



## Meaty

*Samantha Irby*

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Smart, edgy, hilarious, and unabashedly raunchy *New York Times* bestselling author Samantha Irby explodes onto the printed page in her uproarious first collection of essays.

Irby laughs her way through tragicomic mishaps, neuroses, and taboos as she struggles through adulthood: chin hairs, depression, bad sex, failed relationships, masturbation, taco feasts, inflammatory bowel disease and more. Updated with her favorite Instagramable, couch-friendly recipes, this much-beloved romp is treat for anyone in dire need of Irby's infamous, scathing wit and poignant candor.

## Meaty Details

Date : Published September 9th 2013 by Curbside Splendor Publishing

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Author : Samantha Irby

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## From Reader Review **Meaty** for online ebook

### Amina | PAPER/PLATES says

I want to be Samantha Irby's BFF IRL. Readers of her hilarious blog, *Bitches Gotta Eat*, know what I'm talking about — her spare-nothing honesty, her self-deprecating sense of humor and her unflinching observations about living young, broke and creative in the city make her the kind of rad chick you just want to hang out with. Preferably over a large pizza and a pint of ice cream.

Meaty, by Samantha Irby All the qualities I love about *Bitches Gotta Eat* are polished and condensed in this collection of essays, making it, impossibly, even more enjoyable than the blog. Though no detail is too personal for Irby to share — readers will quickly learn about the messy details of her Crohn's disease and the heartbreaking story of her mom's death — *Meaty* is comforting reading. It reminds me that it's okay to be in my 20s and not buying a condo, marrying a consultant or even knowing the last time I Swiffered.

Irby's *Meaty* essays tackle the issues that consume me and my friends' city lives: dating, making a living, struggling to not wear the same damn wrap dress to every single work function. I know I've mentioned her humor already, but let me stress: I laughed inappropriately on the bus a few times and found myself wanting to text my friends with lines from the book. When *Meaty* was over, I was irrationally bummed. Luckily, *Bitches Gotta Eat* still is something to look forward to while I wait not at all patiently for a second book from Irby.

*Meaty* inspired me to cook something, yes, meaty, but also comforting in a "because you're worth it!" kind of way. I've been meaning to tackle Lidia Bastianich's Bolognese sauce recipe, so I took that as the starting point and tweaked it a bit to suit my tastes and ingredients. It takes four hours, but it's worth it for the cooking smells alone. I ladled the sauce over homemade gnocchi, but you could easily use store-bought gnocchi or pasta instead.

Get the four-hour bolognese sauce inspired by *Meaty* at PAPER/PLATES.

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### Madeline says

Samantha Irby's first book was given to me by my best friend, who is a legit writer who performs her nonfiction essays *in front of people* like some kind of professional and is my go-to expert on which essay collections to read. I wasn't familiar with Irby, or her blog, before this book was given to me, but I'm officially a convert now. Her essays are personal and heartfelt and really, really funny, and her voice is so strong that it practically leaps off the page — I have never met Samantha Irby, but reading her essays felt like I was sitting across from her at brunch, snorting my mimosa out my nose while I listened to her telling me about her dating life:

"If I never get banged on a king-sized bed with NO SHEETS and ONE LUMPY PILLOW ever again in my fucking life it would be too goddamn soon. Dudes always want to try to fuck you in the abandoned warehouse in which they're squatting. Or at least that's what the shit fucking looks like, all bare walls and "furniture" procured from alleys and shit. Would it kill you motherfuckers to put a mat in the bathroom? To buy soap with a moisturizing agent? ...Why do you dudes only own one towel? And a hand towel at that? Why do you have no paper towels? Why is all your shit in garbage bags even though you moved in two years

ago? Why does it smell like gym shoes and testicles in your apartment? Why do you refuse to purchase a fitted sheet at the very least? Do I really have to SLEEP IN MY GODDAMNED CLOTHES TO STAY WARM UP IN HERE?"

Or hearing about her meeting with her accountant:

"So it's tax time, and my homeboy was over the other night badgering me about filing a return, asking me about all my receipts and bank statements and whether or not I saved the checks I used to pay for that class I took. Um...yeah, right. I'm sure I either burned that shit or flushed it down the toilet or used it to line Helen Keller's litterbox. Save my receipts, for what? To prove to the government how many times I purchased the same exact black sweater at the Gap? Hold on to my bank statements, for whom? To prove how many times I stopped and started and stopped and RE-started paying for eHarmony, or whatever? YEAH, RIGHT. Is there some sort of loneliness deduction I don't know about? Some alcoholic tax credit? No? Then get the fuck out of my face with that."

Amid the humor, Irby also shares frank, unsentimental stories about her childhood and her chronic health problems, and they're never presented as misery porn or "let me get all philosophical about my *struggles* and how they made me who I am." Instead, Irby recounts everything with a clear-eyed, "so get this shit" tone that never gets maudlin or flippant. *Meaty* is definitely one of the most fun and entertaining essay collections I've read in a long time.

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## Erica says

I can't say I enjoyed this. Well, I mean, I *can* but I would be lying because this was not at all enjoyable to me.

And yet it was quite often relatable.

And it's candid. And dryly funny.

But mostly it's meaty, as the title suggests, and I do not like too much meat. It doesn't digest well in my delicate system.

As you can see, it took me almost a month and a half to read this book of 253 pages, all essays. It was a slog to get through because I felt weighed down so much of the time but I am glad I read it and I kinda wish Irby and I ran in the same circles. On the other hand, I'm kinda glad we don't. I already have my "I love you so much but please, I am begging you, get yourself together" friend. I think we all do. Maybe that's why Irby is so easy to adore as you roll your eyes at her shenanigans.

Of particular note to me were the following essays:

"At 30"

She turns 30, has a list of gripes, some relatable and others not so much, and then she says this:

*I need more people to describe me as "the funniest person they know."*

Honey, you and I share #goals.

"Forest Whitaker's Neck"

I **HATED** dating so much that I had repressed most of my memories from those times but she came along and used this essay to bring them all to light: Gross sheets full of the leftovers from people before me,

finding other LAYdies' hairs in the beard of the guy you're banging, stiff-crotched panties the next morning. Ugh. This is probably the real reason I got married. Dating is a horrorscape.

"How To Get Your Disgusting Meat Carcass Ready For Some New, Hot Sex"

Irby and I suddenly became twins because this is all me. All me except for the part about sucking on toes. That is the polar opposite of me.

"Would Dying Alone Really Be So Terrible?"

Answer: No. No, it would not be, not at all.

"The Tapeworm Diet"

The fatness mystery: SOLVED! GG, Irby!

But then she calls Beezus "Beatrice" and that's not ok.

"I Want To Put a Fat Bitch On Television"

And I want the rest of Nell's story, so...get on it, lady. Make this happen.

I read this collection after everyone else read and reviewed *We Are Never Meeting In Real Life*. Those reviews made me want to read that book but I saw we had this at the library and decided to start at the beginning without actually doing the work of starting at the real beginning because I'm too lazy for that. I mean, look. It took me 1.5 months to read a short book of essays. I'd be dead before I finished a blog. But I may read that thing, anyway, because I find I kinda love Irby now.

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### **Richard Thomas says**

One of the funniest books I've read since David Sedaris. Smart, honest, touching, raw, sexy, dark, dysfunctional and as human as it gets. Brilliant.

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### **Brian says**

Maybe you don't recall reading that classic Montaigne essay "Massive Wet Asses," and perhaps you were "too cool" to read your grandmother's Erma Bombeck collection with that one piece entitled "How to Get Your Disgusting Meat Carcass Ready for Some New, Hot Sex," and maybe Philip Lopate's "Sorry I Shit on Your Dick" flew right under your radar. Don't worry, Joyce Carol: Those three never got around to writing those essays, but Samantha Irby has stepped in to fill that, um, void, with "Meaty." This essay collection includes the three aforementioned titles, but what really distinguishes Irby's writing from the hordes of internet yellers polluting the blogosphere with their one-dimensional self-absorbed ranting--besides her incredibly authoritative and hilarious writing voice, natch—is a fearlessness in PUTTING IT ALL out there—be it the dispatches from the desperate drunken stupidity of the 4am bar crowd (and their hungover next days), or growing up poor in a wealthy suburb, suffering from Crohn's Disease, suffering from Crohn's Disease while searching for love in a sea of oafish bro-brah fuck-ups...Irby mines humor from tragedy and heartbreak from these, and the common-enough frustrations of daily life, but the mockery (self, or other-directed) is always weighted with the universal desire for capital-h Happiness—the hope that, just this once, that cunt Lucy Van Pelt, holding the football of Successful Life, Love, and Fulfillment, won't yank that goddamn pigskin away while our gullible Charlie Brown heart-minds run up to kick it, yet again, and leave

us in a cloud of our own turdz.

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### **Heather says**

Samantha Irby, can we **PLEASE** be best friends?!

Oh, this book was **SO SO SO funny**. No other book has made me laugh this hard, out loud. Not ever.

While most of the stories were irrelevant to my life, a lot of the sentiment behind them related to me as a human being. Her sense of humor is almost **IDENTICAL** to mine, and she curses a lot which also mirrors my personality. I related to her personality and lifestyle very much.

I want to be friends with Samantha Irby. Like, seriously.

Now I need to go read her more recent book! :D

*Thank you to NetGalley, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group & Samantha Irby for a digital copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.*

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### **Chanel M says**

I didn't love it . :(

I wanted to, I really did. The first few chapters were **AMAZING!** I loved her honesty. She opened up about so many things that I do in secret, too. I always knew I couldn't be alone in those experiences but I never had the courage to test that theory.

Oh....and the chapters where she went deep, like "My mother, my daughter" were relieving. I mean she was so honest about something that is probably one of her biggest regrets. Made me feel like I wasn't wrong for moving past my biggest regrets. However, after a while the book lost me. Seeing her embrace her "flaws" in a world that encourages us to hide or exploit them was uplifting but then it became self-deprecating. I was like honey stop calling your body a "meat carcas". Towards the end of the book, I began feeling like she really does have some issues that she should talk to a shrink about...but because she addresses them in a humorous way her friends have failed to point it out to her.

After reading some other reviews I was able to appreciate the other chapters, I hadn't connected with such as the diet one. But, in the end, I wasn't moved by her work. I ended up just feeling bad about my "flaws".

I think maybe this should have remained a blog.

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### **Trish says**

I didn't like this one so much. Seems like Irby is trying way too hard. I just can't get into the juvenalia, though a couple of GR friends quote some funny bits.

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## Arit says

If you read nothing else this year: read this book. You will feel immediately connected to Samantha Irby's writing, her personality, and her sharp, unapologetic way of telling her stories. I've been a fan of her blog for a long time and couldn't wait for her essay collection to come out. Read it in two days and loved it.

Not only will you laugh out loud, but you will also feel the rawness and sadness that comes through the striking comedy of her words. It's hard for a writer to make you spit water out of your mouth in one sentence and then heave a sigh of empathetic sorrow in the next. Whether she's writing about her failed attempts at "normal" adulthood, finding love, or her relationship with her disabled mother, she's able to give you something over and over again that you haven't gotten from a real person in a long time: honesty. And it's a beautiful quality that Ms. Irby possesses. This is the kind of book that you keep on your shelf and re-read. It won't get old or go out of style.

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## Kelly (and the Book Boar) says

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

If you are a person of weak constitution or with delicate sensibilities, I have one thing to say to you about *Meaty* . . . .

Not even kidding. R.U.N. . . . .

Because this author is the posterchild for . . . . .

However, if you are like me you will read the following (which appears on like Page 2) . . . . .

***"I am irritated 99.8% of the time. I hate everything. I loathe everyone."***

And instantly have this to say to Samantha Irby . . . . .

By the time I got to this . . . . .

***"If you could wish for one thing, anything you ever wanted, what would it be?"***

***"An army of weaponized bees."***

I was like . . .

But for the rest of you? I ain't playin' around. I'm going to let Irby's own words sell her book, but PLEASE note these are benign examples and she totally overshares about many various sex things and diarrhea and don't even think about telling me I Suck Turtles if you read this and get offended by it because it is REALLY going to offend a lot of people. Just not people like me – probably due to all of the turtle sucking I've done in the past. Anyway, let's get on with this short shitshow and the sharing of a few quotes that made me really happy Jeebus invented Poise Pads . . . .

***“Do you own a pair of skinny jeans?”***

***“Yes, but after I saw a picture of myself in the newspaper wearing them last summer I am never wearing those assholes in public ever again.”***

***“I am obviously going to die alone, in giant panties that come up to my chin, with crumbs under my tits, and a half-eaten cat face.”***

***“My sister did Slim-Fast once and her farts were bad enough to singe my fucking nose hairs. She burned a hole through the seat of her jeans. Not even kidding. We had to keep a fire extinguisher next to the goddamned toilet. I know you think I’m making this up but there was literal fire shooting out of her butt! It was like living with a dragon. A skinny-fat, cranky dragon who could light the dinner candles with her asshole.”***

And the pièce de résistance . . . .

***“Every time I see a Cialis commercial I think, ‘Oh my fucking GOD, I bet the last thing that old broad wants to do is wait for that old dude to finish raking those leaves while his boner pill kicks in.’”***

I am in love with this woman.

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**Richard Derus says**

Rating: 3.5\* of five

It's Women's History Month! Time to visit or revisit work by women who have inspired, uplifted, made a difference to you, to me, to us all!

I reviewed this collection of essays for The Small Press Book Review. It's by a blogger called Samantha Irby, a Person of Size whose blog is called Bitches Gotta Eat.

I wasn't sure about these essays until I hit the one on diets and dieting, when I started laughing so hard I scared the dog. Read the review, see why. I quoted the (to me) funniest one of them.

**The Publisher Says:** Samantha Irby explodes onto the page in her debut collection of brand-new essays about being a complete dummy trying to laugh her way through her ridiculous life of failed relationships, taco feasts, bouts with Crohn's Disease, & more, all told with the same scathing wit & poignant candor long-time readers have come to expect from her notoriously hilarious blog, [www.bitchesgottaeat.com](http://www.bitchesgottaeat.com).

In addition to co-hosting *The Sunday Night Sex Show*, a sex-positive live lit show, and *Guts & Glory*, a reading series featuring essayists, Samantha has performed all over Chicago. She opened for Baratunde Thurston during his "How to Be Black" tour. She has been profiled in the *Chicago Sun-Times* as well as in *Time Out Chicago*, and her work has appeared on The Rumpus and Jezebel. Samantha and partner Ian Belknap write a comedy advice blog at [www.irbyandian.com](http://www.irbyandian.com).

**My Review:** It's good to be young. I remember that. I'm not young anymore, and frankly wouldn't be young again for all the money there is. But that's age's privilege, to celebrate itself. Every age's privilege, in fact, and Samantha Irby celebrates being young.

In a very testy way.

Hell, if I had Crohn's disease, I'd be testy too. In fact, I am testy, no Crohn's needed. But Irby gets testy over very young problems, as in the essay "Would Dying Alone Really Be So Terrible?":

I want to watch porn by myself, because a dude just won't let you take five minutes to masturbate without his dick thinking it's an invitation, and then that five minutes becomes twenty-five minutes (if you're lucky) of heat and sweat and effed-up hair and having to remake the bed and being late for work and even then, after all that grunting and shoving and groaning, you might STILL have to get your vibrator out while this motherfucker passes out on top of the shirt you'd taken out to wear to the office.

This is the kind of problem a lot of folks of either gender and all persuasions would enjoy having, if the dating sites' usage and match-up numbers aren't complete lies.

Irby's brand of testy humor gets a laugh-out-loud funny workout in her meditation on the American obsession with weight, weight loss, effort-free weight loss, and laziness in "The Tapeworm Diet." She appears, on her teensy little blog avatar, not to be an immensely large person, but I don't know this for a fact as I've never met the lady. She claims to be sizable: "I eat bad things and go to sleep immediately afterward. There, I solved the mystery of fatness for you. You're welcome." Garshk, and here I thought it was my slow metabolism!

Irby then goes on to skewer the un-fucking-believable idiotic should-be-illegal insanities out there for an unsuspecting public to follow as diets:

### **The Twinkie Diet.**

A typical day in the life of Kansas State University nutrition researcher Mark Haub, creator of the Junk Food Diet, which consists of 60% junk food supplemented by a protein shake, multivitamin pills, and a can of green beans or four stalks of celery every day. He avoided meats, whole grains, and fruits. September 10, 2010: A double espresso; two servings of Hostess Twinkies Golden Sponge Cake; one Centrum Advanced Formula pill; one serving of

Little Debbie Star Crunch cookies (my jam!); a Diet Mountain Dew (barf); half a serving of Doritos Cool Ranch corn chips; two servings of Kellogg's Corn Pops cereal; a serving of whole milk (squirt!); half a serving of raw baby carrots; one and a half servings of Duncan Hines Family Style Chewy Fudge brownie; half a serving of Little Debbie Zebra Cake; one serving of Muscle Milk Protein Shake drink; Total: 1589 calories.

Just reading that shit makes my fucking teeth hurt. I think I also might've just caught diabetes through the computer screen. This can't be life, right? Snack cakes and baby carrots? NO IT CANNOT.

Sing it, soul-daughter. Couldn't have said it better myself. The spoiledness of the average American is never in more breathtaking relief than in diet advice and weight-loss program information. Most people on the planet would like to have enough food to get full once a day. People here eat so much they need advice on how not to turn into land-blimps. Something is wrong with this picture. Samantha Irby makes you giggle as she pokes your social conscience, so permaybehaps people who need to hear will listen without realizing what they're hearing. It's the only way past their privileged-person defenses, the evidence shows.

The collection is far and away best taken in doses. It's like any smorgasbord. The offerings are tempting, and the urge to overindulge is strong. Resist the urge that you not grow indifferent to the charms of the groaning board! Read one or two of these tempting treats. Put the book down, pick up something grim and joyless for a contrast...are you caught up on your Bolaño reading? isn't there a new Murakami or something?...and then come back to laugh and learn.

Wait! I didn't mean learn! I meant enjoy! Enjoy, not something hard and boring like learn!

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### **Hannah says**

I love Samantha Irby. I adored her second essay collection, I find her funny and relatable, and I enjoyed this collection (her first now republished with a beautiful cover) a whole lot as well. I have been reading mostly heavy memoirs and this was the perfect antidote to those. While there is obvious darkness here, there is also light and humour. I absolutely sped through this and it made me happy while doing so.

I adore her language and her honesty. I love how honest she talks about her body and Krohn's disease. I love how she structures her essays and her thoughts. I do not mind her vulgarity at all and in fact appreciated its freshness.

As most of you will know, I adore memoirs written by women funnier than me and Samantha Irby is among the funniest. I do think her second collection is the stronger of the two which only makes me more excited to see whatever she does next. Also, this book is being made into a TV series and I cannot tell you how excited I am.

I received an ARC of this book courtesy of NetGalley and Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group in exchange for an honest review.

You can find this review and other thoughts on books on my blog.

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### **Victor Giron says**

I'm publishing this so yeah I love it!

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### **Janet says**

Samantha Irby is a bucket of ice water in the face, the hottest chili in the supposedly mild batch, the best pastrami sandwich in the world--the shock of the bold in other words. Not for the squeamish--this Chicago humorist writes of life meaty and unmediated. If you like your humor STRONG, if you can take the rawness of being female without a bow on top, if you think language is there to be wielded as a weapon in the war against despair and conformity and timidity and 'make it all nice-ness,' you NEED this book. I laughed until I nearly eviscerated myself, ached for the desperation of a family on the ropes, for this colossus of energy having to live with a debilitating illness and the ongoing struggle of the artist in a society which takes no prisoners and makes no allowances for ability and genius. This is quiet desperation turned inside out, and so roaringly funny I'm already making a Christmas list--and let's just say those girlfriends who thought *Bridesmaids* was disgusting are not on it.

The essays about her own family and physical condition--she's been diagnosed with Crohn's disease--anchor the humor of the collection with the darkness of real and ongoing problems that can't be solved, are simply facts of a very real woman's life, which would be a prison without this energy and fury and crazy humor, the outlet of writing itself. Cannot recommend enough.

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### **Rachel says**

If there is a lifestyle porn subgenre for adult women who don't live in saucy *Real Simple* inspired dwellings but instead sit in their dumpy apartments eating cereal every meal, unshaven legs propped up on a raggedy ottoman, I will be the champion of that genre. I love stories of women who are trying to be adults, but who get frustrated with the details and all of the effort and straight-lacedness and just fucking live in a way that makes them happy, even if they are broke or their carpets are full of crumbs. Meaty is kind of all over the place and parts of it feel like space fillers BUT in the sense of just being a person that she wants to be, Samantha Irby is sort of my hero.

(Her blog is definitely funnier, though. I'm not saying that as a dig, because I like this lady a lot. I'm just saying, comparatively.)

On a personal note: it warmed my heart to see the chapter about thumbsucking, because I, like Irby, sucked my thumb into early adulthood (in private) in times of stress and still continue to do so in my sleep 50% of nights. And now that I am living in sin I am incredibly self conscious about the mornings I wake and pry my long-suffering thumb from my mouth, wondering how it got in there when I didn't fall asleep with it in. It's embarrassing and I feel crazy sometimes and Irby does too, but I felt such a kinship in knowing I share a not

so secret shame with another (mostly) functional adult.

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