



Disaster Preparedness: A Memoir

Heather Havrilesky

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A perceptive, witty memoir about the transformative humiliations of childhood-and adulthood-from a unique, already-beloved voice.

When Heather Havrilesky was a kid during the '70s, harrowing disaster films dominated every movie screen with earthquakes that destroyed huge cities, airplanes that plummeted towards the ground and giant sharks that ripped teenagers to shreds. Between her parents' dramatic clashes and her older siblings' hazing, Heather's home life sometimes mirrored the chaos onscreen.

A thoughtful, funny memoir about surviving the real and imagined perils of childhood and early adulthood, *Disaster Preparedness* charts how the most humiliating and painful moments in Havrilesky's past forced her to develop a wide range of defense mechanisms, some adaptive, some piteously ill-suited to modern life. From premature boxing lessons to the competitive grooming of cheerleading camp, from her parents' divorce to her father's sudden death, Havrilesky explores a path from innocence and optimism to self-protection and caution, bravely reexamining the injuries that shaped her, the lessons that sunk in along the way, and the insights that carried her through.

By laying bare her bumps and bruises, Havrilesky offers hope that we can find a frazzled and unruly, desperate and wistful, restless and funny and frayed-at-the-edges way of staring disaster in the face, and even rising to meet it head on. By turns offbeat, sophisticated, uproarious and wise, *Disaster Preparedness* is a road map to the personal disasters we all face from an irresistible voice that gets straight to the unexpected grace at the heart of every calamity.

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