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My Body Is A Book Of Rules



Synopsis

As Elissa Washuta makes the transition from college kid to independent adult, she finds herself overwhelmed by the calamities piling up in her brain. When her mood-stabilizing medications aren't threatening her life, they're shoving her from depression to mania and back in the space of an hour. Her crisis of American Indian identity bleeds into other areas of self-doubt; mental illness, sexual trauma, ethnic identity, and independence become intertwined. Sifting through the scraps of her past in seventeen formally inventive chapters, Washuta aligns the strictures of her Catholic school education with Cosmopolitan's mandates for womanhood, views memories through the distorting lens of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, and contrasts her bipolar highs and lows with those of Britney Spears and Kurt Cobain. Built on the bones of fundamental identity questions as contorted by a distressed brain, *My Body Is a Book of Rules* pulls no punches in its self-deprecating and ferocious look at human fallibility.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I just finished *MY BODY IS A BOOK OF RULES* by Elissa Washuta, and must say I was blown away, torn up, and yet healed by this stunning work. I loved her contrast between a very dry academic paper and a set of incredibly funny and gut wrenching footnotes. And *The Law and Order SVU* segment hit me right in my soul, as I, too, have often imagined bringing the two people who tried their best to ruin my life when I was age 18 to Justice, which I can only hope they are seeing in Hell, where they belong. It takes guts to weave in so many personal details into a bold work of art.

Like a modern stained glass work, the reader often finds shards which can cut very deeply, and the shared pain and hope and growth one experiences while reading this bold first book from what I hope will be a prolific author was one of the most profound reading experiences I have ever encountered. Her sense of humor, at the most gut-wrenching times, is like the old medical practice of blood-letting: the reader's and the author's blood mingles in a widening pool of horror, denial, and acceptance of what can not be changed, but can be used for dramatic healing. Even the reverse mermaid on the cover tears out a smile in the midst of controlled recollections of intense emotional turmoil. It cuts like a CT scan of the psyche, revealing not only the author's pain and healing, but also that of the reader. It is real. It is stark. It is electric and shocking. But is such a comfort to The Abused, anywhere, and to women and other long-neglected heroes of America's past and heritage. This is a book which enhances and fosters healing from Trauma, as well as making Others aware that such trauma exists. Her humor brings one back from the brink of angry tears. It transforms in a way The Wafer might for others.

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