



## Fifty Shames of Earl Grey

*Fanny Merkin , Andrew Shaffer*

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**A shrewd, laugh-out-loud parody of E. L. James' bestselling *Fifty Shades of Grey* series:**

Young, arrogant, tycoon Earl Grey seduces the naïve coed Anna Steal with his overpowering good looks and staggering amounts of money, but will she be able to get past his fifty shames, including shopping at Walmart on Saturdays, bondage with handcuffs, and his love of BDSM (Bards, Dragons, Sorcery, and Magick)? Or will his dark secrets and constant smirking drive her over the edge?

## Fifty Shames of Earl Grey Details

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Author : Fanny Merkin , Andrew Shaffer

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Genre : Humor, Fiction, Romance, Adult, Contemporary

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## From Reader Review Fifty Shames of Earl Grey for online ebook

### ?Karlyn P? says

This was a HILARIOUS parody of Fifty Shades of Grey, it nailed so much of the absurdity of that story!

In **Fifty Shames of Earl Grey**, Anna Steele is an airhead virgin college student who meets the bazillionaire stalker Earl Grey, and soon gets pulled into his sick and twisted world of BDSM - erotic role playing for Bards, Dragons, Sorcery and Magick.

This story pokes so much fun at all the whacked out parts of Fifty, including Ana's lip biting problem (now a nose picking problem that turns him on, lol!), the many over used phrases like his long fingers and eye gazing, the infamous 'contract' and tampon scenes, and of course the erotic sex he likes rough and kinky. It also pokes fun at fan-fiction, Dr Drew, E.L.James, and Twilight!!

OMG, I busted a gut listening to this book. (Thanks Tantor for the audiobook ARC!!) The laughs come so fast, I will need to re-listen to this as I am sure I missed a few while I was laughing so hard.

The audio book narration was also AWESOME. Allyson Ryan has a great voice and was able to pull off this kind of humor and parody. Her Anna was spot-on as a nitwit heroine, and her male voice for Grey sounded sooooo stalker-ish, LOL.

Highly recommended for a great laugh. :-) If you've read Fifty, and know a bit about the books history as Twilight fan-fic, you can't go wrong.

(Audio book ARC provided by Tantor. <http://www.tantor.com/BookDetail.asp?...>)

ETA: The author has the first three chapters on his blog. They are what sold me on wanting to read this story, well worth the quick read. <http://www.evilreads.com/fifty-one-sh...>

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### Adita ?The Slumbering Insomniac? says

★★★★★? [8/10]

DNF @ 40%

Contradictory rating? My point, precisely!

**Before I know it, we're off the ground and soaring above the parking lot. The people are so small from this height; they look like ants (although they're wearing clothes and have two legs instead of six). This is amazing. I'm in a helicopter with Earl Grey, the most handsomest man on the planet. And now he's the most handsomest man in the air! I peer into the distance, and can see the Space Needle in faraway Seattle jutting above the skyline. We're up so high, and the sun is so bright—**

**“Earl !” I shout.**

**“What!” he shouts back, over the roar of the helicopter’s massive blades.**

**“Watch out for the sun!”**

**“What!”**

**“I said, WATCH OUT FOR THE SUN!”**

**He shoots me a puzzled look.**

**“What? I’m not wearing sunscreen,” I say.**

**He shakes his head.**

**“Nevermind,” I mutter. He probably knows how close to the sun we can fly without getting burned. I hope.**

**As we begin our descent, I get butterflies in my stomach. I close my mouth, because I don’t want to pull a Kathleen and spew chunks all over Earl. He lands the helicopter at the Starbucks across the street from Walmart.**

### **The parody of all parodies.**

The victory of

?Good over evil.

?Self righteousness over selfishness.

?Humour over humdrum.

?Brilliance over shoddiness.

?Beauty over ugly mess.

?Prudence over plain misery.

?Earl Grey over Christian Grey.

This is the day I finally got to bury the shame. My self loathing finally ceased to exist and was replaced by a new sense of victory. Pride, even. Years of lugging around the burden of the unspeakable had finally got a closure.

I started reading very late in my life. For almost 20 years, nothing existed out of school and curriculum and science, for me. I never gave noncurricular(if you can call goodreads that) books so much as a second glance. One day in college, all of a sudden, I found myself at the receiving end of a dare.

### **The dare: "Read Fifty Shades of Grey".**

Given how much of a naive and law abiding and socially withdrawn student I was, my bullies couldn’t come up with a better version of "let’s go poke some fun at our class clown/nerd". And I buckled under pressure. And that’s how my book sojourn began. Not quite the fairy tale beginning you’d have imagined, but shaky starts don’t always mean riding-the-rough-waves career. Do they?

If there's one good that came out of this horrible dare, then that's the rekindling of my passion for reading; in a frantic need to put as much distance from the world's most trashy novel of the century as possible.

I was mad at myself for so readily becoming a scapegoat. **I was appalled by how some people can summon the guts to make money out of spoiling so many people's precious little time.** Books like FSoG deserve to occupy the fag end of the lower rung of the book hierarchy. Any place above the measly and menial position is an insult to the world of literature. And, that's where Fifty Shames of Earl Grey enters the picture. To save the face of literature. To wipe the gripe off the minds of thousands of harebrained women who fell prey to the world's worst **Junk-lit**, albeit unwittingly.

Thank goodness, I can finally put my past behind me and move on. This parody doesn't need your complete attention to spread its fragrance; just your acknowledgement. You can give that much and a hats-off, if possible.

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### Alex ? says

Please skip this review, if you are a true fan of FSOG.

I read a cool parody book yesterday and then I remembered this masterpiece, which I already read a couple of years ago. So, I reread it. And I laughed like crazy, or maybe I'm just crazy \*lol\*

Hilarious. OTT hilarious. I read 3 FSOG books and I could connect almost every dot \*lmao\*

Warning: some readers may find this book offensive. It's very harsh, very.

Not always sophisticated humor, some odd and 2 very odd jokes (wrong hole & dead bird), these 2 are the reason I took 1 star off.

Elevator, Walmart, pink Crocs & silver thong and of course Pacific Ocean – I choked on my tea... okay, okay, I say the truth... I choked on my wine!

With this one line, spoken by the h, they covered my overall opinion about the original:

**For the first time in my life, I have found my purpose: to be a doormat for this ridiculously wealthy, attractive, impossible-to-resist man.**

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### Traveller says

Oh, dwarling..\*

I get up and look in the mirror. My hair ...- oh, my hair! It's... really naughty hair. It insists on going in all directions while I sleep. So, I say a mantra every night: "Must flatten hair...must..."

..but it never works. I say it anyway. Who knows, one morning I might wake up with flat hair. This is a very important thing in my life. To wake up with neat, flat hair.

I know today is going to be a very important day for me. It's the day I'm going to meet *him*. I just don't know it yet.

A whole lot of unimportant stuff happens, and then I walk into his office. I see HIM, and I trip over my own feet at the shock of it. ..at how magnificent, how sexy, how stunning, how manly, how *masterful* he is. ..and when he walks away, I trip over the coffee table because I cannot take my eyes off that tight butt in those tight pants.

A whole lot of other unimportant stuff happens, and then, he saves me from being my usual klutz self when I almost walk in front of a car, and then he kisses me. It's the first time I've been kissed, so I faint.

Then a whole lot of other unimportant stuff happens, and then I have a load of orgasms. So many orgasms, that I unfortunately cannot remember which one came first, (hehe heh, 'came' geddit?) plus I can't quite remember what came in between. Oh, yes. I have to eat certain food, and wear certain clothes, and work out at certain times of the day, and hmhm.. Well, anyway, that's what comes more or less in between the comes, I mean between the, between his, er.. between my.. umm. Between. Oooh.. Oooh. Aaah. Holy cow, I never knew that down there could be so between...so coming, I mean sooo holy ...I don't mean so full of holes -- okay, that as well,-- but, I mean, so filled up, with, with HIM.

Holy cum. I blush and chew my lip.

Oops! I hope I haven't given away any spoilers...

PS, I forgot to say. Now, I actually *like* my hair looking all fu..., I mean, looking like I had slept with somebody. (When actually, we weren't really sleeping, tee-hee!)

\* The five stars are *ironic* stars, dwarling...

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### **Sandra says**

The review can also be found on my blog.

This satiric, snarky, sarcastic, over the top story based on the mega-bestselling Fifty Shades of *Twilight* Grey nails all the key points of absurdity of the book it parodies, as well as the *Twilight* saga from which it came. And then some.

The cover alone is hilarious, especially the hand holding the cup with the pointer, middle and pinkie finger extended. If you don't know what that hand gesture means, please look it up under "shocker" on [Urbandictionary.com!](http://Urbandictionary.com)

From the first few lines, I was laughing, giggle-snorting and crying (because I was laughing so hard).

"I'm Edward Cullen. I mean, Earl Grey." [quoted from the original chapters posted online.]

And it only gets **better** from there. The parody starts out much like the fanfiction/published novel by introducing us to ~~Bella Swan~~ ~~Anastasia Steele~~ Anna Steal (!!?) who is preparing to interview bazillionaire enterprise mogul hot stud ~~Edward Cullen~~ Christian Grey Earl Grey as a favor to her sick friend ~~Rosalie Hale~~ Katherine Cavanaugh Kathleen Kraven (who in this parody is a 38 year old perpetual student-slash-journalist alcoholic pothead).

The author immediately reminds us of the origin of FSoG by casually and humorously mentioning the actress who portrayed Bella Swan in the Twilight movies. ~~Bella Swan~~ ~~Anastasia Steele~~ Anna Steal appears to be quite the airhead, naive and virginal, a notion that is nearly instantly invoked.

The parody follows along similar plot lines as the fanfiction-turned-published book, but continually makes the key scenes and themes ever more ridiculous. For example, ~~Bella's~~ Anastasia's annoying lip-biting habit in FSoG is turned into Anna constantly picking her nose. Instead of an inner goddess, she has an inner guidette. Thankfully, her subconscious is just that in this parody - sub-conscious.

~~Edward Cullen~~ Christian Grey has a list of fifty shames instead of being fifty shades of effed up. And what a list it is. He shops at Wal-mart on Saturdays, likes bondage with handcuffs, and professes his love of BDSM (Bards, Dragons, Sorcery, and Magick). Pointy prosthetic elven ears included. He also has a fascination with Tom Cruise, and you just wait until you see who his adopted father is. I nearly choked from laughter when reading that.

All the main characters from the 'book' are present - ~~Jacob~~ Jose Jin (who is a Brony, wants Anna to be his and might even be offered a contract to publish his My Little Pony fanfiction as an original novel, via a "small Australian vanity press" \*snickers\*), Anna's mom and stepfather, her distant father as well as Earl Grey's biological mother.

The first sex scene, in which Anna loses her virginity, will have you howling with laughter.

And then there's the infamous tampon scene. Never have I laughed so hard and for so long as when I read that. Tears of laughter were running down my face.

Fanny Merkin aka Andrew Shaffer intelligently, with tongue firmly in cheek, uses perfectly timed zingers in almost every paragraph to not only poke fun of the ridiculousness of the 50 Shades book, but also to reference things that those who know the history of the fanfiction-turned-international-book-sensationhype will easily pick up.

I wish I could quote from the ARC but I'll have to wait until the final published version is available.

Just know, that if you loved FSoG, you will likely get a chuckle or five out of this parody. You should read it.

If, on the other hand, you hated the original book or the fanfiction from where it came, you'll be laughing your butt off, and this is definitely the book for you.

Very well done, Mr. Shaffer. Thanks for the hours of laughter from your utterly brilliant book.

*I am one of the lucky ones who were provided with an ARC from the publisher (mine via NetGalley). Thank you, Perseus Book Groups and DaCapo Press.*

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## **Stacia (the 2010 club) says**

Have you ever seen the preview for a movie which made you so excited to see it, only to find out when you watched the actual movie that the best parts were already shown in the preview? This is how I felt about *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey*. The 3 chapter sneak peak was extremely funny. Unfortunately, the humor started to wane the further I read. I have no clue how this concept will work as a trilogy.

Even though I enjoyed parts of the book, it's apparent that most early readers found *Shames* somewhat more entertaining than I did. The gay jokes got old fast and it seemed like some of the sexual vibe was removed in favor of playing up other pop-culture references (come on...there could have been SO much more comic gold squeezed out with the contract and the sex scenes, although I did absolutely love the bit with Earl pulling things out of Anna like he was a magician). I will give props to the writer for working in some *Twilight* references though, since Fifty was originally a Twi fanfic. I thought Jin's character was probably the most brilliantly sketched in the entire book, and it was fun to see more of a play on Jacob than what was shown with Jose in Fifty.

Honestly, I think *Fifty Shames* would have been much more amusing had it been condensed into a summarized version of highlights, instead of a full length novel. I found myself skimming by the halfway point and as I read this line, it made me nod my head in agreement : *Pacing ourselves isn't such a bad idea, especially since we still have more than half the book left.*

### **Some Highlights :**

*The receptionist hands me a security badge that says virgin. Is it that obvious? "How did you know -" "That you're a first-time visitor here at the Earl Grey Corporation?"*

*I walk through the glass doors and into the lobby, which is floor-to-ceiling glass and steel. This fascinates me to no end, because buildings back in Portland are made of grass and mud.*

*"No man is an island," he says. "Islands are made of dirt and rocks and trees. I don't know any people made of such things. Therefore, people are not islands."*

*Wow. Was this hot guy a philosophy major in college?*

*When he's not in school or doing homework, Jin spends his free time reading and writing My Little Pony fanfic. He's deep into the "brony" scene.*

*"I'm a Dungeon Master, Anna."*

*What? My inner guidette screeches to a halt on her hamster wheel. I have no clue what he's talking about.*

*"What exactly does a Dungeon Master do?"*

*"I'm into BDSM," he says.*

*"Is that a workout thing, like Zumba?"*

*"No, Anna. it's not anything like Zumba. BDSM is a live-action role-playing game : Bards, Dragons, Sorcery and Magick."*

*He lowers his gaze. "We need to talk about something," he says.*

*"The baby," I say.*

*He nods. "The baby is fine. But..."*

*A wave of relief floods over me. "But what?"*

*"I ran some tests, and your baby is a sadist. Just like his father."*

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### **Cyndy Aleo says**

While I may request a fair amount of titles from NetGalley, there are few review copies for which I keep refreshing my email, hoping for approval. Andrew Shaffer/Fanny Merkin's *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey* was one of those titles. I'd read the three sample chapters Shaffer had posted earlier on his blog as "Fifty-One Shames" and I was eager to see if the wit he'd demonstrated in those early chapters could be sustained over the entirety of a book.

Ostensibly, *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey* is a parody of the best-selling trilogy beginning with *Fifty Shades of Grey*. *Fifty Shames* stars Anna Steal and Earl Grey, a Walmart cashier and billionaire tycoon respectively who meet and inexplicably fall in love. Anna is dumb as a post and Grey -- well, Grey has his 50 shames, which he believes isolate him from the rest of the world.

Shaffer has filled the book with obvious plays on the book, but as someone who did no more than skim the story when it was in its original form as a *Twilight* fan fiction, I can assure you that you'll still find the book funny without it. More than a simple parody, it skewers American culture and the associated cult of idiocy that appears to have led to what most have admitted is a poorly written book sitting atop the best-seller charts for months.

I'm hard to please when it comes to comedy, but found myself laughing out loud frequently when reading *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey*. Shaffers's wit draws from pop culture far beyond the novels he's meant to be parodying, and the intelligence behind the gags and the research behind some of the plot points (I really don't want to spoil anything for potential readers) surprised me for a book written so quickly to take advantage of the other books' press.

Here's hoping Shaffer has a long career ahead of him in parody and satire, this generation's Jonathan Swift.

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### **Anzu The Great Destroyer says**

It all starts with a story of a lonely girl moving to a cold rainy town. She's supposed to be with her dad, whom she doesn't really like. She's a shy girl, doesn't have any friends or any boobs. Her new truck looks like a drunken lobster, and her school seems like a prison full of weird country kids. It all seems to lead her towards suicide until one day when she sees the most perfect being in the universe. He is the Master of the Universe. Lots of teenage angst filled pages later they kiss and decide to be together forever. Even if it involves multiple satanic rituals, our emo girl stops at nothing in order to be with her Master. Until one day when madness possesses him, and he twists her neck, drains her blood and buries her in his back yard. Now

the emo girl's spirit haunts Yung Adult books and is aiming even higher. She's aiming for Erotic Romance novels!

I've been full of anger since the day I ~~read~~ tried to read *Fifty Shades of Grey*, and I failed to find a way for releasing this anger. Yes, writing a review helped, but it wasn't enough. I remember there was a time I was angry about the *Twilight* movie(s). Of course, *Twilight* does not even come close to *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Anyway, back then I watched *Vampires Suck*, which is a fine parody of *Twilight*. I loved it. And I felt freed, in a way. However, *Fifty Shades of Grey* needs something stronger than that. It's a true boss fight, and you know, when fighting bosses, you need big *cojones*.

Well my dear *Fifty Shades of Grey* eat this!

Let me tell you something. Writing this review is pretty tough because I'm barely containing myself from quoting the whole damn book. It's hilarious! I laughed so hard I had tears in my eyes!

Anyway, let's pick on the best stuff in there.

Anna Steal Facts:

- *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey* ~~victim~~ heroine;
- LARP (Live-Action Role Playing) rookie;
- LARP name: Labiamajora;
- Favorite show: Jersey Shore;
- Never used the Internet;
- Nudist parents;
- Picks her nose when idle or nervous;
- Favorite tea: Earl Grey Tea;
- Virgin and never masturbated. Ever.

Earl Grey Facts:

- *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey* ~~stalker~~ hero;
- BDSM (Bards, Dragons, Sorcery and Magick) master;
- BDSM name: Elfin Warlord Sliverin;
- His headquarters are shaped like an erection;
- Vin Diesel is his bodyguard;
- Has a malecrush on Tom Cruise;
- Loves Nickelback;
- Shops at Walmart;
- Gets turned on by women who pick their nose;
- Loves to hide under his ~~prey~~ sweetheart's bed.

The best thing that came out of Anna Steal's mouth.

My opinion:

**“Have you ever had a normal relationship?”**

**“You’re my first,” he says. “And, hopefully, my last.”**

**“The way you say that sounds like you’re planning to kill me,” I mutter.**

**He laughs. “I would never kill you,” he says. “I might pay someone else to, but I would**

**never do it myself.”**  
**“That’s reassuring.”**

Earl Grey’s opinion:  
**His penis.**

The best thing that came out of Earl Grey’s mouth.

My opinion:

**“Do you have a philosophy of business?” I ask.**  
**“No man is an island,” he says. “Islands are made of dirt and rocks and trees. I don’t know any people made of such things. Therefore, people are not islands.”**

Anna Steal’s opinion:  
**Earl Grey’s penis.**

One of my favorite parts of the book was the complete unexpurgated Earl Grey’s Fifty Shames list. Words simply fail me. For those of you who know what I’m talking about, my favorites are #20, #26 and #50.  
\*wink\*

I’m going to repeat myself, but oh what an amazing weapon this book is! I laughed my ass off and managed to cure the disease I got from touching *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

Thank you Andrew Shaffer \*shakes his hand\* thank you for making me whole again!

\*birds singing in the background\*

\*camera zooms out\*

\*focus on Anzu jumping in the grass\*

\*image fades out\*

The End

But holy fuck Fifty Shames #1! Does that mean what I think it means?? Oh fuck I have to read the other two *Fifty Shades of Grey* books!!!

No. Just no. Please! Anything but that!!! I’ll do anything just please don’t make me do it!!

Hold on a minute! Past Anzu, this is Future Anzu, the one who finished reading *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey*. You don’t have to read the whole series to get the jokes! Fifty Shames #1 actually covers the entire *Fifty Shades* series and the coming one is called Fifty Shames in Space. Nothing to do with the *Fifty Shades* series! You are free Past Anzu! Free! Now GTFO.

Here's the cool excerpt that was in the end of the book:

### **Fifty Shames in Space**

The closer I get to climaxing, the more my nipples ache to be touched. Finally, it is too much to bear. I fumble with my top, in a desperate attempt to free my breasts as I ride Earl to my pleasurable destination. One touch is all it will take to send me over the edge. Earl, sensing what I'm trying to do, wraps an arm around me to cup my left breast—but his long fingers find the jetpack's emergency booster switch instead. I am shot three hundred yards across the jungle, where I crash-land into a tree. It is the best orgasm of my life. When I trek back through the jungle and find Earl, there's not much left of him. The direct blast from my jetpack's single thruster cut him in half at the waist. My poor Earl Grey is now fifty shades of messed up . . .

\*\*\*

Does Earl Grey survive? Find out in *Fifty Shames in Space*, the moderately thrilling sequel to *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey*. Twice the sex, twice the excitement, and twice the sex!

Can't. Wait.

*ARC courtesy of Da Capo Press via NetGalley.*

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### **Lakshmi C says**

#### **3.5 My Little Pony stars**

Let me start off by saying - I have nothing against 50 Shades of Grey. I read the series and it introduced me to the BDSM romance genre. I was reluctantly fascinated by Ana & Christain, I blame Twilight.

But my curiosity is a feral beast and this was what I discovered :

This book takes the original story, tweaks the characters and ruthlessly edits the parts that added depth and romance to the story. This was silly and had me chuckling out loud. Perfect when you need to unwind.

Earl Grey is a bizzare mix of Edward Cullen, playboy and nerd. He is aware of his issues and convinced that money can make his problems disappear.

Anna was clueless, absent minded, inappropriately funny and she didn't take anything seriously. She was not timid around Earl Grey and spoke her mind.

Try this if you want an alternate version where Anna does not have esteem issues.

The book also raises an important question - can two flawed individuals build a healthy relationship? That's for you, the reader to decide.

But the best part about this book has to be Jin, who plays José. All of us are familiar with José or similar characters - good looking guys who are content to adore the female lead from the sidelines. But this always changes when the male lead walks in. The old friend is broken hearted - he may move abroad, get engaged to another relative or friend, be conveniently killed off or just live with our sympathy.

But Jin was different. Apart from Anna, he was passionate about My Little Pony. He's dedicated, enjoys it and chooses this as his philosophy for life.

Jin spends his free time reading and writing My Little Pony fanfic. He's deep into the "brony" scene. Who knew that there were so many male fans of My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic?

Never let go," I say, looking into his beautiful gray eyes.

"That could be problematic," he says. "I'll have to let you go at some point. What if I have to pee? What if you have to pee?"

"Um, excuse me? Could you guys get off me, please?" the homeless guy underneath us says.

"I was never too worried that he could take you from me. Remind me later to cancel the hit I put out on him, though,"

The author also provides a comprehensive list of Earl Grey's shames...Totally worth it.

The book sneaks in some sly references to Twilight. I hope this book had a sequel where both these storyworlds would merge and create a delightful hybrid.

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### **karen says**

i don't know if it is just because i read A Coupla Shades of Taupe: A Parody first and may have reached my supersaturation point with *fifty shades of gray* parodies, but this one was not as amusing to me as the other.

there is something almost too easy about it, the way it is really easy to write bad theatre d'absurd, you know. for example:

*an attractive blonde behind the receptionist's desk smiles at me as i walk in. i assume she's the receptionist, because i can't think of any reason she would be sitting behind the receptionist's desk. unless maybe she's filling in for the real receptionist, who could be on her lunch break. but then i remember: it's almost two, and i doubt anyone takes their lunch breaks that late. so this must be the actual receptionist.*

that, to me, is just placeholder humor. it isn't funny necessarily, but it is absurd enough that it can fool you into thinking it is funny. but it's not. and it is too "easy." and there is a lot of that type of writing in the book.

but there are "actual" funny things, too.

*-this is amazing. i'm in a helicopter with earl grey, the most handsomest man on the planet. and now he's the most handsomest man in the air! i peer into the distance, and can see the space needle in faraway seattle jutting above the skyline. we're up so high, and the sun is so bright -*

*"earl!" i shout.*

*"what!" he shouts back, over the roar of the helicopter's massive blades.*

*"watch out for the sun!"*

*"what!"*

*"i said, WATCH OUT FOR THE SUN!"*

*he shoots me a puzzled look.*

*"what? i'm not wearing sunscreen," i say.*

*he shakes his head.*

*"nevermind," i mutter. he probably knows how close to the sun we can fly without getting burned. i hope.*

*-"you're a mystery to me, baby," he says, biting the tip off the banana. i blush.*

*"oh, stop."*

*"no, it's true," he says. "i have no idea what's going on inside that pretty little head of yours..."*

*"to be honest, i have no idea either," i say, looking down at the table to avoid his powerful gaze. "most times, my mind is just an ongoing, present-tense first-person monologue. it's like i'm writing a novel, constantly, but only in my brain. a really bad novel."*

*-it's ten in the morning and earl grey is long gone from the bed. he hasn't completely abandoned me, because i'm still wearing earl's shirt from last night; it's like i've skinned him and am wearing his flesh. only it's less creepy by like a million times.*

and i think that is part of why i liked *taupe* better than *earl grey*. *taupe* truly embraced the sickness. it was gross and dark and gross some more. this one was a tamer comparison that incorporated more of the *twilight* source material, but i just never really got into it. a lot of my reservations had to do with the inconsistencies in the character of anna. she is horny and in charge of her sexuality one minute, idiotically innocent the next; it just doesn't wash. i know it is foolish of my to require character-consistency from a parody of a book that was pretty crappy to begin with, but i do. i require it.

i didn't laugh out loud once while reading this, although i smirked a few times. this is smirky humor. if that is your thing, read this one. if you like sickfuck humor, read *taupe*.

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## **Misfit says**

I'm guessing most folks know the basics of The Fifty Shades of Grey books, originally written as fan-fiction of the Twilight series: mousy Bella and control-freak Edward got a new setting and a hot sex life. Fifty Shades was eventually picked up by ~~money-grubbing~~ publishers, publishers who supposedly edited it, and history was made, although after reading it for myself, I'm reminded of The Emperor's New Clothes. Does everyone love these ~~badly-written~~ books because the hype says they're supposed to, or are they afraid to go against popular opinion? Say it ain't so. Speaking of ~~money-grubbing~~ publishers, I spotted a chat on Amazon mentioning that the lending option for the purchased Kindle editions has been turned off (which I can't confirm because I will not put even one penny in their overstuffed pockets).

With that kind of hoopla and a big fat movie deal in the works, you knew it just a matter of time before the spin-offs and spoofs started, didn't you? A book with characters ~~stolen~~ borrowed from a best-selling author is just begging to have the tables turned on it (I would so love to see what the folks from the old Carol Burnett show could do with this material). I found this Listmania on Amazon that shows there's been several spin-offs already written - but the one I wanted to get my hands on was Fifty Shames of Earl Grey by Fanny Merkin AKA Andrew Shaffer (a big thanks to the kind folks at Net Galley and Perseus Books Group, Da Capo Press for giving me the chance to read this).

Anywho, the \*lovers\* this time around are **Bella Ana** Anna Steal and **Edward Christian** Earl Grey. **Bella Ana** Anna is still the klutzy college student and **Edward Christian** Earl Grey the gazillionaire business man. Instead of being fifty shades of effed up, **Edward Christian** Earl's got a list of fifty shames, including shopping at Wal-Mart on Saturdays and a bizarre fascination with Tom Cruise and his older movies (lol). Instead of constantly biting her lip, this time **Bella Ana** Anna is a compulsive nose-picker (which is a big sexual turn-on for **Edward Christian** Earl). **Edward Christian** Earl doesn't stay at the Heathman Hotel, it's the Holiday Inn...

And just wait until you find out who **Edward Christian** Earl's adopted father is :D

I think you've got the gist of it, and I'm not going to spoil by going further (the twist on the infamous tampon scene was *hilarious* ). Wish I could quote, but unfortunately I can't until I get my hands on a finished copy. I can promise a belly full of laughs, and strongly urge you not to read this one on the plane or the train - unless you want everyone looking at you funny when you start laughing your arse off. Available July 31 according to the Amazon page. Personally I think the Kindle price is a wee bit too high, but you'll definitely get your money's worth in laughter. But wait - there's more coming. There was a preview at the end for the next book in the series, Fifty Shames in Space. I can't wait :)

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## AH says

I'm still laughing... Ms. Merkin aka Andrew Shaffer has nailed it! Her parody of that other book is hilarious! **Fifty Shames of Grey** captures the essence of the two main characters very well. **Edward Christian** Earl Grey is rich, powerful, and a Dungeon Master! Yup – he's a master of live action role playing. His type of BDSM involves bards, dragons, sorcery, and magick. Complete with the prosthetic ears!

**Bella Ana** Anna Steal is her usual klutzy, clueless self. She even has an Inner Guidette doing backflips and running on a hamster wheel, and even makes fun of Anna repeating herself. Anna works at the local Walmart store. She lives in a Portland duplex with Kathleen Kraven, a 38 year old alcoholic addicted to bad television. Her bud Jin is a "brony" – he even has a website dedicated to My Little Pony. And get this – Jin writes My Little Pony fan fiction!

Anna is easily impressed by Earl's affluence. Earl's wealth knows no bounds and he basically buys anything and everything in order to get closer to his Anna. He even buys Walmart so that he can be Anna's boss and give her a break so that they can have their first date. Let's face it, a helicopter ride to the nearest Starbucks (across the street!) to drink a cup of tea as a first date? Impressive. Earl Grey is so rich that he not only has a helicopter at his disposal, he also owns an F-14 Tomcat.

Back in Earl's apartment there are more impressive sights to behold. Earl has a lovely library with a secret doorway to his Room of Doom, or as Anna calls it his "Dorm Room of Doom." A few scenes stood out for

me – Earl and Anna at his private island, complete with his own version of Jurassic Park. There is a memorable dinosaur riding scene. The author comes up with some creative uses for tampons as well. Spanking becomes a whole new experience – a very giggly one.

At the end of the book there is an extensive list of Earl's fifty shames. Very funny. I loved the references to the fan fiction. Well done!

This is a pretty short book and a fast read, perfect for summer reading by the pool. Do not read this book in front of your computer, especially while drinking coffee.

Is this book for everyone 18+? Sure, why not? I think that people who have read the fan fiction and have some knowledge of that story will enjoy it the most. The author has some subtle references to that work and readers in the know will enjoy those the most. If you've read the other published book and liked/hated it, you will get some good laughs. If you haven't read the other book or the fic, this can still be funny but some of the jokes may not make sense to you.

And now for the good news....There is a sequel planned and there is an excerpt at the end of the book – **Fifty Shames in Space!**

Favorite quotes:

“I spend the rest of my night doing schoolwork. After striking a match and lighting a candle, I sit down at my desk with my quill pen and parchment to write an essay for my ethics class on the legalities of fan fiction.”

“He hands me his shopping list and I lead him through the store in search of the item. Duct tape? Plastic wrap? A hack saw? Who is this guy, Dexter?”

“For the first time in my life, I have found my purpose: to be a doormat for this ridiculously wealthy, attractive, impossible to resist man.”

A draft of the first 3 chapters of this book is available on the author's website. Here's the link.

Thank you to NetGalley and the publisher for a review copy of this book.

**Review posted on Badass Book Reviews.**

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**new\_user says**

**I won't count the embarrassing number of times I gabbled that *Fifty Shames of Earl Grey* was**

**OMGhilarious, I'll just explain why Andrew Shaffer's- sorry, *Fanny Merkin's* struck five stars of comedic gold with his *Fifty Shades of Grey* parody.**

Culturally relevant, cheeky, and absurd, *Shames* pokes fun at romance tropes, Anna and Christian, and EL James- a treat for romance readers who haven't seen a pop publication for them since *Everything I Know About Love I Learned from Romance Novels*. *Shames*'s humor resembles the *Scary Movie* flicks, except that shtick's much funnier in text, where our imaginations supply better props, effects, and realism, a better contrast between the real and impossible or unlikely.

A ridiculous Anna and Earl Grey cracked me up, best of all the pokes at romance tropes, for example the running gag about Grey's long fingers, seen on romance heroes everywhere.

*"Everything he says makes me want to make sandwiches with him, even the part about playing with lottery tickets as a kid. Is it because he's so good looking? Is it because of his incredibly long fingers? Or his tousled hair? Or his incredibly long fingers?"*

*"I need Earl Grey. I need his kisses, I need his long fingers, and I need his slicked-back hair..."*

*"Thank you,' I say to Earl. If his fingers weren't so freak-ishly long, I would be dead right now."*

*"I watch as he pulls his credit card out of his wallet using his long fingers, which I swear have to be longer than his forearms."*

Alluding to the "battling tongues" line seen verbatim in romances when referring to a kiss:

*"Our mouths create an airtight seal, and our tongues battle it out for supremacy. His is the more dominant tongue; I let my tongue go limp and submit fully to Earl Grey."*

And the long looks:

*"Hello, Miss Steal," he says, gazing at me gazingly with his gazing gray eyes.*

In Anna's self-deprecation, age difference, exaggerated awe of money and Seattle, Shaffer satirizes *Shades*, as well as references to fanfic, inner goddesses, and Grey's control issues, another running joke. He buys her school, her job, and when she eventually confesses that she's a virgin, says, "I know, Anna. I've read transcripts of all your therapist appointments from the time you were sixteen until last week." We mustn't forget the innuendos and euphemisms. "Are you ready for my love gun?" The love scenes alone are worth 1000 bucks. Also, look up "Merkin" and "pasta puttanesca."

I think most humor books are corny and/or attempting to tell a real, bona fide story when they shouldn't. Comedian biographies? C'mon. *Shames* is a laugh-a-minute exercise in pure absurdity and -sometimes blue- satire from a sharp wit! I was laughing out loud. Mission accomplished. Recommended to anyone with a sense of humor! You do not need to have read *Fifty Shades of Grey*, but you'll enjoy this more if you're vaguely familiar with romance clichés. Read it before everyone's told you all the jokes! Not for the prudish. Duh.

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## Kruti says

Kudos to Fanny Merkin aka Andrew Shaffer! I found myself laughing on every page.

I'll be honest I usually shy away from parodies for the simple reason that good parodies are hard to come by. But this...Fifty Shames of Earl Grey manages to address all that I found utterly ridiculous in FSoG. It even steps it up a notch and mocks Twilight and the general legality of fan fiction. There's even mention of 16 & pregnant, Snookie from Jersey Shore and Dr Drew. I swear this book should come with a warning label.

**WARNING: Not to be read in public places!** Seriously, it pokes fun in all the right places and will have you laughing so often!

I'm not going to summarise the story for fear that I may accidentally spoil things for you. However, I will leave a few of my favourite quotes below. Do NOT click on the spoiler button if you haven't read the book.

(view spoiler)

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*I received an ARC of this book from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.*

## Taryn says

This review was posted to My Secret Romance.

*My inner guidette is screaming on the inside that I should get on my hands and knees and kiss the ground this dreamy man walks on for this laugh out loud book! Oh, Fanny!*

But then I put things into perspective and think- I don't even know what kind of shoes he wears.

For those of you who come across this book and don't know what it is, it's a spoof of Fifty Shades of Grey and a little of Twilight. It's also A MUST READ....if you have a sense of humor!

Fifty Shames of Earl Grey is absolutely comical! The references between Fifty Shades and Twilight made my stomach hurt from laughing so hard. Andrew Shaffer nailed it on the head with this book. At times one sentence would have me nearly in tears!

I'm not going to go into a full detailed review for this book. It's clearly obvious what the story line is. However, what gets me is the way Andrew Shaffer really punctuates the details of the Fifty Shades book in this book. From the clothes the characters wear to their vocabulary and the little innuendos made were spot on. This man didn't miss a beat! If only this was made into one of those spoof movies....then I would be the first one in line!

Two problems I think readers will have with this book. One, if they haven't read the Fifty Shades books then they're not going to understand the humor in this. They will be utterly clueless and it will make no sense whatsoever to them. So if you haven't read the Fifty books then I wouldn't recommend reading this. You won't get the full impact if you haven't. And two, I think people are going to find Fifty Shames of Earl Grey insulting to E.L. James. To me this is just a harmless humor to me, but I have a feeling it won't be for most. I think fans are going to take offense to this book.

I personally thought this book was BRILLIANT! Just Brilliant! At the end, Andrew thanks Stephanie Meyer for inspiring him to write this book. I thought that was the icing on the cake! I hope Andrew does more parodies in the future. By the way, I'm a Fifty fan and didn't take this to be insulting. But then again I like a little harmless humor, so....

Favorite quotes-

How about the entire book?

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