



### The Suburban You: Reports from the Home Front

Mark Falanga

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From Publishers Weekly: Falanga is a familiar character: the transplanted urbanite who must make major adjustments when confronted with eccentric neighbors, block parties, Little League and lawn sales. Falanga writes a column, "Male Call," for the Chicago Tribune and launches his career as an author with this comedic portrait of suburban living. Several anecdotes are affectionate, authentic and gently amusing, although the writing lacks energy and sparkle. Falanga describes many events straightforwardly, mostly forgoing witty, illuminating details. What gives the book a surprising-and possibly unintended-darkness and tension are the vignettes depicting Falanga's wife. He says she's his best friend, yet their squabbles are so consistent, and so subtly hostile, that they emerge as unsettling rather than funny. She deprives him of the grape juice he loves, forces him to eat Chinese food he despises, insists he surrender towels he favors and denies him sex when he chooses a video she doesn't want to see. Other stories come as a relief from this ongoing warfare. Standout characters include a Superdad who brags about his kids and a friend throwing himself a 40th birthday party who talks about his self-help groups and imposes a touchy-feely mode on guests. Falanga covers typical suburban conflicts, but his stories tend to skim over issues and aren't substantial enough for a book. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.



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