



How to Get Divorced by 30: My Misguided Attempt at a Starter Marriage

Sascha Rothchild

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Read Sascha Rothchild's posts on the Penguin Blog.

A hilarious memoir about the ending of a marriage that should have lasted forever-or at least for five years.

It's an age-old story. Girl meets boy. Girl marries boy. Girl decides she is way too young to be stuck in nuptial mediocrity.

When Sascha realized that the one person she didn't want at her thirtieth birthday party was her husband, she knew that it was time for the relationship to end. So, like the hordes of others of her generation for whom starter marriages are as common as Louis Vuitton knock-offs and \$5 Starbucks lattes, they got divorced. With wit, moxie, and honesty, Sascha spills about the horrible ex-boyfriends, awkward dates, drugs, a near-death experience, and memories of growing up in an unconventional household that led to her short-lived marriage.

A story of love, loss, a flat-screen TV named Ruby, and plenty of misguided decisions, *How to Get Divorced by 30* is a hysterical look at what exactly "Til death do us part" means today.

Watch a Video

How to Get Divorced by 30: My Misguided Attempt at a Starter Marriage Details

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Author : Sascha Rothchild

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From Reader Review How to Get Divorced by 30: My Misguided Attempt at a Starter Marriage for online ebook

Kristin says

I won this book in the give-away. I am torn between loving this book & being aggravated with myself for reading it. Mostly, because I had no desire to have a starter marriage or get divorced by the time I was 30. I've been married for 8 years (since I was 23). Part of me wants to say, "If that's how you felt while dating him, why in the world did you marry him?" The other part of me understands that hindsight is 20/20, and she is writing this novel knowing what she knows now, looking back over their time together. Since I've never been in this situation, or any of the situations she mentions it's harder for me to understand her thought processes.

Overall, a funny and interesting story of one woman's starter marriage. While I enjoyed reading it; it isn't something I am likely to re-read. I did appreciate the stories she shared and I was glad to see that in the end she learned important things about herself and what a marriage should be.

Sarah says

Really like this book. The author has a nice, relaxed, humorous writing style. Would recommend this book to any young person who's dating.

Felicity says

I read this book on a four hour bus trip. It's that kind of book...good enough for a bus trip or an airport or a wet, rainy afternoon but hardly competition for your attention at any other time. That comment, however, is not to sell the book short. It's funny in a slapstick, all-too-obvious kind of way. How to get divorced by 30? Don't even think about why you're getting married...just marry the first half-human person that comes along because, well, you always assumed you would get married one day and your Dad promised you a down payment on your first condo when you did. That's probably what enabled Rothchild to overlook the fact that the guy she was marrying was also perpetually stoned (yes, I dated that guy in my twenties too...but I didn't marry him!) The only thing that isn't funny...the number of people who actually do get married for the kinds of reasons Rothchild did. And no, she didn't make any money on the condo. Because the down payment was a joint wedding gift to both of them, she actually lost out in the divorce (but he came out of it pretty good).

Erin says

Unremarkable chicklit. Competent prose barely masks her whining. It's not Rothchild's fault she's an ordinary 20-/30-something making entirely ordinary mistakes and I suspect there are a few 20-somethings among her readership who can use her book as advice. But it's no more interesting than your average English major's blog.

Rachel Kramer Bussel says

I bought this book after hearing Sascha Rothchild speak at the LA Times Festival of Book's Memoir: All The Single Ladies panel. She related the basic story of why she got married at 27 (the timetable that's in the book, and a sense of peer pressure). I read a lot of memoirs and what I liked about this is that, in keeping with the "how to" format, and Rothchild's storytelling sensibility, it is not dark, as a tale of a failed marriage, cocaine and parents who never said "I love you" (deliberately) could be. Instead, it's humorous without trying to be peppy, a point that works in Rothchild's favor. She doesn't gloss over the dark parts, but isn't morose about them. She jumps back and forth in time but it works because even when a chapter is short, it sticks to whatever rule she's sharing. Of course, looking back it's easy to see how when she and her fiance deliberately chose to flout convention and be devil-may-care with everything from "forever" to (something worse in my opinion) not ever mingling any of their possessions, she gives a sense of her mindset at the time. Even though we know that by the end Rothchild will be divorced, the tale along the way is a fun one.

This is a fast and, dare I say it, light, beach read. That's not to say you don't get a sense of loneliness at times (like when Rothchild decides to date a drug dealer in high school and seeks attention; her sense of herself within a twelve step program is very different from what you'll read in most any recovery memoir), but ultimately Rothchild is able to poke fun at, most of all, herself (secondmost: her stoner ex-husband). Even though I've never shared Rothchild's sense of having a timetable, I enjoyed her story, especially seeing how that traditionalism mingled with, say, wearing fangs or walking down the aisle to "Is She Going Out With Him?" This mix of fastidious to the point of OCD and desire to throw caution (in the case of a moving train) to the wind are what makes this a compelling read.

Bethany says

This book is exactly what I needed on my cancelled wedding day. It's nice to know that many people make mistakes and that each one is like jumping onto a train that's pulling into a station. The mistakes make you who you are and you need them to learn. Thank you Sascha.

Lia Morris says

The truthful confessions of a woman's failed marriage. She identifies a lot of mistakes that a lot of us often make when a relationship, sacrificing for our partners, placing expectations on others when they will never achieve what we wish them to achieve, etc. This book portrays a comical outlook of Sancha failed marriage life but also identifies the reason why our society is struggling with the increased divorce rate. The one chapter in which Sancha states all the different reasons why everyone was getting divorced around her provides to be portrayals of how a lot of couples today jump into marriage for the wrong reason. This book can be taken as a lesson learned from Sanchas own experience but is also a comical read for a light reading day.

Sara Strand says

Now, I need to tell you the reason I bought the book. So about two weeks before my whiner post I was at Barnes and Noble. I'm walking through with Matt and the kids and BAM! This book literally falls at my feet. So obviously because I'm fantastic citizen, I go to pick it up and see the cover.

I'm pretty sure it sang to me. Not only is the cover the fucking hotness as far as looks (because I judge books by covers. Sue me.) but the title? Is my life. I obviously took a picture on my phone and sent it to a few people who all thought I was crazy. So I didn't buy it.

Fast forward to a week ago and while I'm moping around being all pissed off and wanting to spend money on shit I don't need, I thought of the book. So I drove 20 minutes to Barnes and Noble and bought the book. And a Member Rewards card thingie. Whatevers- the cashier was hot and I'm pretty sure I was hypnotized.

So I read this book in two nights flat and Sascha needs to be my marriage coach. The book is broken up into steps on how to get divorced. And it was funny because I related to every chapter.

STEP ONE: Jump from your horrible early-20s relationship right into a mid-20s relationship without learning or growing or pondering what you really want out of a mate — then marry that person. By your late 20s, you'll realize you were merely over-correcting the first person's flaws and that the one you married is just as wrong for you as the one you didn't, but in very different ways.

Not only is this step relevant to just my marriage but it's basically describing all three relationships I've had. Another line in the book that struck a chord was "But although fading fervor is normal, there also has to be a little jealousy, a little insecurity, and a little possessiveness." And I agree. Totally. I know really, Matt thinks he can't do any better than me, which may or may not be true, so he wouldn't leave. He'd rather settle and be unhappy forever. Now me on the other hand am the opposite. I may never get married again, but by fucking god I have to think it's possible for me to be in a relationship with someone and not dread coming home. I'm not a jealous person but back in the day- if Matt was eyeing up a chick I'd immediately compare myself. Now I'm secretly begging he'd just cheat so I'd have an excuse out and not look like an asshole. I try very hard to have a social life now because I realized that by not having one from age 19-27 I was killing myself. I missed EVERYTHING that 20 something assholes do. I'm not saying I want to be puking and on the verge of death in the bathroom of a seedy bar and wondering where my underwear went. I just would have liked the opportunity. But now when I go out- if Matt is every jealous I have no idea. I have no idea if he feels anything ever because I don't hear about it. I sometimes feel like I have a better emotional relationship with my gay cat than I do my husband.

In all there are 30 steps and each one is funnier and funnier, but more sad. But it's only sad if you are in say, a happy marriage. Or are a newlywed. But if you have hit the 5 year mark in your marriage and wake up 5 out of 7 days hoping that your spouse has moved their stuff out while you were sleeping and left an optional note- you might enjoy this book. If you plan events and kind of hope your spouse backs out so you can bring a kick ass friend and pretend to be hot and single, this book is for you. If you already have at least one marriage under the table by age 30 you will love this book. If you are a guy who never wants to get married you should read this book to know where and when you should start fucking up.

Irene says

Very funny. And she has a way of making funny a little sad too. Personally, I'm feeling a lot of what Rothchild wrote about (well, maybe except for the cocaine highs and lows). And she definitely has had more boyfriend breakups. But it's not the quantity of breakups that makes a woman more knowledgeable in the game of love -- it's the weight of the love that's lost.

I wish they taught us about starter marriages in school. I might have gone into mine ahead of the game, knowing what I was getting myself into. Alas, the learning curve was brutal. But, now I know. So, thanks Sascha!

One may compare this type of book to maybe something Chelsea Handler would write. But I find Chelsea Handler totally unfunny and not a very good writer. Then again, Rothchild is writer who happens to find comedy in her writing, rather than being a mediocre comedian who wants to cash in and write mediocre books too. Wow...I'm really hating on Handler, aren't I. Oh well.

This is funny. Read.

Jennifer says

Two & a half stars, really.

I picked up this book because I really like Rothchild's segments in *Mortified*, and also because I've been evaluating my relationships and those of my friends as most of us are around 30.

I spent most of the book rolling my eyes at her loser ex-husband. "Really? And you still married him WHY?" He comes across as a worthless lump of slack, and although the book is obviously written from a 20/20 hindsight POV, I was left thinking the author was a dumbass for not seeing the giant warning signs that THIS GUY SUCKS DON'T MARRY HIM! (At the same time, I had to take everything she said with a grain of salt, as we aren't treated to the proverbial second side of the story. Rothchild does reveal a lot of her own flaws and mistakes in the marriage, for which I give her credit, but I was left wondering what aspects of the failed relationship she left out...)

The book was funny in several places and I enjoyed the author's writing style. Here's the problem, though: Memoirs are so very trendy now - At what point does one's life become "worthy" of a memoir? The drug abuse and getting nearly killed by a train would have made MUCH better focuses for a book than her starter marriage did. As funny as this quick read was at points, and despite a few choice bon mots, the fact of the matter is this 30-year-old really hasn't done anything interesting enough with her life to merit a memoir.

Kristin (Kritters Ramblings) says

A snarky humored memoir that I just couldn't get into. I picked this up because I have read and loved

memoirs that are filled of hard funny truths. This one - just didn't work for me.

I knew from the beginning that the man she married would not be there in the end. But from the beginning of the relationship, I saw the doomed ending - she should have never married him in the end. There were so many deal breakers that she just let go by, where I would have made an abrupt stop to the relationship. I can't get started about her family life, oh my goodness.

I have to be honest, I would only recommend this to those who have the heart to bypass her mishaps and rough humor to enjoy a true story.

justablondemoment says

LMAO...I read this book in one sitting. Wonderful book. This is one of those books that you either will relate or won't and for me, I definitely related. It didn't feel like I was reading it felt like me, and the author, were sharing some drinks kicking back and sharing stories. What a gift to be able to write a story and the reader feels as if she is your only audience. WHOOT...way to go.

I only have one warning, and I do this whenever I read books that are at times explicit in either language or sexual content. It doesn't offend me but I know it does some, and I have to be careful of my younger daughters who like to raid my books sooo; I mark the ones I find that have such things. This is one of them. While it certainly is not overdone there are a few times it could be said not for the sensitive.

(Won through LibraryThing Early Review program)

Valerie R says

What an airhead. I mean there's optimism, but it has to have a basis in some kind of reality.

Blog on Books says

Something's fishy here. First off, the book itself. 'How to Get Divorced by 30' began life as an article in the Los Angeles alternative paper, the L.A. Weekly. It has since been optioned by Universal Pictures to (possibly) become a feature film. Fair enough; the title alone is enough from which to build a fun, chick-flick/rom-com that could last a couple of weekends in the mall (assuming the studio covers their bet by putting actual comedy writers on the project who can exorcise this painfully drab story out of their script.) But the middle piece - the book itself - dreadful.

For some reason, Rothchild (and her publisher) thought her twenty-something life's story was interesting enough to foist 224 pages onto the general public during the fallow first quarter. It is not. (It appears that the movie option was already in place, as the book would clearly be a 'pass' without it.) Her story, the story of a writer of limited accomplishment, moving to LA to 'make it,' and turning a loser boyfriend into a loser husband is about as exciting as the 'marriage' of the half-filled ketchup bottles Rothchild merges while waiting tables at the Palm. (A mundane procedure, she actually feels obligated to explain.)

After a handful of uninspired relationships lead her to Jeff, a curmudgeonly wannabe actor/bartender whose life seems to revolve around living in his La-Z-Boy recliner, playing video games and smoking pot all day, it is shocking that Rothchild both marries him and then is somehow surprised that the obviously ill-fated unison ends in divorce. (This, despite the fact that she has to buy her own engagement ring at the mall, is married by a guy who got his certificate off the internet and hopes Jeff wears his good jeans on their wedding day!) It would be hard to imagine a reader out there who shares her surprise as anyone with a pulse could see this coming from deep left-field.

This quick read, gallivants (one of her favorite words, she uses it more than once in the book) back and forth to work with the author, questions whether she should have ended up with a previous boyfriend or two instead, and generally covers the quotidian lifestyle of a young Valley couple whose greatest life-changing event is the day they get a flat-screen TV.

And let's not forget the part where after sixteen years, she decides to try cocaine again just to see if 'she is addicted.' WTF? The fact that this white-trash wedding story is completely banal is bad enough. The continuation of that thinking (that anyone would want to actually read about it) only serves to underscore the basic problem; that Ms. Rothchild lacks the maturity to realize she has nothing interesting to offer here.

The most curious part are the online reviews. While there are a number of negative ones, suspiciously most of the Amazon reviews are five-star and all posted the same week by people who have few, if any, other reviews posted and appear to live in cities the author formerly called home. (A common amateur sign of insider reviews.) Of course, they claim the book is hilarious, scintillating and well-written and many can't wait for her next volume (ahem...).

Unfortunately, with an Amazon sales ranking at nearly 400,000, this is more like landfill waiting to happen. Let's see if a movie ever gets made, and if so, who the real writers are. One word: Fail.

Patricia says

I don't know why I picked up this book, and I think it was only the quality of the writing that kept me reading it to the end. I don't necessarily recommend it, as it was such a sad and shocking story of an American girl about 10 years younger than me but living a COMPLETELY different lifestyle from mine. Her mother, though loving in her own way, shocks me to the core with the way she raises her children! It is amazing that Sascha survived as well as she did. It's good (not great) memoir writing, and occasionally humorous, but mostly very sad.

One passage that has me thinking long after I've finished the book is from p.146, "It's like I always say about the whole Jesus Christ thing. If he loves everyone, no matter what, then why is his love worth anything? I never understood that. If a teacher gives everyone in class an A, then the A loses its value. ...I don't want to be loved by someone who loves everyone. I want to be loved by someone who loves no one, because that makes the love special."
