



## **Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?: A Catholic Girl's Memoir**

*Marie Simas, Keith Popely (Editor)*

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**Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?: A Catholic Girl's Memoir** Marie Simas , Keith Popely (Editor)  
What happens when you grow up in an insane Catholic family? Surprisingly funny, this candid memoir shows readers the endurance it takes to survive in a stifling, abusive childhood. It's an emotional roller coaster from start to finish, fiercely honest and sincere. From the very beginning, the author grapples with hilarious, uncomfortable situations, punctuated by episodes of childhood brutality. These stories will make you laugh out loud, and some will make you cry. This book shouldn't be missed!

## **Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?: A Catholic Girl's Memoir Details**

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## **From Reader Review Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?: A Catholic Girl's Memoir for online ebook**

### **Victoria says**

It said it was a comedy....Really, though, it was the sad story of an abused girl....

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### **Murphy's Library says**

(from Murphy's Library - <http://www.murphyslibrary.com/>)

I didn't know what I'd think of this book when I first saw the title and the cover, but I decided to give it a try because I'd read some positive reviews, but nothing much spoilerish. Let me tell you: even if this isn't the genre of book I usually read, I had a really good time.

The memoirs go from sad to funny in a matter of a few pages, and you see yourself in little details. It's a book with a lesson, even if it just shows up towards the end. You often found yourself thinking if Marie's life wasn't good at all. But it was. You see it in the little rich details that the narrative has.

And let me tell you: I really like this narrative. Really, really, really liked it. I found amazing the nonchalant way Marie uses to speak, and each story is so much more than just the few pages where it was. The tone was an amazing weapon used to the brim by Marie Simas.

My negative points: while I truly understood the title, I don't think it is a good one. I could think of dozens of different titles that would be more... commercial. The revision was very good, the book was extremely well written, the edition was simple, but very good too.

The title and the cover—that matches the name—where the only things that bothered me. And I was a little guilty because sometimes I felt like I was invading Marie's personal space. While the narrative worked fine for Marie Simas, it could put some people a little more sensitive off, more than me.

Overall, it is a very good memoir book and I had a great time reading it. It's better if it is your genre of books, but you really can enjoy it fully even if you just want to give it a try. I tried and had a great time (tampons and all).

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### **Laura says**

This was one of my very first Kindle purchases when I was new to using it plus at 90cents how could I say no? The title of the book felt a little shocking but I must admit it piqued my interest instantly considering it's an autobiography (total sucker for them). This is the second time I started the book (as have most of my books on the Kindle) because of the amount of time that lapsed since reading it last..very well worth it!

Today I plonked myself down on the couch and didn't move until the last page clicked over! It has been AGES since I've managed to consume a book in one sitting!

I don't think pitty is the right word to describe how I felt while reading the book but it did certainly spring to mind...It's really not a book if you have something against violence or sex (rape) as you may find yourself turning mad with anger or queasy in the tummy.

The whole book is painted with a very grim outset but as you read along things don't really change until near the end...Without putting up huge spoiler tags I will say it can truly be amazing how someone can sway you one way with their writing making you think everything in this persons life is hellish but then you find out that's not the complete truth.

Everyone lives a quite unique life no matter how shitty it is which is what I kept thinking while reading this book.

Highly enjoyable!

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### **Lisa says**

I thought this book was going to be really funny, but it turns out to be really deep and interesting. Should be done today with it.

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### **Maria says**

*Disclaimer: I received a copy of this book in the Goodreads Giveaway program from the author.*

As others have stated, this book was not what I expected. My only clue as to what this book was about was via the Goodreads blurb which gave the impression that it was a lighthearted look back at a Catholic girl's life with statements like "...Surprisingly funny...". "hilarious, uncomfortable situations", "These stories will make you laugh out loud".

To me, this book was not funny - it was brutal and raw. It very much pushed the boundaries of what I normally read. In fact, I almost stopped reading the book early on after I reached an incident involving worms.

However, I made myself persevere and to digest the incidents narrated. It was difficult because it was so negative. Not only the content, but the tone. I lost count of the times something was described as "shitty" or someone was an "asshole" or a "bitch". It was wave after wave of snarkiness and bitterness. I found myself torn between empathising with the author for what she endured and yet not liking her very much as she describes some of the ways she treats people as she grows older.

Whilst I would not read this sort of book again, I am glad that I made it to the end. The last few pages do throw perspective on the hard slog through the rest of the book. The ending makes you think of what happens between the incidents narrated. There are those of us who look back on the past as a golden age and miss out on living where we are now. Then there are those of us who do not live in the now because we are too bitter with what has gone before. We tend to hone in on specific events to affirm a view and forget the fullness of emotion with which life usually comes.

Definitely not a book for the faint-hearted or those looking for a story with eloquent writing or likeable characters. It is a personal and real story as it would be told to a closest friend – with “unedited” thoughts, emotions and unrefined language.

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### **Issa says**

This book was not what I expected. A review I read talked about the humor and while there were some funny moments, this memoir was mostly about being raised in an abusive home. It was well written and often sad.

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### **Mandy says**

I won this book and was totally excited to get it in the mail. AND it ended up being signed "Thanks Mandy, Marie" on the inside. Bonus!

With this title, I really expected it to be a lighthearted take on one's experience growing up in a conservative Catholic family. I literally laughed out loud during the first few pages, which outline some hilarious memories from Marie's childhood. As the book went on, the stories quickly went from lighthearted to disturbing, as she outlines pretty severe emotional and physical abuse by her father. It was a quick switch from quirky and funny to "whoa that's messed up." Though I was jarred by the change, Marie's somewhat snarky voice carries the story throughout her life into adulthood.

I liked this book.

I find it hard to write reviews on memoirs, since they are quite literally judgments on one's telling of their life story. So I'll say this: the book is good. The stories are enthralling and it's hard to imagine enduring the things this child endured. However, I felt that it was wrapped up a little too neatly at the end. I'd recommend this book to anyone who likes memoirs, but I'd warn them first that it's not as lighthearted as you might think (from the title and the first chapter).

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### **Miss Bookiverse says**

„Do Tampons Take Your Virginity“ klingt ja eher nach Mädchenaufklärungsbuch. Zusammen mit dem Untertitel „A Catholic Girl’s Memoir“ habe ich schon eher auf etwas Interessantes, möglicherweise Lustiges getippt. Die lobenden Zitate auf der Buchrückseite bestätigen das und haben mich auf „laugh out loud“ Momente vorbereitet. Von denen gab es nach den ersten 20 Seiten allerdings keinen einzigen. Vielmehr ist das Buch brutal und deprimierend. Die Autorin berichtet von einer an einem Hirntumor erkrankten Mutter und einem tyrannischen Vater, der seine Kinder schlägt und seine Frau sogar im Krankenhausbett noch begatten muss. An sich kein Thema, über das man nicht schreiben sollte, aber wenn mir lustige Anekdoten aus dem Leben eines katholischen Mädchens versprochen werden, will ich nicht über Familienmissbrauch lesen.

Das Erschreckende an dem Buch ist, dass es Memoiren sind, woraus ich entnehme, dass die Autorin all diese Ereignisse mehr oder weniger genau so durchlebt hat. Und das ist grauenhaft. Das zeichnet einen fürs Leben und das hört man leider auch am Ton der Erzählung. Marie Simas klingt verbittert und wütend, was sie mir zunehmend unsympathisch gemacht hat. Sie verallgemeinert nicht nur Lesben und Latinos, sie findet auch nichts dabei, dass die portugiesischen Fischer glauben, alles was im Ozean schwimmt, dürfte nach Belieben

von ihnen gefangen und verzehrt werden (Stichwort bedrohte Tierarten). Auch Schilderungen aus ihren Teenagerjahren haben sie mir alles andere als sympathisch gemacht, da sie beinahe stolz davon erzählt, wie sie ihre Freunde ausgenutzt und Männer nur für Sex benutzt hat.

Dazu gesellt sich ein begrenztes Vokabular an Schimpfworten. Alles ist „shitty“, jeder Zweite ein „asshole“ und „fucking“ ist sowieso das perfekte Adjektiv für alles. Die Ausdrücke tauchen viel zu oft auf und verlieren dadurch gänzlich an Wirkung, so dass die Sprache der Autorin einfach nur derbe und einfallslos klingt.

Nach 100 Seiten Negativität habe ich die letzten 60 Seiten nur noch überflogen. Hier wird ein wenig mehr aus den älteren Jahren der Autorin geschildert. Unter anderem berichtet sie von ihrer Schwangerschaft (ungewollt, da sie „zu faul“ war die Pille zu nehmen und die „rauszieh Methode“ halt nicht immer funktioniert – meine Fresse, gibt es heutzutage echt noch so dumme Menschen?) und der endgültigen Abkapselung von ihrem Vater.

Alles in allem hätte Marie Simas vielleicht mehr Zeit in Überarbeitungen und Verlagssuchen investieren sollen anstatt sich aufs „self publishing“ zu verlassen. Ein richtiger Verlag hätte ihrem Buch vielleicht auch die passende Hülle verliehen und ein paar Schimpfwörter gestrichen.

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### **Kristina says**

Read the full review @ Frazzled Book Nommer.

From the very first page, Marie exudes brazen, blatant honesty. *Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?* starts off with an ass/face towel anecdote – I kid you not – and it only delves deeper from there. I applaud Marie for being audacious enough to publicly write about these stories. I'd personally be too afraid of who from my past would read the stories. Marie, however, exposes every raw moment of her childhood – from abuse, to rape, to sexual encounters. This memoir was so full of honesty that I was mildly surprised at first; it takes some getting used to (my jaw dropped at least 10 times while I was reading).

This memoir was a complete emotional roller coaster. There were times when I cried, there were times when I laughed. I personally guarantee you will laugh at the first page of this memoir. But despite the wit and humor present in Marie's memoir, there was also her father present – an ever looming figure of fear. Every time a scene with her father came up, I wanted to personally run over to Marie and give her a big hug. However, she doesn't let us linger in the sadness for long. She seamlessly provides sporadic comic relief throughout the entire novel so that the oppression her father brings isn't too overwhelming.

Not only is she bold enough to “come out” with her story, but she's strong enough to withstand her father's oppressions and the hurts she's suffered. She could have easily succumbed and taken her abuse silently, or even become depressed, but that never happened. Her head was still held high and she took her life into her own hands once she hit college. I was very impressed with the strength that she had.

And I have to mention her grandmother Amalia, who I fell in love with. Any old grandma that chases a perverted old uncle up the street, screaming obscenities in Portuguese, is definitely okay in my book. She was always a constant beacon of hope, at least from my perspective. Every time her grandma was mentioned, everything would get slightly better – not completely, but marginally.

Lastly, I love the fact that Marie tried to go back and reconcile with a few people from her past that she had

wronged, such as Randall Johnson. I gained so much respect for her for writing an apology to him, and even more-so for Randall, for graciously forgiving her.

This novel is definitely thought-provoking, strong, and crazy. It deals with abuse, rape, forgiveness, mistakes, religion, stereotypes, and personal growth. I don't normally read memoirs, but I'm glad I chose to read this one – I definitely recommend it to anyone out there (especially Catholics, such as myself).

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### **Debbie says**

I started reading it as soon as I got home and saw it in the mail, and finished it a little over two hours later. Overall, I really liked the book. It was quirky, a bit gut-wrenching, disturbing, and hopeful all at the same time. Why the 3 stars then? Because I can't get over the title. It's an interesting title, a unique title, a title that is sure to make someone do a double take. Unfortunately, it's also, in my opinion, a *horrible* title for this book as it completely gives the wrong impression about what the book is about. This was not a memoir of a Catholic girl writing about weird questions she had to deal with. It was a memoir of a girl, who just happened to be Catholic (though religion isn't a big part of this book at all), writing about growing up with an extremely abusive and horrendous father and moving past that.

Simas tells a compelling story. I was a little thrown at first by the episodic nature of the book, but it becomes clear just why she chose that structure at the very last few pages of the book. She writes about some truly traumatic and horrific experiences defiantly, cathartically, and with a bit of tongue-in-cheek humor I admired. I don't know if I could have survived in her family and emerged half-way functioning.

*Review copy courtesy of the author via Goodreads First Reads*

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### **Veronica Noechel says**

I have to agree with other reviewers who warned that this is one poorly titled book. It lures you in, thinking (in my case) that this will be a light, comical book about growing up female and the misconceptions we all had, a good cheer-me-up after that Auschwitz book I just read. Hell no. H-e-l-l n-o. While the stories are fast paced and not poorly written, they tell a disturbing story of culturally accepted child abuse. I felt for the girl in the stories, but ultimately was left wondering "why are you telling me this?" since there wasn't really much of a unifying thread or connection to the reader. While I didn't regret reading this book, I also wouldn't recommend it to a friend. It just didn't give me enough to hang onto.

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### **Kristen says**

This book needs a Trigger Warning!! Talk of physical, verbal, psychological, emotional and sexual abuse.

"Do Tampons Take Your Virginity?: A Catholic Girl's Memoir", was not what I expected (and that seems to be the review consensus). I expected more humour then what was in the book but then maybe that is all in the eye of the reader as I can relate to having to find humour in dark places.

I thank Marie for being so open about her childhood experiences. She has taken an experience usually kept

quiet and given it a very loud and unashamed voice! Marie shares a message of never giving up, not being afraid of change and the possibility of survival and creating a better life after abuse. Marie is a strong woman!

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### **Mysterium says**

The author Marie Simas was kind enough to send me a copy of her book. The title lead me to believe that this was a unique yet personal view of how one lived and survived under the dogma of the Roman Catholic Church. After a few exchanged emails, I stood corrected and was still intrigued by her story. As a former Roman Catholic, I am always curious to see and hear others' perspectives of their church and cultural experiences.

I read Marie's brilliant diary of her life with a heavy heart and more than a few laughs and smiles. She has an amazing way of dealing with her abusive and tragic (at times) upbringing. Many in her shoes would have cracked under the pressure, but Marie was obviously blessed with spiritual Teflon and a strong sense of self esteem and spunk.

I am hopeful that this book was therapeutic for Marie and helped her gain closure to a very unfair upbringing. I am also prayerful that readers in similar situations will be inspired by her strength and resilience and move on, move forward, and heal.

Child abuse, sexual abuse, and domestic violence can only be prevented and prosecuted with public attention and shining the light on the ignorance and criminal behaviours of it's perpetrators. Books like these are a first crucial step in this long and seemingly endless process.

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### **Liralen says**

The title and description suggest that this is heavy on the humour, but I found it to be much darker than I'd expected. Although Simas packs the book with light anecdotes, those anecdotes are also wrapped up in stories of abuse, in crass language, and in family dysfunction. The subtitle is 'A Catholic Girl's Memoir', but 'An Abuse Survivor's Memoir' might be closer to the mark.

A few years ago, I read a piece of a draft a woman was writing about her past; I don't remember the details, but I remember that my overwhelming impression was *bitterness*. I said as much, and she was rather taken aback—not so much bothered as surprised, because that wasn't what she read into her own words. I get the same sense here: that I'm finding a deep pit of bitterness and rage in Simas's words, but Simas probably didn't intend it that way. Unfortunately, I can't gauge the extent to which I'm reading too much into things and/or misinterpreting tone.

At any rate...this is made up largely of very short anecdotes that run into each other—one-two-punchline—three-four-punchline. It's not a style that I've ever connected particularly well with, but it is, I think, not wildly unusual in the humour category.

Recommended for those who like their coffee laced with both sugar and arsenic.

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## **Charlie says**

Simas attacks this memoir with unapologetic strength. The humor, pain and personality comes through in the written word. I felt I got to know and connect with Marie. Sure, sympathizing is common with memoirs, but getting a reader to laugh while at the worst, well, that takes a special creative talent. Don't get me wrong, nothing is funny about the serious issues presented, but humor brings relief. The message is about surviving, overcoming, talking and ultimately, in the end to change. Yes, things happen to people, but what are we going to do with these experiences. It might be cliche to say, 'Turn the bad into good,' but taking control is the best revenge. Marie takes control of her past, which also allows her to control her future.

I wish it was longer. Some of the entries seemed too short or cut off. I tend to do this when I'm writing a particularly disturbing scene. At times, it is abrupt, like a slap in the face. However, it is consistent and the more I think about, it works with the overall voice of the book. Still, a little more vulnerability by slowing down at certain places would benefit the passages.

\* mature content: marital rape, abuse and language.

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