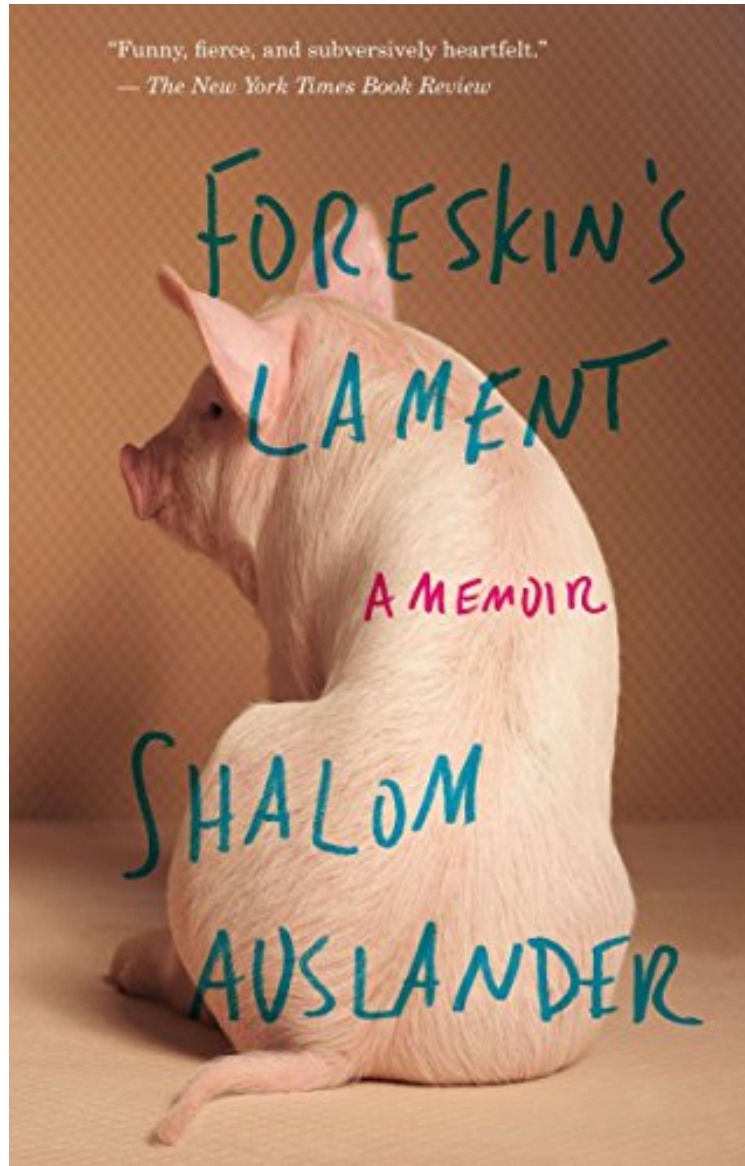


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Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir

Shalom Auslander

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Shalom Auslander : Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Foreskin's Lament: A Memoir:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. To skin or not to skin, that is the questionBy Jeffrey D. EhmannIf you've lived around or have been exposed to Orthodox Jews (when you live in the NY metro area, its hard not to), this book will relieve that some of their young boys are just like non-Jewish boys of that age. The love of girls, cars, porn

is and weed is universal across socio-economic and religious groups. The author's epiphany moment when faced with choosing to circumcise his new born Son also transcends religions as many of our generation wrestle with the decision to raise our children in the organized religion of our parents. I'm not knocking organized religion, however in some instances it comes with allot of baggage. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Liked the book, recommend for some...By Ita Sara I enjoyed reading this book-wasn't sure at first-but felt it was an interesting thought provoking book. I think it would be difficult for those who are not of the Jewish faith or who do not know the more orthodox traditions that some may find difficult to understand. Some of this was definitely fiction, but it is hard to know what what and what wasn't. Some of the explanations the protagonist said he learned from his orthodox education I was very unfamiliar with and found it hard to believe he would actually be taught certain things, but then it could have happened. On the other hand, the theme is about a dysfunctional family and a son who had to deal with this and deal with principles of faith that he did not accept- a very real situation today. This book is worthy of discussion with others. The book was well written but in places a little repetitive and lengthy. I read it on my phone. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I laughed, I cried, I (almost) wet my pants...By Hermine L. "Foreskin" was outstanding. There were days I sat in the garage listening to the CD instead of going in the house. Having had something of a similar upbringing (yeshiva, though nothing like "Black Hat," I certainly identified with Auslander's predicaments, though I can't say I took the same steps to deal with them. "The Blessing Bee" is a classic and his one-on-one battles with God (or G-d) are poignant, agonizing and hilarious, too. The author's narration works, too. First, I thought he was too flat, but his passions and predicaments more than came through. This was a most entertaining and wonderfully nostalgic read. Mike L. Deerfield IL

FROM THE CREATOR OF SHOWTIME'S "HAPPYISH" A New York Times Notable Book, and a "chaotic, laugh riot" (San Francisco Chronicle) of a memoir. Shalom Auslander was raised with a terrified respect for God. Even as he grew up and was estranged from his community, his religion and its traditions, he could not find the path to a life where he didn't struggle daily with the fear of God's formidable wrath. *Foreskin's Lament* reveals Auslander's "painfully, cripplingly, incurably, miserably religious" youth in a strict, socially isolated Orthodox Jewish community, and recounts his rebellion and efforts to make a new life apart from it. His combination of unrelenting humor and anger renders a rich and fascinating portrait of a man grappling with his faith and family.

From Publishers Weekly Auslander, a magazine writer, describes his Orthodox Jewish upbringing as theological abuse in this sardonic, twitchy memoir that waits for the other shoe to drop from on high. The title refers to his agitation over whether to circumcise his soon to be born son, yet another Jewish ritual stirring confusion and fear in his soul. Flitting haphazardly between expectant-father neuroses in Woodstock, N.Y., and childhood neuroses in Monsey, N.Y., Auslander labors mightily to channel Philip Roth with cutting, comically anxious spiels lamenting his claustrophobic house, off-kilter family and the temptations of all things nonkosher, from shiksas to Slim Jims. The irony of his name, Shalom (Hebrew for peace), isn't lost on him, a tormented soul gripped with dread, fending off an alcoholic, abusive father while imagining his heavenly one as a menacing, mocking, inescapable presence. Fond of tormenting himself with worst-case scenarios, he concludes, That would be so God. Like Roth's Portnoy, he commits minor acts of rebellion and awaits his punishment with youthful literal-mindedness. But this memoir is too wonky to engage the reader's sympathy or cut free Auslander's persona from the swath of stereotype—and he can't sublimate his rage into the cultural mischief that brightens Roth's oeuvre. That said, a surprisingly poignant ending awaits readers. (Oct.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Bookmarks Magazine Shalom Auslander, author of *Beware of God: Stories* (2005) and a contributor to *This American Life*, reveals his ambivalence about God through fear, black humor, and undirected anger. If *Foreskin's Lament* sounds like a terrible rage against God, it is, in parts, but it coalesces into a fascinating reflection on the role of faith and ritual in modern life. Most reviewers found Auslander's stories about his tormented life refreshing, moving, and humorous—for example, the story of his father building an ark for the synagogue, only to be ostracized, struck a high note. However, a few criticized Auslander's tendency to mask real anger and deep questions with comedy. Beneath the humor, however, lies a reflective memoir on religion's powerful hold—and why, sometimes, it's so hard to shake it off. Copyright © 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc. "Fierce, funny, and subversively heartfelt...With his middle finger pointed at the heavens and a hand held over his heart, Auslander gives us *Foreskin's Lament*. Mazel tov to him. And God? Well, he'll survive."—New York Times Book "Auslander writes like Philip Roth's angry nephew... a scathing theological rant, a funny, oddly moving coming-of-age memoir, and an irreverent meditation on family, marriage, and cultural identity. God may be a bit irritated by this book, but I loved it."—Tom Perrotta, author of *Little Children* and *The Abstinence Teacher* "A laugh-out-loud quarrel with God."—Newsweek "A terrific book I was sad I read in so few sittings, because I wanted more."—San Francisco Chronicle "Hilarious, caustic, and surprisingly moving."—Philadelphia Inquirer "Blasphemous and funny."—Newsweek "A surprise and delight."—Boston Globe "A fretful, self-effacing, bitter...hilarious story."—The Houston Chronicle "Wryly comic."—New York Magazine "Hilarious, caustic, and surprisingly moving."—Philadelphia Inquirer "A very funny

memoir.”—GQ“Lyrical, hysterical... funny and angry.”—Cleveland Plain Dealer“An audacious, poke-God-in-the eye memoir.”—Miami Herald