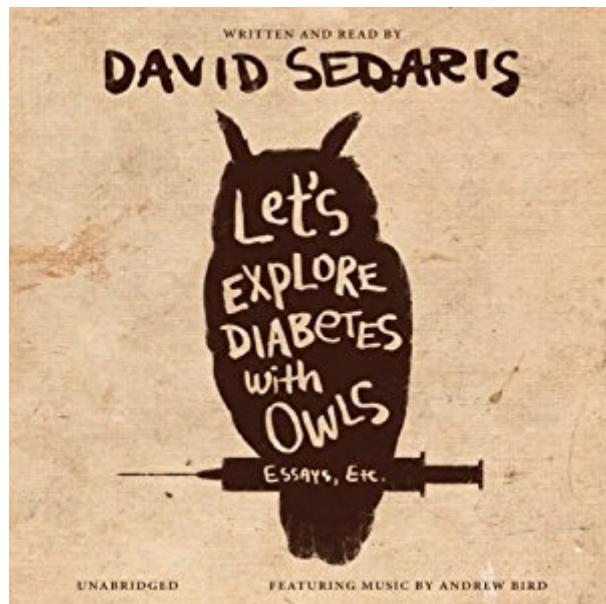


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Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls



Synopsis

Audie Award Finalist, Humor, 2014 From the unique perspective of David Sedaris comes a new collection of essays taking his listeners on a bizarre and stimulating world tour. From the perils of French dentistry to the eating habits of the Australian kookaburra, from the squat-style toilets of Beijing to the particular wilderness of a North Carolina Costco, we learn about the absurdity and delight of a curious traveler's experiences. Whether railing against the habits of litterers in the English countryside or marveling over a disembodied human arm in a taxidermist's shop, Sedaris takes us on side-splitting adventures that are not to be forgotten.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 25 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Hachette Audio

Audible.com Release Date: April 23, 2013

Language: English

ASIN: B00C6K1BK0

Best Sellers Rank: #8 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Travel #10 in Books > Reference > Writing, Research & Publishing Guides > Writing > Travel #20 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor > Essays

Customer Reviews

Good news for this author if he's planning another trip to China: the Chinese and the Indians are in a race to see how quickly they can sanitize their respective countries. They are competing to see who can build the most toilets. No more making do with a hole in the ground, or what my niece, who spent six months in China calls a 'squattie' (she accidentally dropped her cell phone in one). Don't do what I did and read "#2 to Go" while eating lunch. Not only does David talk about Chinese sanitary habits, he also dives into the dark side of their cuisine. Fried rooster blood, anyone? The owl in the title is stuffed. The author's partner, Hugh collected owl knick-knacks (not voluntarily--people started giving them to him when they found out he liked owls) and David wanted to top off his friend's collection with a stuffed owl. Unfortunately, taxidermists are not allowed to stuff owls in this country, even if the bird died of old age. When David and Hugh moved to France, they were stymied by the same law. However, although you can't kill an owl in England, you can have it

stuffed once it's dead. David's trip to the English taxidermy shop is one of the highlights of this book: "If you like the odd bits and pieces, I think I've got something else you might enjoy." The taxidermist retreated to the area behind his desk and pulled a plastic bag off an overhead shelf... From the bag he removed what looked like a platter with an oblong glass dome over it. Inside was a man's forearm, complete with little hairs and a smudged tattoo..." The severed arm had a story behind it as do all of the odd bits and pieces that this author collects and shares with his readers. Some of the essays in "Let's Explore Diabetes with Owls" are fantasies of what life might be like for a red-neck, right-wing voter. This is where the author ventures into Jonathan Swift's territory: heavy-handed satire, but witty. Very witty. These essays made me wonder what Sedaris thinks of the current Republican candidate for President. I hope he writes an essay (or an entire book about the 2016 Presidential Race). He's one of the few authors who could do this subject justice. Meanwhile, read this book and find out what David Sedaris thinks of the Chinese, Germans, the English, dentists, book tours, the lines at airports, and Pygmy skeletons.

I love you, David Sedaris. Perhaps in another life we could have been something, alas, you have your own life to live and know not of my feelings for you. I will continue to admire you from afar and gleam the messages you leave me in your words, braided like the soft silkiness of your hair. Oh, what it would be like to be able to gaze into those small dark eyes, and have you see me for who I am, what I could be. At some point I know I will have to give up my crazy dream, for now I will slowly lie down and close my teary eyes and spend my nights with you again. You are amazing. I don't care what other people say. My admiration of your intellect is far greater than any negative thoughts from people who may know better than I. While I sit and read these books and laugh and smile and feel like it was written for me. Just because I have an aunt who collected owls and I have collected the sugar diabeetus. Perhaps I will explore. The diabetes. With the owls. At this point I am willing to try anything. Good Day.

Sedaris is known for his biting wit and hilarious stories about childhood. The problem with this book is instead of snarky, he comes across as bitch and unaware of his own privilege. I'm glad he can buy a house in the English countryside and can travel all the time but I guess I just don't care to hear about it. There is an entire essay about journal writing. It's like he had to fill more pages for his publisher and just free-wrote about his journaling habits. I didn't find it funny or even remotely interesting.

This is my 4th David Sedaris book. There are a handful of humorous and thoughtful sections throughout LEDWO, but it's missing the charm and wit of his earlier titles. A large part of the appeal of David's stories is his honesty and accessibility. He observed a recognizable world through his own, unapologetically quirky lens, which both endeared him to me and made me view the familiar in a refreshing light. His musings were both hilarious and sad, but affirmed something comforting to his audience: We're all a little weird, and that's okay. With "Owls", David's writing has taken on a different tone. Instead of sharing with his readers, it feels more as though he's talking down at them. As his notoriety and wealth have increased, so, seemingly, has his ego. While he's always had somewhat of an air of superiority, it was balanced by his self-deprecating humor and made him weirdly more endearing. But in Owls, any attempt at creating relateability with his readers is gone. Chapters alternate between personal anecdotes of his exotic travels, meals, and jetsetting, and his "alternate POV" stories that are nothing more than tired, cartoonish stereotypes of people he deems lesser than him.

Sedaris, I've been told, is a wonderful talented storyteller ... Perhaps so, but I was alternately disgusted and bored, and sometimes just appalled. I won't waste my time reading more of his work. I do not find racist, sizeist, mean spirited, passive aggressive "humor" to be at all interesting.

I love David Sedaris' works, but his latest book seemed highly political and lacked his usual lighthearted comedy. I couldn't even finish the last couple of chapters, because the content wasn't what I had expected. I will continue to read and follow Sedaris as I have for over a decade. You will love this book if you're a Democrat. I am not.

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