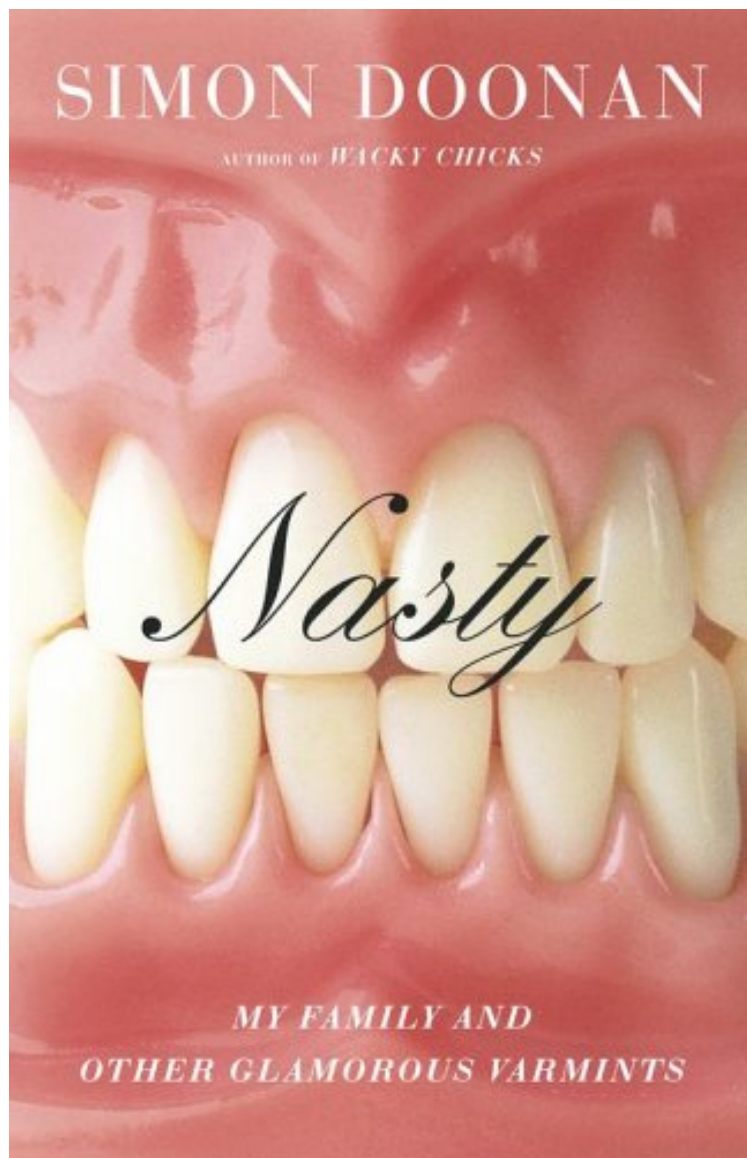


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## **Nasty: My Family and Other Glamorous Varmints**

*Simon Doonan*

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**Simon Doonan** : *Nasty: My Family and Other Glamorous Varmints* before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Nasty: My Family and Other Glamorous Varmints*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Quite a disappointmentBy Lightning BaltimoreMy husband and I loved the short-lived BBC series "Beautiful People," so it was with much excitement that I bought this book, upon which the series was based. Luckily for the TV show, it had a brilliant writer in Jonathan Harvey, who somehow

managed to take a rather pedestrian and not particularly funny book and transform it into a hilarious, yet very human and touching, series. As for this book, well, I got one mild chuckle while reading it. Seriously. One. Single. Chuckle. The writing style is mundane, the constant use of French is annoying, the numerous photographs are often given no context, and there is almost no narrative flow. These tales of Doonan's youth are presented in a very slapdash, seemingly random order. I have no problem with non-linear storytelling, but here it just feels lazy and scattershot. It's like a long conversation about constantly changing topics that all of a sudden just . . . ends. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great, great, fun summer read By Joe Bua The tags that the review page recommends say it all. This is a fabulously funny memoir, by a man who I didn't even know could write. You've seen Simon Doonan on many VH1 shows talking about pop culture through the ages. This book lets you in on how Simon became who he is, who and what influenced him including his wonderful mom Betty and father Terry, his sis, Narg (Gran backwards) and Biddie (Biddie, oh Biddie I think you're just grand) Simon's childhood into adulthood pal. Think of Nasty as a very rich meal that you savor over as much a period of time as you can for something that reads so easily. And, coming soon, a BBC series based on this book produced by Jon Plowman (AbFab, Little Britain). You'll love this. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. My kind of humor By Jody Kaylor His true story told with brilliant humor. I love to read whatever Simon Doonan is writing and since it involves another country and the adventure of moving to the U.S., all the better.

Proving his savoury wit and saucy prose in two previous books, Simon Doonan has established himself as one of today's most dazzling literary humorists. Now, in his breakthrough memoir, the writer whom Liz Smith calls 'the brashest and most brilliant thing in type' revisits his formative years and the defiantly eccentric, loveably odd family he calls his own. Long before he became a celebrity - as a social commentator on VH1 and as the marketing genius behind Barney's New York - Simon Doonan was a 'scabby kneed troll' mired in Reading. The essays in NASTY chronicle the misadventures of the Doonan clan in all their endearingly dysfunctional glory. Readers meet his mum Betty, whose gravity-defying, peroxide-yellow hairdo proudly announced to the world her innate sense of glamour; father Terry, an amateur vintner who transforms parsnips into the legendary Chateau Doonan; grandfather D.C., a betting man who plots to win his fortune by turning Simon into a jockey; and other assorted relatives exhibiting varying degrees of sanity. Fearing he will contract a genetically transmitted insanity bug, Doonan decamps with his flamboyant best friend Biddie to London, where he hopes to establish himself among the Beautiful People, those elusive creatures who luxuriate on floor pillows and amuse each other with bon mots. Throughout his memoir, Doonan continues his bumbling pursuit of the fabulous life, only to learn, in the end that perhaps the Beautiful People were the ones he left behind.

From Publishers Weekly "Nastiness is rich. Nastiness is fun." And in this colorful memoir, nasty is also quite enjoyable. Doonan (Wacky Chicks), creative director of Barney's New York, was raised in the industrial wasteland of 1950s and '60s Reading, England. He craved glamour and excitement; what he had instead were two cheeky working-class parents: the fabulous Betty, who sported peroxide-yellow hair and spike heels; and Terry, who embraced amateur wine-making with near-religious fervor. After all, in an "extended family of assorted lodgers and mentally ill relatives," alcohol helped. "It was all quite nasty," Doonan explains, so he and his drag performer friend Biddie headed to London in search of the Beautiful People. Instead, they found crazy characters and lowly prostitutes, people Doonan recalls with unabashed glee. Armed with a relentless joie de vivre, Doonan takes readers on a breezy joyride through his life, focusing less on his career trajectory than on his kooky formative years. Humor is his ultimate weapon, and whether Doonan's in Los Angeles getting arrested in Vivienne Westwood plaid bondage trousers or coping with a gay-bashing policeman in Blackpool, he keeps his comic cool. This endearing book pays tribute to a madcap childhood and the power of familial love. Photos. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist The author of the hilariously fey Wacky Chicks (2003) fields another winner, recounting his pre-celebrity life among a nest of relatives who were unconventional at best, dubiously linked to sanity at worst. This eccentric British household included unorthodox, homemade wines (concocted from potato peelings and parsnips); a mother with towering, peroxidized hair and a tendency to overimbibe those vintages; a butch sister self-denominated Jim; and Narg, a certifiable nutcase granny. Young Simon yearns for life away from the Midlands, in London among the beautiful people. After time there with good friend Biddie--during which he endures poverty; banging, gurgling plumbing; and an earsplitting prostitute neighbor--and years at university, struggling to develop a gay identity, Simon repairs to America at 27, only to be arrested by Tom-of-Finland-ish police while wearing "plaid bondage trousers." Not to worry; he becomes a literary wit and raconteur whose latest will draw and amuse many. Whitney Scott Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved "That Simon Doonan is a writer with a flair for the clever aphorism and a trenchant wit is no surprise. But that he is also capable of telling a tremendously moving tale is something of a revelation. It's all here: the inexorable bonds of family; Swinging London in all its Rita Tushingham glory; the calamities of AIDS..." "Nasty" is a book for anyone who has ever yearned to transcend their own beginnings. In other words, if you were ever younger than you are now, you must read this book." -- David Rakoff, author of

"Fraud"