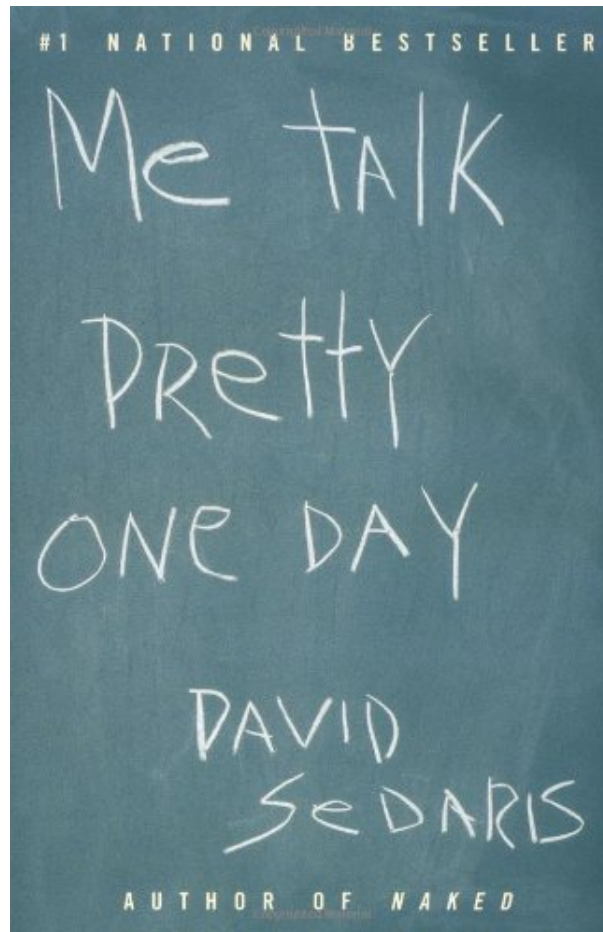
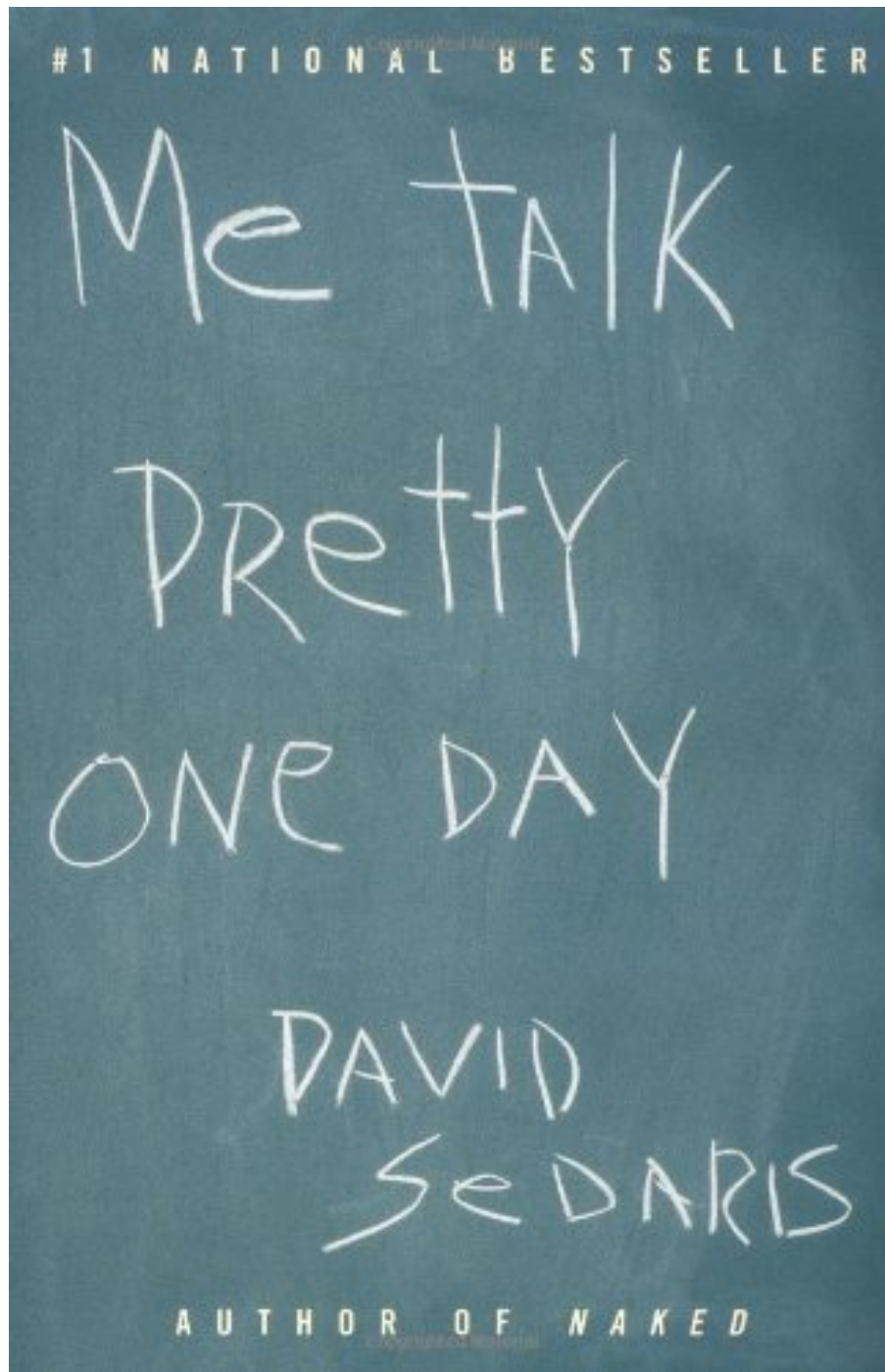


ME TALK PRETTY ONE DAY BY DAVID SEDARIS



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Amazon.com Review

"It's a pretty grim world when I can't even feel superior to a toddler." Welcome to the curious mind of David Sedaris, where dogs outrank children, guitars have breasts, and French toddlers unmask the inadequacies of the American male. Sedaris inhabits this world as a misanthrope chronicling all things petty and small. In *Me Talk Pretty One Day* Sedaris is as determined as ever to be nobody's hero--he never triumphs, he never conquers--and somehow, with each failure, he inadvertently becomes everybody's favorite underdog. The world's most eloquent malcontent, Sedaris has turned self-deprecation into a celebrated art form--one that is perhaps best experienced in audio. "Go Carolina," his account of "the first battle of my war against the letter s" is particularly poignant. Unable to disguise the lisp that has become his trademark, Sedaris highlights (to hilarious extent) the frustration of reading "childish s-laden texts recounting the adventures of seals or settlers named Sassy or Samuel." Including 23 of the book version's 28 stories, two live performances complete with involuntary laughter, and an uncannily accurate Billie Holiday impersonation, the audio is more than a companion to the text; it stands alone as a performance piece--only without the sock monkeys. (Running time: 5 hours, 4 cassettes) --Daphne Durham

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Sedaris is Garrison Keillor's evil twin: like the Minnesota humorist, Sedaris (*Naked*) focuses on the icy patches that mar life's sidewalk, though the ice in his work is much more slippery and the falls much more spectacularly funny than in Keillor's. Many of the 27 short essays collected here (which appeared originally in the *New Yorker*, *Esquire* and elsewhere) deal with his father, Lou, to whom the book is dedicated. Lou is a micromanager who tries to get his uninterested children to form a jazz combo and, when that fails, insists on boosting David's career as a performance artist by heckling him from the audience. Sedaris suggests that his father's punishment for being overly involved in his kids' artistic lives is David's brother Paul, otherwise known as "The Rooster," a half-literate miscreant whose language is outrageously profane. Sedaris also writes here about the time he spent in France and the difficulty of learning another language. After several extended stays in a little Norman village and in Paris, Sedaris had progressed, he observes, "from speaking like an evil baby to speaking like a hillbilly. 'Is them the thoughts of cows?' I'd ask the butcher, pointing to the calves' brains displayed in the front window." But in English, Sedaris is nothing if not nimble: in one essay he goes from his cat's cremation to his mother's in a way that somehow manages to remain reverent to both of the departed. "Reliable sources" have told Sedaris that he has "tended to exhaust people," and true to form, he will exhaust readers of this new book, too. With helpless laughter. 16-city author tour. (June) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Library Journal

More sharp-tongued humor from Sedaris, who recently moved to France.

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A recent transplant to Paris, humorist David Sedaris, bestselling author of "Naked", presents a collection of his strongest work yet, including the title story about his hilarious attempt to learn French. A number one national bestseller now in paperback.

- Sales Rank: #6420 in Books
- Brand: Hyperion EA
- Published on: 2001-06-05
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x .75" w x 5.50" l, .63 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 272 pages

Features

- Great product!

Amazon.com Review

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Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Fun easy read...

By Carlos T. Mock

Me Talk pretty One Day by David Sedaris

This is typical David Sedaris. The book has two parts, the first one is anecdotes of Mr. Sedaris growing up - the eccentricity of his father and all family members. Basically it contains his life growing up in North Carolina, then his move to Chicago, and finally to New York City.

The second part of the book is mostly his life with Hugh, his lover and living in France.

Narrated from the first person point of view, the book has no start, middle or finish - but rather a series of anecdotes. Each one could possibly stand out as a short story.

Mr. Sedaris comedy is better heard than read, but I can picture his voice when I read. There are some moments that I thought stood out. On "Jesus shaves" I liked his commentary that the Easter bunny was as real as the story of Jesus.

On "I pledge allegiance to the flag," Sedaris makes fun of our American stupidity and its rewards from malpractice lawsuits. And there is a commentary of Americans traveling in the Metro in Paris and how they pick on Sedaris confusing him for a pickpocket thief - however, to my disillusion he never revealed to the Americans that he spoke English.

The book is an easy fun read. i read it on my trip from Chicago to Puerto Vallarta (4 hours) and still have time left.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Comedy routine gone too long

By fra7299

I bought this book because awhile back I happen to read one of the chapters from this memoir, the one entitled "Me Talk Pretty One Day." In this chapter, Sedaris describes his struggles at learning French in a "sink or swim" language class. Being fully immersed in this class is made more difficult with the antics of the "language instructor from Hell" who goes after each student methodically. I enjoyed this chapter mainly because I think this is something we all could readily identify with in some way, and he came across as quite funny.

After reading the entirety of *Me Talk Pretty One Day* though, I tend to agree with the reviewers who say that reading Sedaris is better left in moderation and smaller doses. His humor--snarky, cynical, sardonic, self-deprecating--is funny at times and moments, but over the long haul it loses its steam. Not only that, but reading an entire book by the author helps the reader begin to fully understand that Sedaris' humor is not so much self-deprecating as egocentric. I suppose this is the point, and that it's all part of his shtick, but it works against him and renders his book less entertaining, more annoying.

In specific parts, I found Sedaris funny. I enjoyed the first chapter, "Go Carolina", where he talks about his visits to speech therapy. He finds a way to avoid all words that have the dreaded "s" in them as a way to help his self-esteem and avoid interrogation from his speech therapist. Some of the bits about him being a "mover" were funny as well, albeit over the top. Sections of his reflections about his visit to France are entertaining as well, as well as his attempts to learn the French and not fully being able to fit in.

Over all, though, a good deal of the narrative loses its humor over the course of two hundred odd pages. Some chapters were entertaining, others were entirely pointless. The latter parts of the novel were a struggle to get through, and I found myself wanting to skim entire sections. By the end, it became sort of like a comedy routine gone too long, with repetitive material being thrown at us again and again, waiting for the light chuckles.

This is my only read from this author, but I'm not sure if I will read this author again, unless it is a very short essay.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Laughter is the Best Medicine--Enjoy!

By Donna Hill

I've read about Sedaris and his sense of humor especially when he has been compared with Augusten Burroughs, author of *Running with Scissors*, whom I like a lot. Some people think that he is wittier than Burroughs. I won't compare them. I like them both. This book provided more laughs than I thought it would. As a former expat, die hard crossword puzzle addict, and child of a couple of one-of-a-kind parents, I can identify with much of Sedaris' humor. I didn't enjoy all of the chapters equally. But I was identifying and laughing at least more than 50% of the time.

Many of us, including me, had troubles fitting in at school. Sedaris had a lisp. I enjoyed reading about his interactions with his speech teacher. A story from the Metro in Paris is priceless. His birth family, characters all, will entertain you with their eccentricities. Sedaris admits that prior to becoming a writer he was a bit of a drifter, working at all sorts of unusual jobs, and met his share of strange people. I like the way he compares his boyfriend's life as the son of a State Department diplomat stationed in various places overseas to Sedaris' more mundane life in the U.S. I got many laughs from his chapter on esoteric food when he has to conduct a thorough search of his dinner plate in order to find what he has ordered. There is a bathroom story which is hilarious--potty humor at its best.

I found foul language to be at a minimum, used mostly when he is telling us about his weird brother who calls himself "Rooster" and has a few filthy stock phrases he uses continually, particularly shocking because he uses these with their parents. I knew that Sedaris is known to be edgy and bizarre and I already found his Christmas stories to be a little too far out there for me. But these stories were enjoyable, with not that many cringe-worthy stories. Naturally you won't be wanting to read this if you're particularly prudish or squeamish. I'm a 67-year-old woman who doesn't enjoy wallowing in filth, but I do enjoy someone with an edgy sense of humor. Try it, you might like it, and you can always skip the parts that make you cringe or aren't your cup of tea.

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