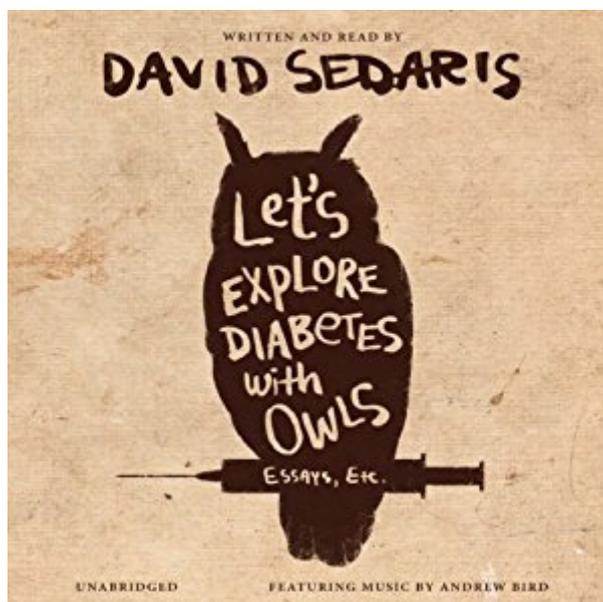


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# Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls



## Synopsis

Audie Award Finalist, Humor, 2014 From the unique perspective of David Sedaris comes a new collection of essays taking his listeners on a bizarre and stimulating world tour. From the perils of French dentistry to the eating habits of the Australian kookaburra, from the squat-style toilets of Beijing to the particular wilderness of a North Carolina Costco, we learn about the absurdity and delight of a curious traveler's experiences. Whether railing against the habits of litterers in the English countryside or marveling over a disembodied human arm in a taxidermist's shop, Sedaris takes us on side-splitting adventures that are not to be forgotten.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As one who considers David Sedaris as the leading American humorist of this era, I honestly wished I had liked this collection more. Not that it is bad - you will probably love many of these pieces - but it is, overall, rather disappointing. Sometimes, as a reviewer, I wonder if my take on a book is "off" (perhaps I was in a bad mood when reading the book) and check to see what professional reviewers have to say. I was relieved to see that most had the same attitude towards this book. None gave the book anywhere close to a gushing and glowing 5-star review (then again, they don't care that on gushing 5-star reviews usually receive the most 'helpful' votes - as opposed to some reviewers). It's been a long five years since David's last book of essays. This makes the new book more difficult to please: our expectations are so high, our desire to be amused so great, that anything less than terrific is disappointing. I certainly wouldn't say that this collection is terrific. Nor is it nearly as good as his previous essay collections. Some of the essays are, in fact, excellent,

but more than a few I felt were in the 'tortured-premise/contrived' category, and others were just bland. Let's get the lesser essays out of the way first. What Sedaris does best is observational humor - seeing the hilarity in the details in life. Topical humor is usually the purview of lesser writers: having a topical premise for humor and torturing it (spreading it out) over a ten-page essay. Sadly, Sedaris takes a current topic, same-sex marriage, throws in a redneck, and ... hilarity ensues. Not. It's a contrived piece. And several of the pieces are not essays but entirely fictional short stories.

It's been five years since David Sedaris released his last collection of essays, *When You Are Engulfed in Flames*. America's foremost humorist released *Squirrel Seeks Chipmunk: A Modest Bestiary* in 2010, which I really enjoyed, but I believe it's non-fiction where Sedaris really shines. His latest book, *Let's Explore Diabetes With Owls* takes us back to classic Sedaris, as the author takes on a trip around the world with him. I truly enjoyed this book. Although his self-deprecating stories are most effective at pointing out the absurdities in everyday life, and sometimes share similar formulas, it's a formula I find never gets old. To me, his writing is akin to curling up on the couch with your family in front of a large fire telling stories. It's comforting, familiar (in a good way), and full of belly laughs. This book continues the high quality of writing that I discovered over a decade ago with *Naked*. In one of my favorite stories from this book, Sedaris describes visiting a taxidermy shop in London, where he plans to buy a stuffed owl as a Valentine's Day present. Somehow he befriends the owner, who decides that David would be the type of person who would like to see what lies behind the curtain, that which the typical shoppers aren't allowed to see. Intrigued? Among the bizarre displays and specimens is a miniature human skeleton. What kind of human skeleton would be found here? I won't spoil the ending, but it's definitely not what you'd expect.

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