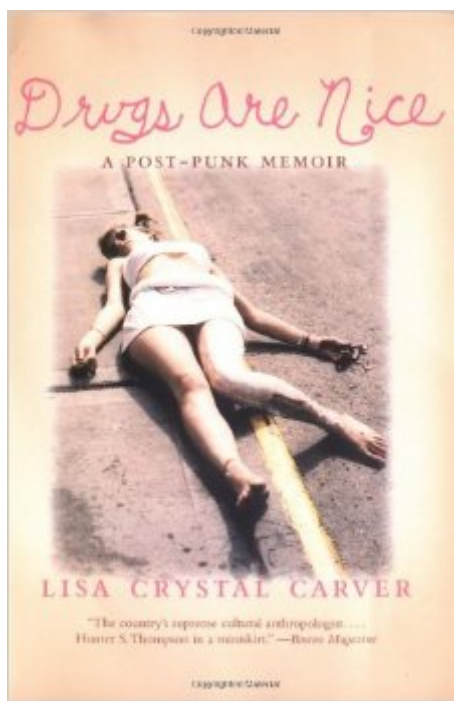


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Drugs Are Nice: A Post-Punk Memoir



Synopsis

In this eye-opening memoir, Lisa Crystal Carver recalls her extraordinary youth and charts the late-80s, early-90s punk subculture that she helped shape. She recounts how her band Suckdog was born in 1987 and the wild events that followed: leaving small-town New Hampshire to tour Europe at 18, becoming a teen publisher of fanzines, a teen bride, and a teen prostitute. Spin has called Suckdog's album *Drugs Are Nice* one of the best of the '90s, and the book includes photos of infamous European shows. Yet the book also tells of how Lisa saw the need for change in 1994, when her baby was born with a chromosomal deletion and his father became violent. With lasting lightness and surprising gravity, *Drugs Are Nice* is a definitive account of the generation that wanted to break every rule, but also a story of an artist and a mother becoming an adult on her own terms.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Oh, wait, am I not supposed to review my own book? Anyway, I don't love it. I hate it! I can't even look at it! But you could...

You know how sometimes a book is a friend? You ignore your family and your work and getting sleep because you've just met a brand new best friend? That's how nice the book *Drugs Are Nice* is. Are. Line after line after wow after whoa after no way, she lived this and came out of it funnier and smarter and even more able to distill beauty, dripping it in perfect drops across her uterus-wrenching prose? Seriously? Seriously. Lisa Carver makes me want to write, and every time she writes another book, it gets better, which means I have to get better, which means we all do.

There aren't that many drugs in this book - Lisa's whole way of thinking and living are the drug. Her writing, especially in her fabulous magazine *Rollerderby*, has always been intoxicating. When you drink it, you enter the secret twisted world just under the surface of the normal-seeming one, where everything is fascinating and sexy and on fire. In *Drugs Are Nice*, she takes that passion for exploring weirdness and turns it on herself, and you know it's going to be entertaining but it's also a serious and genuine study of an amazing life. From a uniquely messed-up relationship with her drug dealer father, to becoming the star of the underworld, to her nightmarish time with industrial musician Boyd Rice and having a child with serious health problems - every chapter of this book seems like the climax. Every chapter is full of characters too intriguingly warped to have been made up. It's the history of an underground movement, and the Boyd Rice part is a horror novel that you can't put down until the horrible end. But the best thing is that over the course of the book you are watching Lisa slowly become human, watching her come to understand what motivates her and develop a heart that can love. You end up quite moved as well as burst into flames.

Right after "Good Vibrations", a little song called "Pennyface" is my favorite song of all time. Every once in a while I hear it on a mix tape and think, "what ever happened to Lisa Suckdog"? I was in a bookstore yesterday when I saw some familiar words in pink lettering on this book's spine and was staggered with vague memories. Reading the copy on the back cover I was truly enticed and figured that for a few bucks it would be worth finding out "whatever happened". I guess she never really went away and has fascinated a bunch of people younger than I and this isn't even her first book. Nevertheless, in those great days before some loser named Kurt signed a big money contract, Lisa Carver was among a dingy pantheon of musicians (or whatever) who were truly fascinating, inspiring, and confounding to me. I would not have guessed however that reading a memoir about one of the dingiest in the pantheon - glorious Pennyface notwithstanding - would be so fascinating, inspiring and confounding as well. Her story is much more interesting than I would have guessed and she tells it with surprising eloquence and verve. Any time she writes about her father is particularly riveting. As for her life in the underground world... Those days... those days were incredibly fun and mysterious. But her book reminds me that they were also desperate - emotionally and fiscally - and perilous. The person who wrote this book 'got' at a young age that she could stare down the nightmare and come back for more just for the sheer aliveness of it all. And that aliveness is all we have.

This is a brilliantly written book that is probably too unique to be in the tradition of something like the LIARS' CLUB, yet is every bit as compelling. As Lisa finds her way amidst sociopathic parents and her own rather odd tendencies, she records unforgettable vignettes of the similarly and disimilarly deranged (i.e. Smog, Dame Darcy, Costes, Boyd Rice). She has a tendency to smash her life open like some nuclear physicist intent on studying the particles that fly out. The insights she gathers from these extremities are not merely flash powder. There is always relevance--however strange--amidst the huge amount of released energy. The below negative review dwells on scatological points that comprise maybe a page of the book. This review was written by one of Boyd Rice's friends (and in the spirit of full disclosure, I'm one of Lisa's). If you read the book, you'll understand why Boyd is a tad reluctant to be exposed in such a light. He is an interesting and magnetic man, yet like most gods and demigods, has clay feet that show here and there. Anton LaVey's odd family life is also sketched. Personally, I might have been a bit more entertained by/ forgiving of his foibles yet Lisa has high standards for conduct (in certain areas such as parenting) even amidst her own tendencies toward debauchery. Though I can see how such exposure might make one uncomfortable, isn't all publicity good publicity? Maybe not. Apparently, someone (or several someones) is (are) so mad about this book that Lisa and her publisher have been receiving threats. It's great publicity plus gives gainful employment to a certain ex-Navy seal. Ah, the drama. . . . Look for lots of negative reviews from Church of Satan people who probably haven't read the book.

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