



The Snake Has All the Lines

Jean Kerr

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A collection of humorous articles published between 1958 and 1960 by the author of *Please Don't Eat the Daisies*.

No ISBN; LCCN 60-13534

The Snake Has All the Lines Details

Date : Published 1960 by Doubleday

ISBN :

Author : Jean Kerr

Format : Hardcover 168 pages

Genre : Humor, Writing, Essays, Nonfiction, Autobiography, Memoir

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From Reader Review The Snake Has All the Lines for online ebook

Megan says

Laughed so hard I cried! Best book all year. Most amazing part she wrote it 50 years ago!

Emily says

Kerr has collected a series of columns written in 1958, '59, and '60 for various magazines such as Ladies Home Journal and McCall's. Her writing is humorous and deals with subjects of motherhood, being a playwright and consumerism.

Although I was not able to comprehend a lot of her pop culture references, I found this book entertaining and, for the most part, surprisingly relevant.

Betsy says

This was a fun group of essays, proving that life as a mother is much the same then as now.

Melissa Leatherwood says

This book is one that I read over and over again. A favorite of mine for sure. I love Jean Kerr and her writing style. She reminds me of Erma Bombeck but is even funnier than that. I laugh every time. A must read for every mother. It is guaranteed to make you laugh.

Alicia says

Funny and still quite on point 55 years later. These collections all repeat themselves, however, not much in the way of new essays.

Natalie says

I like the way you think, Jean Kerr.

Judy Baer kim says

Refreshing. Funny. Makes you want to read more books written during/about this era.

Sue says

Hilarious book! It's a series of essays covering Ms. Kerr's life as a wife, mother, and playwright. My favorite chapters were the ones with Humbert Humbert and Lolita appearing in a "Can This Marriage Be Saved?"-type article, (a feature that is still a part of Ladies Home Journal today); and "Out of Town With a Show", where Ms. Kerr describes what happens when a playwright goes on a try-out tour for a new show. True, there are some dated references, but the book is still funny --and fun to read.

Valerie says

This may or may not be the edition I have (mine has no dust cover). The edition I have is illustrated by Whitney Darrow, Jr.

I grant you, a lot of this stuff is very dated. It would be a public service if somebody would go through and publish a guide to the popular culture at the time. I don't think, for example, that I've ever seen more than about five minutes footage of June Allyson. (I even had to look up the spelling).

So I can't deliver on the companion volume of popular culture. But I CAN elaborate which essays are found in this book, with short elaboration. This will make it possible to figure out which of the essays are in Penny Candy, which I don't have a copy of, and another later book whose title I can't remember.

So here goes:

Notes and acknowledgements: which explains the title.

Chapter I: I was a sand crab: Not only explaining why Kerr never took her kids on an extended 'adventure' vacation, but also providing tips for those taking kids to the beach.

Chapter II: Letters of protest I never sent: But she probably should have. Though she represents such compositions as a cure for insomnia, some of them are badly needed.

Chapter III: Go, Josephine, in your flying machine: The author uses personal and anecdotal arguments to refute the statistics

Chapter IV: How to talk to a man: with various subcategories, such as 'when he's snoring'.

Chapter V: A child's garden of manners: Includes some dubious ones, like the obligation not to grab the tablecloth as you fall after tipping your chair back.

Chapter VI: As I was saying to Mrs Rockefeller (confessions of a status finder): This might be more entertaining if I'd read Vance Packard's The Status Seekers. Or not.

Chapter VII: Can this romance be saved?: It's not necessary to have read Lolita to understand this. Or the Ladies' Home Journal. But I didn't find it very funny. As I've said before, I don't care for this aspect of Kerr's work.

Chapter VIII: Tales out of school (the sandwich crisis): One of the reasons I've always liked Kerr is that she, (like me) is nocturnal. The description of the problems of making sandwiches at 1am is resonant)

Chapter IX: Out of town with a show (or what to do until the psychiatrist comes): Kerr was a fairly well-known playwright (often in collaboration with her husband). This essay contains a (fairly nonspecific) recipe for spam (the lunchmeat).

Chapter X: How to cope with bad notices: This actually deals with mildly bad, ambiguous, and even good reviews. Kerr points out that really bad notices are often a relief.

Chapter XI: The ten worst things about a man: Well, if those are the worst she's experienced, all I can say is that she's been a very lucky woman.

Chapter XII: Happy Motoring: A description of the ideal family car (and what one may have to settle for)

Chapter XIII: My Wild Irish Mother: Well, you'll just have to meet her. But, as you're unlikely to, this essay will have to do.

Chapter XIV: When I was Queen of May: Having known several very tall women, this is a familiar story to me. But to those who haven't known tall women, it's an introduction to another milieu.

Chapter XV: Mirror, mirror, on the wall (I don't want to hear one word out of you): A fairly succinct discussion of the unrealistic expectations of the cosmetics industry and other purveyors of 'beauty'.

Now I'll have to digest this, so that I can figure out what's in Penny Candy.

Julianne says

Amazing to believe this book was written 50 years ago. Though some of the cultural references don't "make sense", so far the humor is timeless!

Polly says

OK, to be honest, I finally gave up on this one. There were parts that were very entertaining, but most of it was hard to get through. The humor is very dated, and it's an old book. I did find the illustrations fun to look at.

Douglas Singer says

Jean Kerr's humor is very rich. She never seemed to be writing filler to get the page count up. Her imagination was too fertile for that. Laugh after laugh after laugh. Highly recommended reading.

Rowena says

Priceless!

Erik Graff says

This and her Please Don't Eat the Daisies were at Mother's parents' home in Oslo, Norway when we arrived there with my little brother for a summer visit. For want of anything better, I read both, as well as many back issues of The Readers Digest, before finding that some English books were available at the local library and at bookstores catering to tourists.

Megan Barnes says

As opposed to Christopher Buckley's Wry Martinis, which 10 years later is unreadable, Jean Kerr's books make me laugh 50 years after she wrote them. Her most famous book is probably Please Don't Eat the Daisies, which was more about being a mother. But Kerr was also a successful playwright, married to drama critic Walter Kerr, and this one is more about the theater.
