

Naked by david sedaris

Literature



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David Sedaris is the author of bestsellers as well as collections of personal essays. His book entitled *Naked* quickly shot onto The New York Times best seller list. The content of this book describes memorable bits and pieces of the author, Sedaris's, life. Sedaris uses irreverent balance of humor to show his relationship with his family members. In my view, the author portrayed it very well which made this book a well written autobiography.

The collection of autobiographical essays ranges from Sedaris childhood suffering as a boy from compulsive behavior (licking light switches, counting steps) to his earliest, terrifying allusion of his homosexuality. This book tells a story of a man riding the wave on which his tendencies take him. The author takes us through unbelievable events in his life. Sedaris displays a remarkable ability to view himself and the people around him in a harsh but honest light. It's the fact that these stories are based on his real life that make you feel emotional while you're laughing at the same time.

In "Dinah, the Christmas Whore," Sedaris shows how he reacts to his mother: "Whore. That lady is a whore. " "I'm not certain what reaction I was after, but shock would have done quite nicely. " Instead, my mother said, "Well, then, we should probably offer her a drink" (117). This is a surprising account of Sedaris learning his mother's response towards his sister friend who was a prostitute. He realized that "We were the only family in the neighborhood with a prostitute in our kitchen " (120).

Sedaris realizes that his mother is not upset by the fact that there is a prostitute in the house. This makes him feel that there is something wrong with his family. In the essay "Ashes," he reasons the reality of his mother's illness to

a chain smoker dying of cancer: " I'd heard of people who had survived cancer... with the aid of whole grains and spiritual publications that encouraged them to sit quietly in a lotus position " (237). In fact, quite the opposite, she greeted the dawn chain-smoking and saw it off with a bottle of hard. " In her own way, she had already begun to check out... he writes, " it was her hope to die before one of us landed in jail" (239).

At the end of " Ashes," he seriously questions his rejection of the world by recounting a moment of critical failure on his own part. He attempts to comfort his suffering mother by trapping her in a last moment affectionate comfort by saying, " I've heard what you're going through and I know that you're frightened. You're frightened because you think you're alone" (242). His mother's response confronts Sedaris comfort: " I'm frightened because you're crushing what's left of my goddamned lungs," she says (243).

In this extract from Ashes we can see that Sedaris balances humor with a touching tenderness about his mother's fatal struggle with cancer. He uses words like " You're frightened because you're alone" to his mother at the brink of the death makes his humor totally irreverent. In terms of the relations among the family members, he recalls one of the most memorable moments was when his sister attempted to play some old videotape the late Mrs. Sedaris had left her and learns that golf tournaments had been recorded over by the father. This clearly shows that the father had no feeling towards Sedaris's mother.

The whole family was into some big crisis as nobody was sincere with another. They all acted differently and showed that they were all just living

together and no one had any feeling towards each other. In the essay " Get Your Ya Ya Out," Sedaris showed the relationship to be divided among the family members. He mentions his mother and grandmother not getting along too well because his mother was not of Greek origin. This showed indifferences among them to the extent that they all struggled to survive the abandoned state of their relationships.

Sedaris puts an acid spin on it and makes it funny, from his painful-to-read struggle with obsessive-compulsive disorder that he eventually cures with a cigarette addiction, to his inability to find work after college. His sense of humor can also be seen in the essay " I like guys," where he challenges his sexuality. He looks into himself as a person who is confused about his sexual identity, even though after sleeping with a boy at the camp he is still not sure about his sexual orientation whether he wants to be a gay or just a straight guy.