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STEPHANIE KLEIN



A MEMOIR

Straight Up and Dirty

Stephanie Klein

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Straight Up and Dirty Stephanie Klein

"I did have my own friends, my own salary, my health, and TiVo: all the important things we're likely to take for granted. Still, when it hit that I'd now have to date again, I panicked. Dating meant nightclubs, heels, and black. It meant, 'No, thank you. Really, I'm full.' It meant matching bras and underwear. Clothes with the micro used to describe them. Because until you date again, people will hiccup lines about getting back on horses. So you invest in an Agent Provocateur whip and a subscription to an online dating service. . . ."

--from *Straight Up and Dirty*

She had every girl's dream: the perfect marriage to the perfect guy in the perfect apartment on the Upper East Side. Marriage fit Stephanie Klein like a glove . . . but unfortunately it fit her husband like a noose. And then, just like that, Klein found herself "divorced when you're firm, fashionable, and let's face it—fetching."

Celebrated bloggist, photographer, and freelance writer Stephanie Klein lets it all hang out in this juicy tell-all tracing her jump back into single life following her divorce. On the dating advice of her therapist, Klein attempts to keep "a pair and a spare" of men always on hand and has lots of bawdy fun along the way. But when the anniversary of the devastating breakup from her "wasband" forces her to revisit what happened, she finds herself wanting more than her therapist's recommended gimmick to keep her emotionally safe.

Straight Up and Dirty demonstrates that the true measure of success isn't what's crossed off life's to-do list. It's having the grace and fortitude to move through change, curls intact and smiling.

Straight Up and Dirty Details

Date : Published July 25th 2006 by William Morrow (first published July 1st 2006)

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Author : Stephanie Klein

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Genre : Autobiography, Memoir, Nonfiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Humor, Biography, Funny, Biography Memoir, New York, Adult, Unfinished

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Katie Hornberger says

Let me start by saying I adored Moose, Klein's memoir about fat camp. It was an honest coming of age story that left me laughing out loud. I thought I would like Straight up and Dirty but after 3 attempts to read it, I could not get past page 100. I saw the spoiled little girl in Moose grew into a superficial brat. She was so picky, rude, and judgmental that I could not get into it.

Meredith says

Words cannot say how much I enjoyed reading this book. It's your typical chicklit in memoir style. My two favorite combinations. I found Stephanie extremely likable and would really recommend anyone looking for a great chicklit memoir. She is also coming out with another memoir about her experience at fat camp. I think its called Moose. Cannot wait for that either.

Roy says

Harsh judgments of men based on quick superficial observations by an emotionally damaged, myopic redhead with stridently non-conformist sexual accessibility. It's the tragic and insensitive thrashing of hopeful suitors by a woman reaching middle age while still operating on cheer-leader mentality. Without adequate prompt, reflection, or personal growth she suddenly reaches a vague epiphany to close the book on an unrealistically triumphant note.

Kourtney says

I wanted to like this book. I really did. The back blurb indicated that Klein went from divorce to being single and this was her tale. And we've all gone through breakups so how bad could this be? It also indicated she "has lots of bawdy fun along the way." How much more SATC can you be? I'm a fan, so I'll love this too, right? I was wrong...

(1) The blurb indicates she "has fun along the way." Throughout the book I never felt as though she was having fun. Ever. There were so many tears, fears, and insecurities how could she ever really enjoy life? Everything she did, whether it was go out with her girlfriends, or be on a date with someone, was something for her to whine, complain, and cry over. I saw no "fun" until the last two pages of the book, which completely ruined the whole point of the book. She was supposed to learn that being alone was ok. This didn't happen until she found someone. Really? That's like me eating a cookie but declaring not eating cookies would be ok. How does that even make sense? Of course she's ok! She's found someone again! The whole book she cried because she thought she was a loser when she was single and was somebody when she had somebody. SHE HAD SOMEBODY, OF COURSE SHE'S HAPPY! Take some creative license and find yourself before you find the guy...

(2) "Bawdy" was just a nice of way saying that Klein could be vulgar for no rhyme or reason. I am not a prude in any way shape or form, and I can enjoy a good sex scene when the timing is right and it fits with the plot. She would be talking about something banal and then BLAMMO a vulgar comment for no reason. They just never fit. "Hey I like your shoes!" "Oh he ***** on my face last night" (edited for those faint of heart - and you may want to skip this book if that offended you).

(3) This felt like something your therapist would tell you to write. "Write a letter to your ex-husband and then rip it up." Instead she ran to a publisher who published this crap. Who's laughing now because I spent money on it. Thankfully it was only \$2 in the bargain bin.

(4) I can't believe I also bought with it her other book where she hates herself because she was fat as a kid. If it was anything like her hating herself because she was single, I have a miserable couple of days ahead of me. Maybe I'll write a book about it, whining about the time I spent reading about others whining about their pathetic lives. My therapist told me to write down these feelings in a letter and rip it up. I decided to post it on my Goodreads review...

Skip this one. You can thank me later.

Jen says

As an occasional visitor to Klein's blog, I picked this up thinking it would be a quick and entertaining read. WRONG. This book is so disorganized and confusing that I couldn't even finish it. It's horribly written stream-of-consciousness with no discernible structure. Klein can be funny and brutally honest, but her book is completely self-absorbed and pretentious. The thing is, Klein probably knows this, but thinks it's clever and cute (or at least marketable), whereas I do not, and didn't stick around long enough to see if she redeemed herself.

Sara says

Maybe it's because I'm not a chick that's into "chick lit" but I just did not connect with this book at all. It had some funny parts, but mostly it just seemed as though the humor was forced. I'll admit I didn't even bother finishing this one, though I made a valiant effort and got most of the way through the book. Even then I will usually struggle through to the end, but it just was not worth it. If you're a straight, fufu, appletini-drinking, shopaholic, fashionista of a woman, you'll probably identify more with her writing. It doesn't extend far beyond that crowd, and that crowd does not include me in any one of those categories.

Jolene says

Straight up and Dirty is a book that I've turned to year after year. It's been my go to bowl of Ben & Jerry's ice cream – the late night phone call to my girlfriends – the wine that chills me the fuck down when I think life couldn't get any worse, the words on the pages have become that soft, cuddle blanket, the foot that kicks me in the ass and says, "Shit could be worse now get the fuck up and take a shower." and no this isn't one of those self help books claiming to reshape your life with cheesy affirmations, no this is real life. This is her life.

Straight up and Dirty has seen me through 1 ½ marriages and a couple douchebag boyfriends. I'm surprised that I'm not sitting next to Stephanie Klein somewhere in a cozy little joint in NYC sharing friendships gone bad, marriage and relationship war stories....because shit, we have plenty to get us through a few appetizers, the entrée, desert and a few after dinner drinks....hell, we'd probably close the joint down.

I came across Stephanie years ago while surfing the internet when I was still foreign to the term "blogger", I was amazed at how raw one person could be. I truly admired her ability to just throw her life out for all of us to read. I was thankful.

I wasn't alone.

Here she was displaying her life, her trials, her kick ass-grab the world by the balls moments and not giving two fucks what people thought. I loved it. That's when I stared at the countless journals I had lying next to my bed with my life, my trials, my kick ass moments written on those pages and thought how therapeutic it would be to just put it all out there. Maybe my story, my deep dark moments could possibly help someone. That's when I became a blogger and that's when I picked up Straight up and Dirty.

Straight up and Dirty is a memoir, the story of a blogger, writer turned author. It's a story about survival during a marriage that ended in betrayal, coping with a mother in law that could rival any villainess in a Disney flick, it's about picking yourself up after divorce and rediscovering your self-worth while throwing yourself back into the sea of dating (again and again), it's about still having hope after those small penis moments and knowing things could be worse. I mean, you could be Minetti, the small penis man that made it into a book.

(excerpt)

Minetti. His last name even sounds like it means" small penis" in Italian. You know he's doing the best with what he's got; you feel it in the stubble of his pubes. You're certain he's trimming to make it look bigger. He must know he's little. But he doesn't have a fancy car or fancy voice. He's genuine, and it's sad because you can't move past it.

Take it from me, this book is a must read. It's my Pride & Prejudice, my go to book when I just need to feelless alone and it's hilarious!

Tara D-K says

I loved this book. For me, it was so relatable on all levels. It was like Sex and the City but better- Stephanie and her friends could have been my friends and I...and her story of the Wasband was a story like my own. It was gut-wrenching at times and you couldn't help but feel for her immensely. It was a very courageous story to put out there since it IS a memoir. I don't know that I could do the same and I'm a very open person. I've never recommended a book more than I have this one.

Mallory says

Klein is like that friend you have who lets it all hang out - sometimes inappropriate and always hilariously

funny. This is chick lit, but to the next degree... Chick-tion, perhaps? It's smart, witty and absolutely adorable. It can also be heartbreakingly real and gut-wrenchingly sad. This is a must-read for any single girl who half-wondered if she'd ever find love, but didn't care terribly much if she did or she didn't. Imagine Woody Allen with red hair and a vagina, and you have Stephanie Klein. We all need a little more self-deprecation in our lives, and Klein? Well, she has it.

Nicole says

This was a good, insightful, laugh-out-loud book. However, I am more than a little sick of chick-lit writers coming to the flawed conclusion that now that they've spent x amount of time: not dating, traveling to India, and "working on themselves" they'd be totally ok alone, even though now they're married.

I call horse-poo. It's too easy to say that when you're cuddled up against someone at night.

She is extremely grating at points, so much so that I wanted to continue the plot, but I didn't necessarily want to hear it from her (the narrator). She happened to meet the right guy at the right time, that's all. She acts as though she is a guru of dating, tossing down the the message of "love yourself" from the mountain tops so we'll all finally be enlightened.

I understand that not dating for a while and pursuing her passions and the opportunities that came her way helped her to gain more confidence in herself and how in turn that may have attracted the right man for her. But what if the story went the other way? What if she was still making great strides in her career and feeling confident about that, but her dating life continued to be in the dumps?

I highly doubt she'd be coughing up the "i'm totally ok alone" line everyday.

I think her conclusion discounts the importance of love and how being in a relationship -- the right relationship -- can make you happy.

Angeld01 says

I saw Stefanie Klein and the Printers Row Book Fair last month and I really liked her. I have since begun reading her blog.

I enjoyed this book. Yes, it was a little slow - but her exploration of life as a divorcee at 28 was well thought out. I hear some reviews say she referred to her ex-husband too much - but I liked that. I got a stronger sense of her, and definitely what she was overcoming by her stories of her marriage. Also, I always find myself interested by divorce, in that, what drives you to that point?

I don't know Gabe - but he sounds like a nightmate. Never was he for a moment deserving of Stefanie's love & I am genuinely interested in what he has put his new love through. The best good thing about the end of that marriage was the end of Rome.

I thought her journey was important (even if that was some of the "slow" of the book) Why did she ever pick such a selfish person for a partner in the first place?

I enjoyed this book and was honored Stefanie was so honest in her portrayal of no only others; but most importantly of herself.

Heather says

I can't help but compare this book to Eat, Pray Love.... as both are about a divorce and crisis of self. Unfortunately, there is no comparison. I never felt a connection to the author or any personal thread to her struggle. She often comes off shallow... or like she is trying to hard to be her NY self.

Sheree says

A friend of mine was reading "Moose", Stephanie Klein's second memoir when I went for a visit. The cover for Moose was interesting and I always like to read about a chubby little girls' struggle as I can relate. So, I read the insert of Moose and noticed first memoir was published called "Straight Up & Dirty". Sounded like it would be right up my alley..a brash and honest account of life and relationships, sounds good to me. Boy was I wrong.. this memoir sucked! No wonder there was no wait for this book in the library and because it took me so long to read I kept renewing the book and still no one wants it. So disappointed with this effort, I won't even bother reading Moose now, I've already removed it from my list of books to read.

Melissa says

I've avoided reading this book for years now. I got to know the author through a mutual friend, and I had such a hard time coming to terms with reading a memoir when I 'knew' the person whose life it was about. It felt wrong of me to read about her life, private and personal details she went through, and get to know her in a way that felt so removed from a conversation. I'm so glad I got over that and read her memoir. This sounds cheesy as I'm writing it, but it's given me strength when I needed it most. So often we are afraid or simply don't know how to find happiness within ourselves. She took me on a journey where I could identify and personally grow from, just by being a bystander.

Chelsea G.P. says

If you're a fan of Klein's blog (stephanieklein.com) then you're familiar with her off the cuff, stream of consciousness writing. With this book, she takes her writing to the next level. It's well thought out, carefully crafted and entertaining. Its chick-lit, yes, but without the pretentious air of Candace Bushnell. She bears all, but with her own personality - which comes across as someone who might be a friend.
