, are written about with love. There's a sense of humor present, but never any sense of derision or snark, and it's beautiful to read from the perspective of someone like that. I think I fell in love with the author just a little bit. Regarding the weight lifting parts of the book, an author I greatly respect (Lou Schuler) reviewed this book, saying it was possibly the best weight-lifting book he'd ever read, even though only about 10% of the book was about lifting. After reading the book, I know exactly what he means. While there are lots of books about there about programs and techniques, this book addresses the mental aspect. It goes into detail about the psychological and therapeutic effects of weight-lifting, how it can calm and focus your mind, and how the ability to move large objects really gives you a sense of having a handle on your life and your body. The sections on his love for books were great at capturing that feeling of escape that makes me love books, forgetting about your own life in your urgency to get lost in fake emergencies and problems and worry about if these fictional characters are going to get out okay. The parts on Tourette's syndrome were illuminating. I've never known anyone with Tourette's (at least not very well), and I was fascinated by having an inside look on the syndrome, seeing how it affects you and what it feels like. The parts on Mormonism were my least favorite parts of the book. I'm not religious and religion doesn't particularly interest me. I do suspect that this book may have had a bit of redemptive effect for Hanagarne. He had to cut his mission short due to health problems, and perhaps writing this book helped him to feel like he was still reaching a lot of people with the message of religion. And now I'm incredibly late for my morning workout, but I finished this book last night and I just couldn't wait to share my love for this book with the world. This book was absolutely wonderful. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Inspiration to never ever give up! Ever! By Don Bentley Disclaimer: I was NOT provided an advance review copy of The World's Strongest Librarian from Josh's publicist at Gotham Books, so obviously, they didn't influence my review. And I'm cheap! Maybe next time Gotham? I befriended Josh on FB a few years ago because of kettlebells. Then I find out he's a giant librarian with Tourette's. On top of all that, he's funny and entertaining. I knew I would buy any book he wrote, even though the first book he writes is a memoir and as a Mormon. I never read memoirs, and I'm not Mormon. I'm glad I bought it. There was a lot in the book I could relate to, such as our heights ending with 7" (if only mine started with 6!"); struggles with difficulties growing up (mine pales in comparison with a moderate/severe hearing loss, but it did affect my social/dating life as well as my academic life); the struggle with the ponderousness of religion vs. a personal relationship with Christ; kettlebells and wanting to get stronger (still working on this last part. Now, I need to find my own Adam. But not Adam himself. That dude is scary!); the attempt to use humor as a defense mechanism (and yes, because we like to entertain others); and lastly infertility (thankfully, only going through this once). I didn't know about this last one before reading the book. I can understand not using it as part of the promo. Through it all, Josh is very clear about the pain and the struggles, but I did not sense a lot of whining in the book. There wasn't a single section where I wished he wrote about less. Not being Mormon, it was interesting to get a perspective of the church from somebody who struggled with it. It was also interesting, albeit sometimes difficult to read about his and Janette's struggles with infertility, since it's something that we struggled with. I wished it had a few less swear words, however some were necessary "evils"; especially his Dad's hilarious expression for the LDS church. Yep, I've attended more than one of those myself. Having said this, I don't know if I would encourage young kids to read this if you're sheltering them from swearing and teen hormonal angst. I have always wanted to meet Josh, however, after reading this book, I want to meet his wife Janette more. What a wonderful woman to look past the distractions of Tourette's and see the person underneath. Max is going to be fine if his upbringing is as nearly good as Josh's was. I have no doubt it will be. I can't wait to see what Josh comes up with next. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Highly recommended! By rushriver Not a weepy book. It's about the people who had an impact on his life and his struggle with

Tourettes. It's about being 7, or 17, or 27, and what a boy of that age enjoys and grapples with. Some people think memoirs written in the mid-thirties are silly but I think it's the right time to recollect youth and the effort to become a functional adult. If he were to write about someone else, who would that be? I think he has the makings of a good author.

A funny and uplifting story of how a Mormon kid with Tourettes found salvation in books and weight lifting Josh Hanagarne couldn't be invisible if he tried. Although he wouldn't officially be diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome until his freshman year of high school, Josh was six years old when he first began exhibiting symptoms. When he was twenty and had reached his towering height of 6'7", his tics escalated to nightmarish levels. Determined to conquer his affliction, Josh tried countless remedies, with dismal results. At last, an eccentric, autistic strongman taught Josh how to throttle his tics into submission using increasingly elaborate feats of strength. What started as a hobby became an entire way of life and an effective way of managing his disorder. Today, Josh is a librarian at Salt Lake City's public library and founder of a popular blog about books and weight lifting and the proud father of five-year-old Max. Funny and offbeat, *The World's Strongest Librarian* traces this unlikely hero as he attempts to overcome his disability, find love, and create a life worth living.

From Booklist Josh Hanagarne is a remarkable man. He is a librarian, a follower of the Mormon faith, has Tourettes syndrome, and can deadlift 600 pounds. In this moving memoir, Hanagarne shows his readers what it is like to live with a severe form of Tourettes and how, with patience, love, and support from his family, he was able to build a rich, full life. With the onset of Tourettes, Hanagarne found a source of joy and delight and a welcome escape in books. He chronicles the increasing severity of his Tourettes, which forces him to leave his Mormon mission early and affects his pursuit of higher education. Hanagarne is open about his struggles, from his questioning of his faith, through the difficulties in his marriage, to his dogged determination to challenge himself to persevere and become a librarian. Throughout, his optimism and amusing, self-deprecating sense of humor shine through. An excellent and uplifting story on accepting and coping with lifelong disabilities, of particular interest to librarians. --Eve Gaus Josh Hanagarne is a remarkable man. In this moving memoir, Hanagarne shows his readers what it is like to live with a severe form of Tourettes and how, with patience, love, and support from his family, he was able to build a rich, full life. Throughout, his optimism and amusing, self-deprecating sense of humor shine through. An excellent and uplifting story on accepting and coping with lifelong disabilities, of particular interest to librarians. Booklist Wildly quirky memoir of facing down his ferocious Tourettes tics Hanagarne's account manages to be very gag-full and tongue-in-cheek highly engaging Reconciled with Tourettes, Hanagarne never let the disease get the upper hand. Publishers Weekly "A sumptuous read, as funny, erudite, and energizing as a chat with a conversational intellectual, as engrossing and moving as a medical detective drama The book leaves all of us who've read it feeling a little stronger and brighter ourselves." Martha Beck, Author of *Expecting Adam*, *Leaving the Saints*, and *Finding Your Way in a Wild New World* Just like the library has every funny, beautiful, moving, wise story you'd ever need in it, so too does this book. This is not just your ordinary memoir: it is a soaring, inspiring elegy to the small and big miracles of parenthood and friendship and marriage and how they triumph over the not so small challenges of life. It is a perfect, perfect gem of a read, unputdownable, unforgettable, unmatched. Pam Allyn, author of *What to Read When* "Josh Hanagarne inspires in his pursuit to break the shackles of Tourette Syndrome and live his life to the fullest, as a husband, a father and a librarian. Insightful, heart-wrenching and delightfully humorous, *The World's Strongest Librarian* is a triumph!" Cory MacLauchlin, author of *Butterfly in the Typewriter: The Tragic Life of John Kennedy Toole* and *The Remarkable Story of A Confederacy of Dunces*. As a gym rat myself, I can attest to the power of hurling one's sinews against heavy stuff that keeps wanting to slam you back into the floor. The difference with Josh Hanagarne is he has lifted much weightier impediments--Tourette's, loneliness, geekitude, and the calling to be a writer. That he is, and a talent to savor, to emulate, and to be inspired by. Steven Pressfield, bestselling author of *The War of Art* and *Turning Pro* "Josh Hanagarne has an astonishing story to tell, and he does so with insight, humor, grace, and wonder. All human beings suffer and struggle. Through the lens of his own miraculous experiences, Mr. Hanagarne illuminates the path to joy and the infinite possibilities of transcendence." Melanie Rae Thon, author of *Sweet Hearts* A truly interesting, engaging, and fascinating memoir. Joe Lansdale, author of *Edge of Dark Water* Josh's special struggles to deal with his own doubts, Tourette's and society give his journey a patina of honesty, resilience, and a flavor of humanity that truly inspires. Josh has a unique voice and I was privileged to read and be empowered by his story. Stephen Abram, VP of Gale Cengage Learning A funny, profound, emotionally generous, and wonderfully human story. Lou Schuler, author of *The New Rules of Lifting* Everything about this book is big: certainly it is the story of a 6'7" librarian with Tourettes, but it is also the quest for how we know, how we feel and how we love... without reservation. I found it impossible to put down; save a day to read this. Dan John, author of *Intervention* Josh Hanagarne is a giant of a man and a giant of a writer This guy is the real freaking deal in a very fresh and exciting way. "Larry Brooks, author of *Story Engineering* Witty and upbeat voice fun (and inspiring) reading. *Library Journal* "The whole of this delightfully rich and unconventional gem of a book is even greater than the sum of its parts. Read it and laugh and learn." The

Washington Post Fearless and funny. [NewYorker.com](#) An inspiring, often funny tale about the power of persistence. [PeopleRead](#) this book and then go hug a librarian! Anne Holman, *The King's English Bookshop* Joyfully celebrates books and reading. [BookPage](#) About the Author Josh Hanagarne is a librarian at the Salt Lake City Public Library. He lives in Salt Lake City, Utah, with his wife, Janette, and their son, Max.