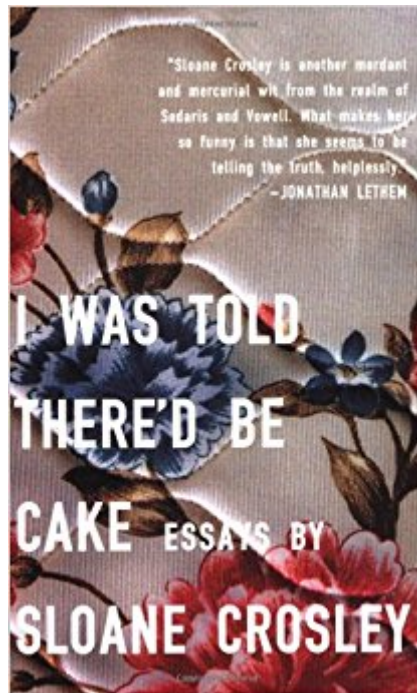


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I Was Told There'd Be Cake: Essays



Synopsis

From the author of the bestselling novel, *The Clasp*, hailed by Michael Chabon, Heidi Julavits, and J. Courtney Sullivan. Wry, hilarious, and profoundly genuine, this debut collection of literary essays from Sloane Crosley is a celebration of fallibility and haplessness in all their glory. *New York Times* bestseller. From despoiling an exhibit at the Natural History Museum to provoking the ire of her first boss to siccing the cops on her mysterious neighbor, Crosley can do no right despite the best of intentions -- or perhaps because of them. Together, these essays create a startlingly funny and revealing portrait of a complex and utterly recognizable character who aims for the stars but hits the ceiling, and the inimitable city that has helped shape who she is. *I Was Told There'd Be Cake* introduces a strikingly original voice, chronicling the struggles and unexpected beauty of modern urban life. Sloane Crosley is also the author of *How Did You Get This Number*, *The Clasp* and the ebook *Up The Down Volcano*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. This debut essay collection is full of sardonic wit and charm, and Crosley effortlessly transforms what could have been stereotypical tales of mid-20s life into a breezy series of vignettes with uproariously unpredictable outcomes. From the opening *The Pony Problem* to the hilarious *Bring-Your-Machete-to-Work Day* (which will ring true for any child of the early 1990s who played the first Oregon Trail computer game), Crosley is equal parts self-deprecating and endearing as she recounts her secret obsession with plastic ponies and the joys of exacting revenge via a pixilated wagon ride. In less capable hands, the subjects tackled "from unpleasant weddings of

long-forgotten friends to horrendous first jobsâ” could have been a litany of complaints from yet another rich girl from the suburbs. But Crosley, who grew up in Westchester and currently lives in Manhattan, makes the experiences her own with a plethora of amusing twists: a volunteer job at the American Museum of Natural History leads to a moral quandary, and a simple Upper West Side move becomes anything but. Fans of Sarah Vowell’s razor-sharp tongue will love this original new voice. (Apr.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

For those for whom the publication of new work by David Rakoff or Sarah Vowell would be a literary event equivalent with the announcement of an eighth Harry Potter novel, the release of Crosley’s debut collection of keenly insightful personal essays should have similar impact. The New York Times, NPR, and Village Voice contributor’s take on everything from volunteering to vegetarianism, bridesmaid’s duties to baking disasters escorts readers on a raucous ride through the fluctuating minefield that is contemporary culture. Crosley’s sardonic observations have a sassy edge; her nimble humor, a naughty zing. Yet beneath her smug persona of a young woman about town • (that town being Manhattan) lurks another, more vulnerable image: that of sensitive small rat from suburbia • (the suburbs being Westchester.) Real and recognizable, Crosley’s is the voice of everyone’s favorite quick-with-the-quipps sister, daughter, roommate, coworker. With an unabashed appreciation for the trenchant irony inherent in life’s more quotidian activities, Crosley exposes society’s and her own’s most endearing qualities. --Carol Haggas

What wonderful funny book. Picked up on a whim and what a delight read it has been.

I think this was meant to be a comedy but it just wasn’t that funny - disjointed storyline...

Brilliant!

Fantastic. She is funny, sarcastic, and genuine, and I very much enjoyed it.

Not a typically chick-centric essays about bad hair and bad boyfriends. This chick kicks ass with the best of the boys. She’s smart, funny, brutally honest, and I loved every minute of this book.

Always on the lookout for a new, fresh voice, and one touted as a "mercurial wit" on a par with David Sedaris and Dorothy Parker, had to be good, right? Well . . . I'm sorry to report these front and back cover comparisons are just good copywriting. I'm not saying this author isn't talented. She is. She's funny, smart, quirky, writes well, and has a few 20-something stories to relate to, perhaps, essay-readers of her generation and fellow Manhattan-ites who may never tire of telling or hearing the same stories again and again and again. (Boss from hell, moving, etc.) I'm afraid there's nothing new here--a few chuckles and clever witticisms, but mostly I found this to be a monotonous collection of tales from a young woman shaking off the selfishness of youth and coming of age. Of varying length and format, these essays aren't polished and there are attempts to give a last-line/full-circle zinger in several cases; however, for me they didn't work. Further, I knew there was a generation gap when she started waxing nostalgic about video games in the excerpt entitled "Bring Your Machete To Work Day." And I didn't quite know how to take the proclamation: [I] "find people who publicly strive to make the world a better place to be moderately annoying." I feel I should have been more on board with her sense of humor by 117 pages into the book where this appears. Nevertheless, I can't blame the author for these particular criticisms--which means this book had more of an audience problem for me, rather than a talent problem. I'd love to read more of Crosley's work, say in another decade or two. My guess is that she's going to get better and better. Bottom line: Good writing, mildly humorous, nothing new for baby-boomers, but probably great for Gen X'ers and those who follow . . . what are they called? No doubt, Crosley knows. Michele Cozzens is the author of *It's Not Your Mother's Bridge Club*

Even though I'm decades older than Ms. Crosley, I found her memoir funny and insightful. After finishing the book, I passed it along to my 32 year old daughter who raved about it. Don't pass this one up!

If I were to write a book containing biographical essays, it would be very similar to this. My little ponies, Oregon Trail, secreted away neurosis, wild tales of awkwardness...Super awesome book!

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