



Guts: The Endless Follies and Tiny Triumphs of a Giant Disaster

Kristen Johnston

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The two-time Emmy Award winner presents a harrowing, hysterical, and beautifully written memoir as frank and revealing as Augusten Burroughs—with the humor and wit of David Sedaris.

“It felt like I was speeding on the Autobahn toward hell, trapped inside a DeLorean with no brakes. And even if I *could* somehow stop, I’d still be screwed, because there’s no way I’d ever be able to figure out how to open those insane, cocaine-designed doors.”

The two-time Emmy Award-winning actress has written her first book, a surprisingly raw and triumphant memoir that is outrageous, moving, sweet, tragic, and heartbreakingly honest. *GUTS* is a true triumph—a memoir that manages to be as frank and revealing as Augusten Burroughs, yet as hilarious and witty as David Sedaris.

With *GUTS*, Johnston takes us on a journey so truthful and relatable, so remarkably fresh, it promises to stay with the reader for a long, long time.

Guts: The Endless Follies and Tiny Triumphs of a Giant Disaster Details

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Author : Kristen Johnston

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Kristi says

Not sure why this book is getting such great reviews really. It's not a very in-depth look at addiction. It's told jokingly and it's kind of hard to take someone's recovery very seriously when they come from that perspective about it. I've read a lot of books on addiction and while Kristen Johnston has a story to tell it's basically just one story. "I drank a lot then my stomach exploded then I stopped drinking a lot. Because I had to." The end. I really didn't feel a whole lot of emotion reading this book. I think I'll just anxiously wait another week for Bill Klegg's new book to come out instead. Disappointing read for me. I guess I don't think that a book about addiction should be "enjoyable" to read really. It should make you uncomfortable. It should make you feel something. This particular memoir really does not.

John Hancock says

First, let me say that Kristen Johnston is one of those rare people that enrich the lives of others simply by being here. Her comedic timing and acting talent aren't the end of it. She writes, she designs, she teaches. All while being a beautiful person that is uncomfortable with being beautiful. (shut up, Kristen, You're beautiful with a capital "B")

Oh, ok, that's out of the way. This book. If you do not buy this book, or read this book, or conk your friend over the head to get their copy of this book, then you have done yourself a grave disservice. I'm not saying this because it's well written (it is), or it's about someone talented (it is), or it's an autobiographical look at their life (it is).

But.

But. There is a strength and a fragility intertwined that is the backdrop to Kristen's search for herself. In the beginning, she hides herself from herself and others. She does a bang up job of that. Emphasis on the "bang up" part. She takes us along for the ride, and it's a warts and all (or pwnk and all) stark unmasking of what she finds at the end of her facade.

It's the same journey and station stop we all will make eventually. Where we finally measure ourselves accurately, find ourselves wanting, and then find a way to love ourselves anyway. And, because we figure out how to love ourselves, we remake us into US in a way that is better for those around us.

It is the ultimate human journey. Without being a philosopher, She holds up a mirror to herself, and looking over her shoulder, we see the mirror into ourselves, as well.

I could go into details of the book, but that would be ruining it for you. I will, however, give you one piece of advice: If you start to read this, make sure to block out some time or you will have to forego sleep.

Well played, Kristen, well played. I didn't really need the sleep anyways.

Lesbianfunworld Online says

Kristen Johnston is evil, and so are her Guts.

I first saw the book in Indigo. Or Chapters. Well, whichever bookstore it is where I go for Starbucks every day.

I walk quickly through the books to the escalator, and take the stairway (escalator) to heaven. But then one day, she caught my eye. Well, the book cover caught my eye. It said GUTS which first I thought was a zombie book (and in a way, I was right).

And then I saw Kristen French... Stewart... Johnston... a chick with big lips smoking a cigarette.

And every day I walked past her book it called out to me, tempting me on my way to coffee heaven. So really, she's like the devil what with all that temptation. Anyway...

I bought the audio book because she reads it. And I'm too lazy to actually hold a book up and turn pages. But I really bought it because I love storytelling. And, wow, does she have a story to tell.

Now, I don't know Kristen Johnson... Johnstone... Johnston from a hole in the ground. I think I've seen 2 episodes of 3rd Rock (which apparently is not the same as 30 Rock, but it sure makes me wonder why all these rocks are being numbered...)

So, I don't know Kristen, I'm not one for stories on boozy actresses or redemption or tell-alls (okay, tell-a-little-because-she-can't-remember-it-all). But within the first couple of minutes, I was totally hooked.

"I'm a pill popping lush. Your mind it totally blown, isn't it? After all, an actress addicted to booze and pills is pretty much unheard of. And, an actress addicted to booze and pills who then writes a book about it, is even rarer... It was a dark day indeed when I was forced to admit that I am about as special as a manila envelope."

Bwahahaha, oops, I mean, how sad. Nope, I really mean bwahahahahaha. She made me laugh, even out loud on the subway and that's okay, because it scared people away and I got a seat.

So it doesn't matter if you don't know Kristen Alley... Dior... Johnston, and it doesn't matter if this isn't your kind of book. Ms. Johnston is a gifted little devil and she makes you like it anyway.

December 21 2013 Update: I read a great suggestion on a website: for the three most important people in your life, buy them your three favourite books. This is definitely one of the books. Just sayin'.

Jen from Quebec :0) says

I want to say THANK YOU to Johnston for writing this book and making it 'no-holds-barred'. I myself have

also lived with a colostomy bag as my entire colon (large intestine) has been surgically removed due to severe Crohn's Disease. This book accurately depicts what a lot of my experience was like, making me feel, well, less alone, frankly! (Update- I have actually spoken with the author via Twitter and she is a great, intelligent, kind lady! Thanks, Kristen!) -Jen from Quebec :0)

Stephanie says

Memoir of Kristen Johnston coming to terms with addiction/alcoholism after her guts literally disintegrated from her drug usage. She's funny and "rigorously honest"... :-)

Shannon says

I never watched "3rd Rock From the Sun" or saw much of Kristen Johnston's work. But a few years ago she was in an episode of "Sex and the City" in which she played a washed-up party girl who, while completely wasted, tragically falls through a window to her death. I got the sense while reading this book that art was paralleling life, minus the funeral at the end...although Kristen came close.

Memoirs are not generally my thing but I'm so, so, so glad I made an exception for this one. It's extremely well-written, painfully honest, and surprisingly humorous. And while I've never suffered from an addiction like Kristen has (although she says that **everyone** is addicted to something...and she's probably right), I found myself identifying with her, particularly when she reflects on her tendency to view her own self-worth through other people's filters. And I also found myself thinking that this is someone who I'd really enjoy hanging out with. Beginning to end, she comes across as real, and her intelligence and humor shine through. I really hope she writes more.

Kathy says

Does the world NEED another book by/about a celebrity who has succumbed to addiction and had to deal with the consequences? In this case, I think: yes.

Kristen Johnston tells her story with honesty and humor. She doesn't make excuses for her behavior; she doesn't take much credit for her survival. I really think she shared her story to help other people who may be tempted to head down the wrong path. Each generation has to learn some of these lessons for itself. When you laugh, it hurts less and you may remember it better.

Heather says

This book is laugh out loud and bottom-of-the-barrel-sad. Throughout it all, Kristen Johnston's voice is interesting, frank and holds nothing back. I felt for her and also could relate in some ways. Her amount of denial is astonishing, but when in survival mode, that happens sometimes.

There is a definite emotional and psychological maturation and I was relieved to see it. But her writing is

fresh, brash and very entertaining. As much as she might finally not care whether or not I like her, I really do.

My favorite quote?

"I'm convinced that the only people worth knowing are those who've had at least one dark night of the soul."

I certainly would not eliminate people on this standard, but I would venture to say that I relate to people who have had their dark night of the soul more than those who have not been there. Probably because I have been there as well. Perhaps more than I would prefer, but some things you don't get to choose...and these are the times that shape you into the person you are to become...maybe even the person you are meant to be.

Jodi says

Kristen Johnston has written a candidly open and honest book about her triumph over addiction. I was in awe as I read the events that compounded on her psyche until her only escape became drugs and alcohol. I knew Kristen had a story to tell but wasn't prepared for the emotion that jumped from the page in the laying bare of her life. I found myself wanting to be Kristen's protector, ass-kicker and biggest supporter at various times throughout the book.

Within the pages of "GUTS" Kristen regales us with her now famous sharp tongued wit as she retells the story of coming-of-age as an "outsider" in school, to finding her outlet in comedic acting. She shares the torment and bullying that unfortunately has become a rite of passage in most of our educational institutions.

When Kristen outlines the course of her addiction to drugs and alcohol, I, being someone who is at best addicted to coffee and a great pair of shoes, had absolutely no idea how quickly something that starts out as a social drink can become a puddle of quicksand that can drag you in over your head with nothing to hold onto.

To say Kristen had a fall from grace would be crass. To have lived through what could have been the end of her life, and frankly our loss, and surface on the other side determined to break her addictions and claim back her life is nothing short of a triumph. She doesn't candy coat the process or make it movie of the week pg rated. She tells it like it is making no apologies and owning up to her mistakes.

Kristen has actually written this book. She hasn't stood behind the shoulders of a ghost-writer watching them do all the work and taking the credit. She dug in her heals and pulled every detail from her GUTS good and bad. I have to say the woman has balls of steel and I applaud her for writing a book that anyone who addiction has touched needs to read.

Bobbieshiann says

3.5

"My loss of ambition quickly morphed into an all-consuming depression, and as anyone can tell you, depression and addiction absolutely adore each other. Just when my depression became too difficult for me

to battle alone, I discovered, purely by chance, that narcotics made everything much better, for about four hours. Of course, the problem with "treating" depression with drugs or alcohol is that your sorrow then simply becomes one hard ball of need. So instead of being depressed, you're simply a sobbing loser who counts pills or constantly vomits on your friends' laps. You've become a poor imitation of someone being alive. But, hey, it's better than being depressed! Isn't it?"

I will be honest, this book is not funny at all. I know Kristen has humor to her, but there was no laughter from me. The beginning is a bit disinteresting and I found myself wanting to stop reading the entire book. Good thing I did not. Kristen story is not your regular tell play by play of her addiction. She rehashes where it all started and how her insecurities overtook her life. Her need to please others and to come off so independent that she did not need help, when in fact, she did. Her fight alone is rewarding in the end as you see her start to find self-love and understanding.

Brian Gryphon says

An incredibly easy read about something serious- and not just the "guts" incident referred to in the title. There are plenty of biographies and memoirs that reveal the tragic life of an addict, or else the stupendous strength of will of someone who beat their addiction(s). This is neither; Kristen provides neither easy solutions nor dire warnings as she shares her story. Instead she reveals the humour and drama that is life.

I guess if you want your addicts to be movie-style heroes or purveyors of melodrama, if you think that remorse and wearing sackcloth and ashes is the only dignified response, this might not be for you. A more personal response to the book is at my blog: <http://briangryphon.com/index.php/201...>

Jeff says

Just read the book. Once you do, you will want to read it again. Maybe not right away, but eventually and you will be glad you I usually don't like celebrity biographies. They tend to either be all about an over-privileged, under-deserving childhood, or they go the "bet you didn't know what a mess I really am route." This book is just very real, and funny, and sad, and hopeful without being a bipolar piece of crap designed to wring every emotion out of you. This isn't a new perspective on addiction, but it is a relatable one which makes it that much better. People can look at it and see themselves making the same choices in those situations. For those of us in recovery it's a great read because we really relate. Especially to the everyday experience of taking it 24 hour at a time. This lady is my hero!

kalica calliope? says

ah, how I love Kristen Johnston. such a sassy, snarky, Amazonian woman who can spew profanities and make the Scottish blush.

I am a fan of people/authors with a raw, somewhat brutal honesty with the slightest hint of self deprecating humor, who curse like sailors. Johnston hits every note.

the final chapter mentioning "silence equals death" was (in my opinion) the most prolific part of the entire novel. rather than simply writing her "war story" and ending with "and that's what happened, the end" she ACTUALLY encourages individuals to speak out. break the stigma around recovery, damn it. talk about it.

the funniest part of this whole thing is that before I read this; my older sister had talked about it. she is an certified LPC and LCDC and works at a women's rehab facility, and she mentioned that she actually had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Johnston during one of her tours, talking about her book at different rehabs in the states.

Jill says

First off, you have to buy the audio version. Kristen reads it, and her delivery is a treat.

Next, I would have given it 6 stars if I were allowed. This mighty, wee-sized book floored me. I couldn't believe how self-aware she was. For as fucked-up as she must have been (and admitted she was), Kristen recalls her ordeal and addiction with...what are the right words...charming, straight forward honesty? Not even that. This is why I was never a writer.

For everything she goes through when her guts blow up, I was laughing out loud (sometimes insanely) through the whole thing. When she talks about her sobriety "confession" during an anniversary in AA, I thought I might crash my car. She admits to stealing Vicodin from her Mom who was recovering from surgery; from her friend, from her DOG. Then she remarks, "at least they weren't beef flavored. That would be sad." And That's what I'm talking about.

But I can't do it justice in a review. Just listen to it. Then we can talk.

Darlene Vendegna says

I am not usually a fan of memoirs, but since I've been a fan of Kristen Johnston since she first sat in that little red car, looked down at her chest and screamed, I had to buy her book. She had me from her opening "thank you ever so much for buying my book." She writes as though we are having a conversation. Engaging, interesting and at many times laugh out loud funny. Parts of her story made me weep for her and for any kid who has felt 'other', which really is pretty much everyone deep down. Even though I don't personally battle the same demons of alchohol and Vicodin, her struggles spoke to me. I finished her book with a new understanding of myself and a deeper compassion for anyone struggling with addiction whether they recognize it yet or not. After reading the book I also purchased the audio version, which Kristen reads herself. Listening to her speak added a level of intimacy and humor to a story that was already ripe with intimacy and humor. It's a book I will read again and again.
