

The Advocate is an exciting adventure capturing the essence of cultural characteristics and sometimes invisible sources that define the lives of millions.

The Advocate, a must-read, is a fictional tale of Ryan Arenz, a retired middle-class widower. He volunteers for a program where he advocates for Wanda, a single mother living in poverty, and her young son Marshawn. Although out of his element, Ryan is tasked with ensuring 'Marsh' is prepared for school, feels he belongs, is on a level playing field with other kids, and has a fighting chance to succeed and stay in school.

Once a week, all the children in the pre-K daycare meet along with their parent(s) and the other advocates. What happens in this diverse group is surprising. Things don't always go smoothly for Ryan, Wanda, and Marsh.

The story is both heart-warming and heart-breaking. This is an important novel at this time when we need to be brought together rather than further divided.



Tim has taught in Minnesota and Colombia S.A., directed plays, and coached sports. After founding a successful financial planning firm, Tim wrote "If I Had a Million Dollars: How to Achieve Financial Independence Before Your Parents Do" and lectured at colleges and universities on financial literacy for several years. In addition, he has published two novels: "Back to the Island" and "Will." After 16 years in the Boundary Waters' woods, he lives on Minnehaha Creek in Minnetonka, Minnesota, with his wife, Mary. They have five kids and 12 grands.



The Advocate, A Novel
Timothy P. Munkeby
Size: 5.5x8.5
Page Count: 160 Pages
Publication Date: July 26, 2022
Price: \$18.95

978-1-952976-77-3 paperback
978-1-952976-78-0 ebook
978-1-952976-79-7 hardcover
Printed in the United States of America
Published by Kirk House Publishers
kirkhousepublishers.com

Paperback Available
Kirkhousepublishers.com
Baker & Taylor (A Follett Company)
Ingram
Amazon
E-pub available on Amazon Kindle

BULK DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE

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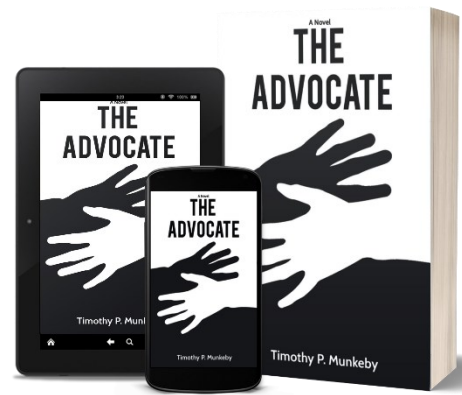
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A Novel
**THE
ADVOCATE**



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Printed in the United States of America

Published by Kirk House Publishers

kirkhousepublishers.com

Paperback Available

Kirkhousepublishers.com

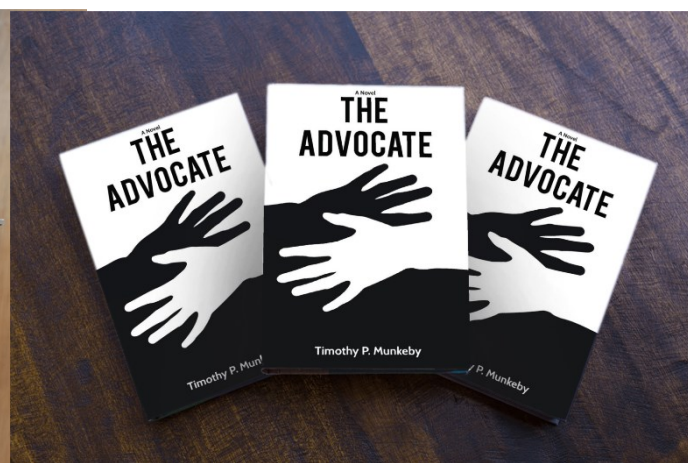
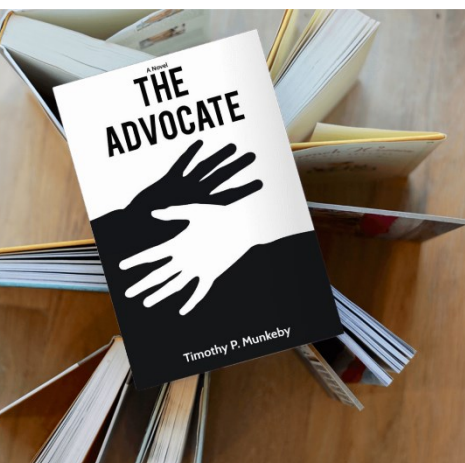
Baker & Taylor (A Follett

Company)

Ingram

Amazon

E-pub available on Amazon Kindle



A Novel
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Excerpt
From Chapter One



As soon as I saw those eyes peering out at me, I took it as a challenge. I wanted those eyes to be smiling at me. I kicked my shoes off and looked around...no toys in sight, no books. But maybe in his bedroom?

“Great photo there, Wanda. Who’s it of?” Rose’s gentle voice again came to the rescue, easing the tension and leading us into the room. I took a quick look around. There was only the one picture on the visible walls. It was a large photo the focus of which was an interesting and intimidating-looking tall black woman, smiling dauntingly, head held high, as if challenging the camera. She was surrounded by three giants—men and Black as well. They were all smiling broadly.

When Wanda didn’t answer, Rose continued: “By the way, I’m Rose, this here is Billy. Ryan apparently has no manners today.”

“Oh, sorry,” I said. I was nervous as hell...but determined. “Can we sit down and visit?” I looked at Billy and he crossed his eyes. He didn’t look too comfortable either.

“Sit where ya like,” Wanda said. “Ya’ll want something ta drink?”

We all looked at each other, no one knowing what to say. “What you got, honey?” Rose asked.

“Soda, I guess,” Wanda answered.

“Well, let’s you and me get to that kitchen. Can I hold the baby? He looks like a cutie. What’d you say his name was?”

Wanda didn’t answer and didn’t look like she was giving up her baby to anybody soon. She turned and headed toward a dark doorway.

Rose looked sideways at us, smiled, shrugged, and followed Wanda.

As the light in what must have been the kitchen snapped on, Billy and I looked around, trying to figure out what the seating arrangement might be. I wasn’t sure if I should sit on the couch with Wanda and Marshawn. I mean, eventually, we were going to have to get along, but I decided I’d let Rose do her magic and sit with Wanda...ease into things.