



# Tonight I'm Someone Else: Essays

*Chelsea Hodson*

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## **Tonight I'm Someone Else: Essays** Chelsea Hodson

A highly anticipated collection, from the writer Maggie Nelson has called, “bracingly good...refreshing and welcome,” that explores the myriad ways in which desire and commodification intersect.

From graffiti gangs and *Grand Theft Auto* to sugar daddies, Schopenhauer, and a deadly game of Russian roulette, in these essays, Chelsea Hodson probes her own desires to examine where the physical and the proprietary collide. She asks what our privacy, our intimacy, and our own bodies are worth in the increasingly digital world of liking, linking, and sharing.

Starting with Hodson’s own work experience, which ranges from the mundane to the bizarre—including modeling and working on a NASA Mars mission— Hodson expands outward, looking at the ways in which the human will submits, whether in the marketplace or in a relationship. Both tender and jarring, this collection is relevant to anyone who’s ever searched for what the self is worth.

Hodson’s accumulation within each piece is purposeful, and her prose vivid, clear, and sometimes even shocking, as she explores the wonderful and strange forms of desire. This is a fresh, poetic debut from an exciting emerging voice, in which Hodson asks, “How much can a body endure?” And the resounding answer: “Almost everything.”

## **Tonight I'm Someone Else: Essays Details**

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# From Reader Review Tonight I'm Someone Else: Essays for online ebook

## Nicola says

Tedious. I couldn't finish this one, but felt I'd read enough to make a rating. It's filled with pedestrian MA in Personal Essay passages and aimless coasting and credit card debt-racking (such is our generation's experience, but I'd love to read someone actually grappling with that).

I've read a lot of essay collections in the same vein as this one (I found Hodson's voice quite similar to Chloe Caldwell's, for example). I'm coming to think of it as the TED Talk voice of personal essay: constructions like "Doing [thing] while [ambiance]"; lots of references to childhood moments and scenes of early relationships that never cohere into an impression of the person you're reading tens of pages about. Hodson also has a tendency towards humble-bragging, usually about inconsequential things like being good at easy retail jobs. It's all disaffection and pretty words with no sense that there's anything at stake.

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## alexandra says

i enjoyed every single one of these essays but also none of them will stay with me beyond this reading? That's not to say the writing isn't incredible, that Chelsea Hodson doesn't have a natural talent with narrative prose, and that I won't read everything she ever produces — because i will. I just don't feel any of these were something I heavily related to. Or that I need to reread because it wasn't the right time.

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## Thomas says

### 3.5 stars

A vulnerable essay collection about desire, intimacy, and what our bodies can endure under physical and emotional duress. Chelsea Hodson's writing felt the strongest in her longer-form narrative essays, when she had a structure to work with. My two favorites include "Pity the Animal," a smart and incisive examination of female objectification and how Hodson herself has dealt with it, as well as "I'm Only a Thousand Miles Away," an innocent essay about obsessive childhood crushes that turns into something much more sinister and scary. At its best, this collection details the pain and the wonder of growing up and being a grown up, prickly and thwarted desires and all.

I wanted Hodson to go deeper or clearer with some of these essays. Some of the pieces contain several little snippets pieced together that I felt confused by, both on a structural level and on a sentence level. For example, in "Simple Woman," she writes "Money needs us, depends on us to mint it... Dreams, on the other hand, don't need us at all." While I found the observation about money fascinating, I would have appreciated a more prolonged exploration of what she means about dreams. I felt this sense of disorientation at several points in the book. Hodson wrote several interesting one-liners that I wish evolved into more, either more commentary or self-insight, similar to some of my favorite essay collections, like *The Empathy Exams*, or *Bad Feminist*, or *So Sad Today*.

Overall, a good book I would recommend to those interested by the synopsis, as well as those who enjoy vulnerability and self-disclosure in brief, dashing snippets. I am curious to read what Hodson writes next and appreciate all the effort she put into this collection.

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### **Elizabeth says**

I read the inside cover before I bought this book and read it again after I finished. And, I can't say that the promise matches my perceptions. Hodson is a skilled writer, but that is all that I can say to recommend *Tonight I'm Someone Else*.

This collection of essays reads more like an unedited diary (albeit by a talented writer) than a published collection of essays. And, the organization - from long paragraphs of careful, beautifully written prose to simple lines separated by paragraph breaks - was not cohesive in terms of form.

After 191 pages, I did not have a real sense of who the author is or what the purpose of this book really was - other than a navel-gazing recounting of Hodson's many crushes, infatuations and purposeful (?) attempts to be victimized and violated.

While I appreciate the author's honesty - and much of this book felt brutally honest - I felt that Hodson was withholding what was truly real. What was withheld could have made this book, the author and her story more sympathetic, more meaningful, more interesting and most importantly, more *human*. I wish that Hodson would have gone deeper, as I am certain that she has a compelling and important story to tell.

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### **Scott Mcclanahan says**

I loved this book so so so so much. Finally a book of essays where the writer doesn't tell you how they want us to be, but how we are.

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### **Scott S. says**

While this collection had some good chapters, there were moments when my attention started to wander and my thoughts could've been titled *Tonight I'm Reading Something Else*. Okay, that was an easy joke, so I should mention that it worked best when Hodson wrote about childhood / teen / college years - it was then things were pretty engaging. In 'I'm Only a Thousand Miles Away' she speaks of her attractive friend hooking up with an attractive guy (during the high school years) --

*"Our friends were the kind of people who made things happen, and we were the kind who waited for other people's magic to touch us . . . we imagined the event so thoroughly that it became ours, too."*

Not that I wanted to be reminded of my own adolescence (no thank you!), but Hodson effectively captured some truths / experiences common to a North American teenager. However, after reading a handful of other female-authored memoirs / essay collections (like those by Jessi Klein or Sloane Crosley - both recommended ) in the last two years I thought this one fell a little short of the mark.

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## Daniel says

Je serais un grand lecteur de poésie si la poésie était toujours comme ça.

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## Vincent Scarpa says

"For our high school graduation party, our school hired a hypnotist. My best friend volunteered herself, went onstage, fell asleep, and then he had her dancing and singing Backstreet Boys songs. When she woke up again, she walked back to her seat and I tried to tell her what she'd done while she was out, but she said she was awake the whole time. *It was easier to just do what he wanted me to do*, she said, and I knew what she meant."

**A fucking masterpiece.**

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## Rachel Davies says

<3 <3 <3 <3 <3

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## eman | readsforkeeps ? says

"All characters appearing in this work are you. Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely you." - Chelsea Hodson, *Tonight I'm Someone Else: Essays*

"Tonight I'm Someone Else" is a collection of essays about Chelsea's work, life, and relationships. It is packed with vulnerability, emotions, and recklessness in between switching careers and getting into relationships. The thing with reading an essay collection is you only get a fraction of each and everything and as much as you wanna get deeper and explore more of it all you get are fragments that makes you leave wanting more. This gave me so much "feels" that my phone's full of relateable sentences from the book. ? Well written and definitely a book I will re-read in the future.

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## Kevin says

Chelsea Hodson is somewhere between poet and magician. Her sleight of hand is dazzling, weaving dark themes and just the right amount of vulnerable heart into these essays, whether they be meaty and full or broken into sharp diamond-like shards of prose. I'm not sure I know another writer who can be so hard and soft at the same time. And don't overlook the humor herein--it's the kind of sharp wit that reminds me of Fran Lebowitz or the songs of PJ Harvey. This book is an amazement.

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## **Jenny (Reading Envy) says**

"Last week, I decided my friend, Erik, was both beautiful and impossible, and I felt it save my life in a way."

Okay friends, I'm going to say some honest things about this book, because I was given a review copy in exchange for an honest review. That quote I used up there is not from final copy so it may not appear as written exactly but I wanted to pull out something to use as an example.

How did you react to that quote? I predict that your overall feelings about this book will have a lot to do with your reaction to the quote. If you felt a resonance with it, you are probably younger than me and this book will be a great read for you and where you are in your time of life. If you rolled your eyes at it, hang on because most of the book is a lot like that, and you are likely not to warm to the navel-gazing essays of this book. I'm almost 40; I felt too old. I remember feeling similar to how she feels in some of this, in other ways I'm of a different generation that was never so willing to give up independence to feel emotionally manipulated by people who don't deserve that power. I think I learned earlier to see people from their perspective instead of only from my own.

So there are individual essays except for me they bleed together quite a bit. Throughout the pieces, the author is referencing someone who she can't let go of, to ruminate (again) about a memory or a feeling, longing for them and wondering about them. There is a lot about finding identity and a place by subverting expectations. There also seems to be a theme of the pursuit of the feeling of complete and utter freedom or abandon, which could also be seen as ultimate selfishness (nobody knows where she has gone) or ultimate recklessness (nobody knows where she is!).

So, I gave this three stars. I felt like the book wasn't for me. But I can see how others might really like it, and for those readers, I would highly recommend it.

*Thanks to the publisher for providing access to this title. I discussed it on a book speed dating bonus episode of the Reading Envy Podcast, where I did say I liked it enough to finish it, which I did. This book came out June 5, 2018.*

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## **Guillaume Morissette says**

Reading this book felt like giving it direct access to my brain + a high-level security clearance & letting it cause as much chaos as it wanted in there.

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## **Mateus Rizzo says**

Um dos melhores livros que eu li esse ano e na vida. Extremamente sensível, único, bem escrito. O estilo abstrato e quase surreal dos ensaios me fez passear pelos pensamentos dela e em seu "universo". É até difícil encontrar palavras para falar sobre esse livro, considerando o quanto gostei dele. Os ensaios são cheios de realidade, misturadas com sonho. Cada parágrafo é um mundo dentro de si mesmo. É louco e extremamente reconhecível. O livro é uma reflexão arrebatadora sobre o que é ser mulher e ser artista. Sobre

autoconsciência. Os textos são uma mistura de ideias românticas e hedonistas. É um livro sobre estar vivo e sobre querer viver.

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**Wendy Ortiz says**

This causes me to wait breathlessly for everything Chelsea Hodson will write next. 10 stars.

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