

The Triumphant Approach:  
Chasing the Unwritable Book

Novel and Critical Exegesis

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## Abstract

Newly single and working the graveyard-shift at his local railway station, Peter Lawson is a complete failure. Yet, inexplicably, he has never felt better in his life. This confidence swells when a newsreader on morning television and an astrologer at the city's loudest tabloid both agree: Peter is *The One*...

What follows next tests the limits of his mind, and his faith, as he lurches from crisis to catastrophe – being helped along in his journey by a psychiatrist, a priest, and a class full of autistic boys – before meeting Maya, the one who guides him home.

Set between Sydney, London, and the foothills of the Himalayas, The Triumphant Approach is a tale about love, lunacy and the attraction of belief: a meditation on identity, and the redemptive power of losing one's mind, in modern day Australia.

Following the novel is a critical exegesis that charts the genesis and development of The Triumphant Approach by examining its various thematic elements with a focus on madness and writing, giving particular attention to the mental illness and spirituality shared by the protagonist and the author. The exegesis examines how identity is changed by mental illness and explores the inherent challenges for the writer intent on expressing that through fiction, as well as looking at the relationship between mental illness and belief – with a view to understanding the symbiotic relationship between the two.