



Much to Your Chagrin: A Memoir of Embarrassment

Suzanne Guillette

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People who don't have embarrassing stories are untrustworthy. Or at the very least, they aren't telling the truth. -- Suzanne Guillette

By your own definition, you are very, very trustworthy. After all, you are the kind of person who spills pasta sauce down the shirt of a famous writer you're trying to impress. You are the girl who, when taking a new mentor out for a fancy lunch, forgets to bring cash -- or a backup credit card. You are almost thirty, an unemployed writer, recently un-engaged from your fiancé of several years, and in all your naiveté can't foresee that mixing the personal and the professional will bring you mortifyingly disastrous results.

You are Suzanne Guillette, the author of *Much to Your Chagrin*, a smart, hilarious memoir of how chronicling the humiliations of others helped her come to understand and accept herself.

Guillette was twenty-nine and the proud owner of a freshly inked MFA when she began to work on her first book -- a collection of embarrassing moments gathered from family, friends, coworkers, and strangers on the street. Stories poured in about every possible type of gaffe, from wardrobe malfunctions (widespread) to romantic misunderstandings (ditto), and from office faux pas (common) to bodily fluid mishaps (distressingly common). Everyone Guillette talked to was enthusiastic about her clever project -- and no one more so than Jack, the wry, handsome literary agent who Guillette thought might just be her soul mate.

But as time marched on, Guillette began to see that the tales she'd been gathering were nothing compared to her own moments of shame. Like her increasingly frequent need to sneak out of work (at a health agency, natch) for a "quick smoke" to settle her nerves. Or her stubborn ability to ignore the reality that her fairy-tale romance with Jack was imploding in a truly spectacular fashion. When Guillette accepted that the story she was meant to tell was not others' but her own, *Much to Your Chagrin* was born.

Told in a unique and captivating voice, punctuated by the embarrassing stories she collected, *Much to Your Chagrin* follows one woman's discovery of what it's like to finally feel comfortable in your own skin (even while accidentally exposing yourself to your elderly neighbors). Raw, honest, and brilliantly funny, it is an extremely personal memoir about the lengths to which we human beings sometimes go to conceal the parts of ourselves that we are least willing to admit are true. Forget the stuff we keep from the world -- it's what we hide from ourselves that is of greatest consequence.

What is *your* most embarrassing moment?

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