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I Know I Am, But What Are You?

Samantha Bee

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Samantha Bee : I Know I Am, But What Are You? before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Know I Am, But What Are You?:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fun, Light ReadBy R. SchwenkSamantha Bee is my favorite of The Daily Show correspondents. I can't imagine anyone else being able to do the segment on NILF, highlighting all the sexy female news correspondents, especially of the Fox News persuasion. This is her first book, and it consists of

autobiographical vignettes, mostly from her decidedly different childhood. Her three parents (father, mother, and step-mother) and two of her grandmothers come alive in these pages as quirky, occasionally clueless, and always loving. Most of the stories are from her middle childhood, from age eight to fifteen, and, from her narrative, she seems grateful to have survived it all. However, this book is NOT an autobiography. The reader will find only hints of her career trajectory and of her relationship with her husband Jason Jones (save for a hilarious adventure at a dude ranch!). We learn only the tiniest bit about her own children, and I found myself wanting to know more about the genesis of her hilarious Daily Show persona and whether it differs at all from her off-camera persona. We can hope that this book is successful enough to engender sequels. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. I LOVE this book By Rachell LOVE this book, and Samantha Bee! She is hilarious and intriguing. Her writing feels more like you're listening to your best friend tell you the most fascinating story that you've ever heard. Did I mention she's hilarious? I had to get out of bed to read in the living room because I was keeping my boyfriend up with all the stifled laughs that shook the bed so hard that even my dog gave me the stink eye. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Awesome By Sara Weisshappel Very candid but funny. Samantha delivers in this book. It reads very fast. You will laugh out loud at the essays.

Candid, outspoken, laugh-out-loud funny essays from much-loved Samantha Bee, host of TBS's uproarious late-night show Full Frontal with Samantha Bee, executive producer and writer of TBS's comedy television series The Detour, and former The Daily Show with Jon Stewart's Most Senior Correspondent. In I Know I Am, But What Are You? she shares her unique and irreverent viewpoint on subjects as wide-ranging as: BARBIE'S DREAM HOUSE There were six main players in my coterie: G.I. Joe (macho, good-looking), Wonder Woman (hot, carpet-munching neighbor, busy with athletics), Marie Osmond (career gal, smart), Ken (gay, obviously), regular Barbie (slutty, dumb, eternally single), and an old-timey Barbie from the sixties (smoker's cough, swinger). HER CHILDHOOD CRUSH I had a notebook dedicated to ironing out the details of my postmarital name change. Samantha Christ. Mrs. Jesus H. Christ. In fact, Jesus and I were so tight that if at any moment He should materialize, I knew we would listen to my disco records and eat Tang straight from the package, just like lovers did. GYM CLASS My grandmother would send me in a navy-blue, puffy-sleeved, one-piece cashmere sweat suit with a patent-leather belt, and warn me not to sweat in it, since it was dry-clean only. FAMILY TIES There's really nothing creepier than going somewhere with one of your parents and having people think you are together, as a couple. Of lovers. Who do it. With each other.

From Publishers Weekly A senior correspondent for The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, the Toronto-born comedian pokes fun at herself in a witty collection of personal essays. Recalling her upbringing, she lightheartedly and hysterically skewers her parents, stepparents, grandparents, and even the nuns who taught her math, half of whom "looked and smelled like the rejection of life itself." Bee's stepmother took camping "very seriously," and preparing for a trip was "like preparing for the End of Days;" her father, claiming to be thinking up strategies for better fuel efficiency, was really "just reading Penthouse on the toilet." Regarding the nuns at her Catholic school, Bee doesn't hold back: "You could see that they had all their lady parts, but you just knew that once a month they menstruated dust." Bee takes readers from childhood to adolescence and beyond, reminiscing along the way about her first boyfriend, comparing their sexual chemistry to that of a "sea cucumber that sits motionless on the cold, dark ocean floor and dreams of dry-humping a nearby scallop." Bee successfully brings her witty, self-deprecating, slightly cynical, and semi-scathing world view from screen to page. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. About the Author Samantha Bee lives with her husband, also former Daily Show correspondent Jason Jones, and their children in New York City. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. camp summer fun Every once in a while I think about what my life would be like if my parents had stayed together and not separated while I was still a baby. Obviously it would involve a regular commute to the maximum-security penitentiary to visit whichever of them had committed the murder that signaled the official end to their marriage. Something relatively insignificant would have pushed them to the brink. Perhaps my mother wouldn't have been able to tolerate sorting through my father's soiled gym bag to do his laundry one more time, or my father wouldn't have been able to handle my mother's growing interest in founding a pioneer-style ecovillage—whatever the trigger, one of them would have snapped. The surviving parent would sit happily in their cell, content to be free of the shackles of the doomed relationship, and secure in the knowledge that it had been a justifiable homicide. Their new life would be such a relief that they would dive hungrily into something formerly out of character: a study of medieval French literature or raku pottery classes. Embracing their reinvented self with gusto, they would send misshapen vases and epic poems home at Christmastime, to the bewilderment of their grandchildren. Only the penal system would really blame them for their crime. Anyone who had known them would have thought, Oh yeah, makes sense. They were a terrible couple. I'm amazed they didn't try to kill each other years earlier . . . I come from a long, magnificent tradition of divorce, dating back to the time when nobody was doing it, when it was shameful and nearly impossible to get one. Our family legacy of failed marriage dates back to the era in which women whose behavior vaguely pushed the boundaries of social acceptability were automatically considered either mentally deficient or, more likely, hookers.

If you wanted to be an actor, for example, that was just an artsy way of saying, “I do it for money.” If you opted to have a job, then you may have been a “career gal” by day, but everyone knew it was probably just a front for your nighttime hookering. And if you dared to get a divorce, then you were indisputably a hooker, and God bless the poor husband who had to put up with you for so long, you horrible floozy. The women in my family were often suspected of this kind of sluttiness, but the glorious truth is that they mostly just loved to marry sadists. Men who liked to beat them up physically or psychologically, drink up all the food money, start a side family, and then proceed to drink up all their new family’s food money, too. It was quite a collection of gentlemen that the women on both sides of my family had collectively cast aside. I’m sure they would have endured any tawdry accusations with relish if those accusations had been accompanied by divorce papers. Dating from well before the turn of the twentieth century if there has ever been a successful, happy marriage in my family lineage, I have yet to hear about it. When I rack my brain, I can’t think of a single adult, other than myself, in my immediate or extended family who has not been painfully divorced at least once, usually twice—even the gay ones. This inspires tremendous confidence in my husband. My maternal and paternal great-great-grandmothers both divorced their husbands, and later went on to marry different kinds of sex perverts; my grandfather left my grandmother for his secretary and her family; my parents got divorced, and their second marriages and/or common-law relationships fell apart; a whole bunch of aunts, uncles, and cousins all split up—which leaves us with a portrait of a shattered family and some very robust hybridized genes. And this is just the tip of the iceberg. After the nuclear winter, all that’s going to be left standing are cockroaches and Bees. Our family tree has been hit by lightning so many times, we’re really more of a charred, ungroomed topiary hedge of misfits trying to figure out how we’re related. Nobody’s really sure what to call anybody else at family gatherings. Are you an aunt? Can I just call you Debbie? Are you a cousin? Oh, so you’re related to the lady who was standing in front of the shed during the baby shower? So then . . . am I technically allowed to fool around with your son at the family reunion? Whoops, too late, I already did. But after all the heartache and confusion, and cousin-on-cousin make-out sessions, getting to have a stepmother like the one I have was the single best result anyone could have hoped for. In keeping with family tradition, my parents threw in the towel when I was an infant, after a long and uneventful high school romance and subsequent teen pregnancy. The fact that they followed through with the pregnancy at all seemed to be their own inept form of teen rebellion, though of course, for obvious reasons I’m grateful for it. Although I officially lived with my mother, I saw my dad on weekends, and my grandmother and great-grandmother were there to fill in the gaps. And though I adored my parents in a way that bordered on adulation, there were many, many of those gaps. My mother never remarried out of the sheer terror that she would again be saddled with someone like my father. My father, suffering from a similar terror that he would again be saddled with someone like my mother, opted out of the dating pool entirely by marrying her polar opposite. Sensing that there might be a shortfall in the area of competent parenting, my father was sure that his freshly ratified marriage offered the kind of stability that his child deserved. It must be terrifying to be thrust into the position of stepparent, but my stepmother, Marilyn, was game and jumped into it full steam ahead with little regard for its perils. I was certainly not the kind of child she was used to, but she seemed confident that she could provide me with the kind of wholesome family experiences almost no one who is not a character on a television show has ever had. She exploded onto the scene, breathing a fresh, minty new life into our musty old father-daughter weekends, formerly spent watching NFL games and quietly munching on doughnut holes. Her energy contrasted sharply with what I was used to; she was a busy maker, chatty, industrious, always baking something delicious, pouring vinegar into the dishwasher to cleanse its inner workings, and finding clever uses for leftover Reader’s Digests. I was scandalized by the stop-sign patch she wore on the back of her jeans, and desperate for her to give me a Toni Home Perm identical to hers, as I knew only she could. Though she would have denied it at the time, Marilyn found me peculiar. For one thing, I was exceptionally quiet, though I preferred to think of myself as multifaceted and thoughtful. I was the living definition of the term indoor kid. I wasn’t technically allergic to the sun or to fresh air, but stepped outside infrequently and gingerly anyway, like a baby vampire learning to survive in the civilian world. I had the complexion of Powder and the muscle tone of a pile of flubber. And since I was basically being raised by senior citizens at the time, my physical activity was limited to driving around the park to look at the trees, driving to the lake to look at the lake, and driving to the mall to look at coats that were “car length.” My grandmother had been raised during the time of polio, so to her, every other child was just an infected mucus machine gunning for her precious only grandchild. On the rare occasions she would actually send me off to the playground, it was always with a laundry list of warnings: “Don’t share a comb!” because she was paranoid about lice. “That Stella is a real pimple-hatch; don’t go near her face with yours!” “Don’t choke to death on your iced [sic] cream sandwich—choking is an agonizing way to die.” And “Watch out for cars. Before you know it, they’ll run over you and drag you down the street to your death, and they won’t even have felt the bump.” She needn’t have worried about me at the playground. All I did was sit in one spot on a bench and count down the seconds before I could reasonably return home and claim that I had played on the teeter-totter with some nit-riddled Pimplestiltskin. I’m pretty sure my stepmom suspected that I thought I was better than everybody else, but actually, what I suffered from was acute and crippling shyness. I was afraid of everything. I wet the bed at night because I was tortured by the fear that I would wake everybody up if I flushed the toilet. I was terrified that other children would speak to me or inflict their halitosis

on me. I was afraid to walk across the green shag broadloom because I thought there was a chance it would transmogrify into the Indian Ocean and drown me while my legs were simultaneously being consumed by a hammerhead shark. According to the vast library of shark-death and nautical-disaster literature on my bookshelf, only a few feet of water were required for either. I disliked competition of any kind, because I only liked to win at things and didn't like to try if victory seemed improbable. I would get claustrophobic in public washrooms if they weren't close enough to where people were gathering, because I thought that a pedophile was going to try to snatch me. I slept with a dirty strip of squirrel fur that I had ripped off my grandmother's coat and called my "rat." If I couldn't find my rat, I would sob quietly and moan "Ratty" until my mother fished him out of the garbage again for the last time. I just wanted to hang out with adults and be accepted as one of their own and be let into their adult secret society that included such things as "swearing" and "reading dirty books." By the time I was seven, my mother and I were living in an old mansion that had been a veterans...