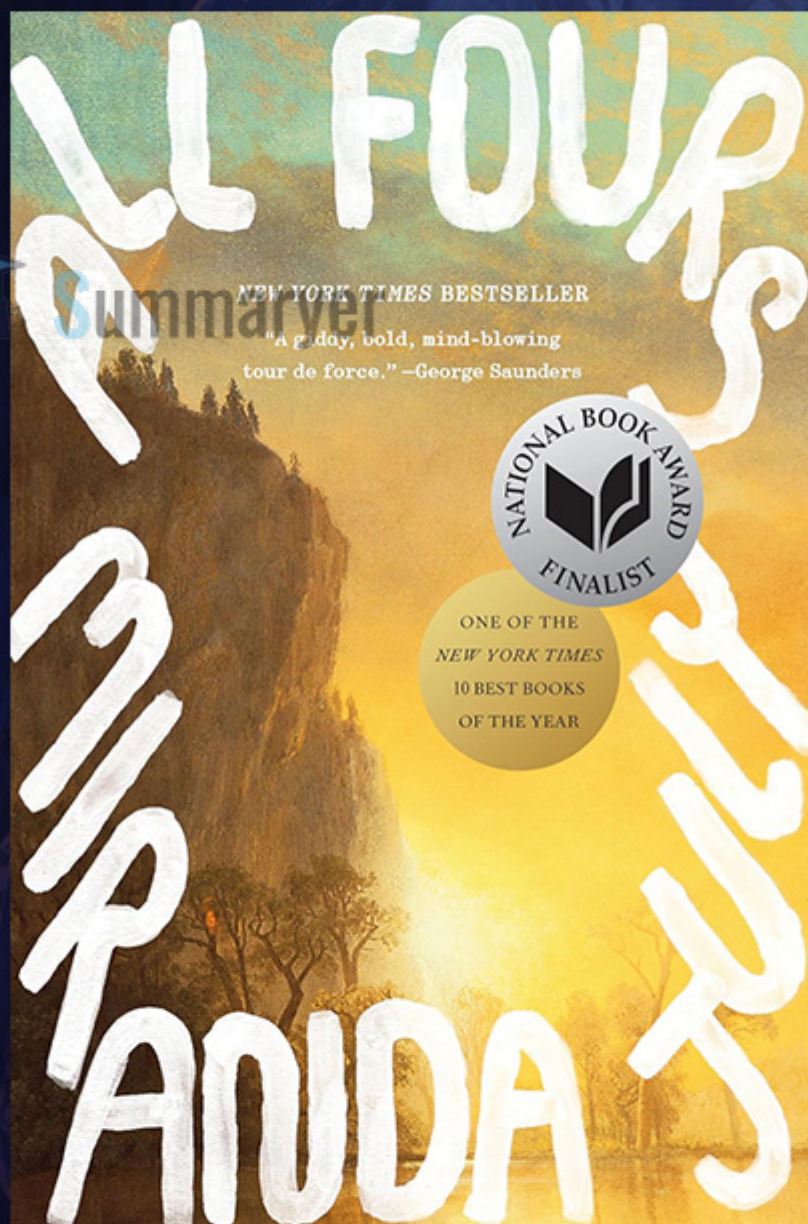


□□ Is All Fours Brilliant or Unreadable? And Did Martyr! Just Beat It as the Novel of the Year?



Summaryer



In a year of bold, disobedient fiction, two books have fiercely divided readers: ***All Fours* by Miranda July** and ***Martyr!* by Kaveh Akbar**. One is described as “a raw masterpiece,” the other as “self-indulgent nonsense.” The twist? Those descriptions apply to *both*, depending on who you ask.

So what’s really going on? Did *Martyr!* just edge out *All Fours* as the definitive novel of 2024—or are we witnessing two equally polarizing, brilliant failures?

Let’s break it down.



☐☐ ***All Fours* — Miranda July’s Most Intimate (and Alienating?) Work Yet**

What it’s about:

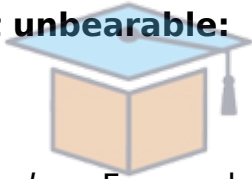
A middle-aged woman leaves her marriage and embarks on a sex-and-self-discovery road trip. But this is Miranda July—so what unfolds isn’t plot-heavy drama but a stream of hyper-detailed observations, awkward encounters, and bizarre, poetic self-reflection.

Why some call it a masterpiece:

- ☐☐ *Radically honest*: July dissects female desire, shame, aging, and identity with unnerving closeness.

-  *Stylistically fearless*: The prose is fractured, diaristic, intimate. It feels like reading someone's secret brain.
-  *Inventive structure*: The lack of conventional plot is, for fans, the whole point—this is inner life, not outer action.

Why others call it unbearable:



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-  *Plotless and slow*: For readers craving structure or momentum, it feels like a long, drawn-out journal entry.
-  *Emotionally draining*: The book swims in ambiguity, discomfort, and stagnation. There's little relief or resolution.
-  *Hard to empathize*: Some see the protagonist's self-absorption as frustrating or even alienating.

 *Verdict*: *All Fours* is not trying to be likable. It's trying to be **true**—and for some, that's more than enough. For others, it's just... too much.

☐☐ *Martyr!* — Kaveh Akbar's Lyrical, Political, Form-Bending Novel

What it's about:

Cyrus, an Iranian-American, explores identity, addiction, and faith through a journey that blends autofiction, poetry, documents, hallucinations, and ghosts. It's part religious reckoning, part cultural dissection, and wholly genre-bending.



Why some hail it as genius:

- ☐☐ *Language on fire*: Every sentence feels crafted by a poet (because it is). The rhythm sings, the metaphors shock.
- ☐☐ *Ambitious scope*: It grapples with martyrdom, immigrant identity, Islamophobia, and spiritual longing—head-on.
- ☐☐ *Narrative kaleidoscope*: Letters, scripts, dream fragments—it explodes the boundaries of what a novel can be.

Why others are exhausted by it:

- ☐☐ *Overly cerebral*: The symbolism is thick, the references dense. Some feel it's more thesis than story.

-  *Hard to follow*: With its fractured structure, it's easy to feel lost. It demands a lot from the reader.
-  *Character distance*: Some readers struggle to emotionally invest in Cyrus as a character amid the high-concept prose.

 *Verdict*: *Martyr!* is literature with a capital “L.” If *All Fours* whispers, *Martyr!* preaches—and that voice is either transcendent or too loud, depending on your mood.

So Which Book “Wins” 2024?

That depends on what you think literature is for.

If you want...	Read this
A novel that excavates interiority and disorients through intimacy	<i>All Fours</i>
A novel that explodes form , questions faith, and provokes through intellect	<i>Martyr!</i>

Neither book is safe. Neither is easy. Both are deeply personal, culturally urgent, and—yes—divisive.

So we ask:

☐ What's Your Verdict?



Summaryer

- Is *All Fours* a narcissistic thought spiral or a feminist triumph?
- Is *Martyr!* a poetic masterpiece or just beautifully disguised confusion?
- Which one stuck with you longer—emotionally, or intellectually?
- And most importantly...

What does it say about you if you loved one and hated the other?

Let's argue in the comments. Civilly. Or not.