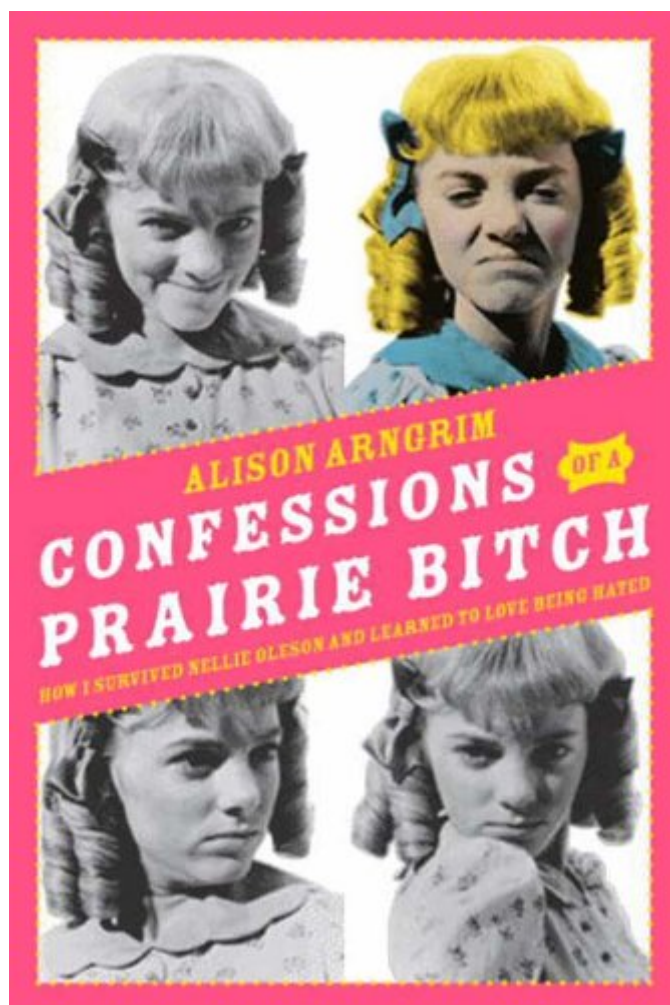


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Confessions Of A Prairie Bitch: How I Survived Nellie Oleson And Learned To Love Being Hated



Synopsis

Confessions of a Prairie Bitch is Alison Arngrim's comic memoir of growing up as one of television's most memorable characters—the devious Nellie Oleson on the hit television show Little House on the Prairie. With behind-the-scenes stories from the set, as well as tales from her bohemian upbringing in West Hollywood and her headline-making advocacy work on behalf of HIV awareness and abused children, Confessions of a Prairie Bitch is a must for fans of everything Little House: the classic television series and its many stars like Michael Landon and Melissa Gilbert; Gilbert's bestselling memoir Prairie Tale... and, of course, the beloved series of books by Laura Ingalls Wilder that started it all.

Book Information

File Size: 3143 KB

Print Length: 331 pages

Publisher: HarperCollins e-books; Reprint edition (June 8, 2010)

Publication Date: June 15, 2010

Sold by: Amazon Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B003L77ZVQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #88,891 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #20 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Humor & Entertainment > Television > History & Criticism #74 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Leaders & Notable People > Social Activists #83 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Television > History & Criticism

Customer Reviews

As with many, I went through the list of 'Prairie' books as they were released. As a reader, I do not necessarily look to 'relate' to the author's life, because we are all clearly different, even though I have spent my life in the entertainment business and my work is still in it. What I do look for is the author's honesty in the details they do choose to share. I also like it if the author realizes that not all their readers have shared in their experiences. It is almost like wanting my doctor to talk to me in

terms I can understand and relate, rather than in medical jargon. And even me having been in the business for most of my life, I can still read an actor's autobiography and go: "What in the world is he or she talking about?!" First came Gilbert's 'Prairie Tale.' I liked the book, but the author failed to realize that her readers are, for the most part, completely removed from her reality. She relates to the reader as a 'peer,' failing to realize that they will mostly have little clue as to what it is like to be in her shoes (i.e. not everyone can run up to Montreal to find out what their boyfriends are up to). Many readers will also like to know what was it like 'being' in the Little House ambience. Gilbert goes through her Little House years rather fast, so if you blink, you may miss it. This is understandable, because she grew up there, so it became, for her, daily routine, but her audience may be wanting a bit more since this was not their routine, and may be hungry to know more. And it seemed that her book was more a therapeutic catharsis rather than sharing one on one with her readers. Again, understandably so, and the approach she chose, so I took it as that and went with it.

This was the third attempt for me to return to the vintage "Little House on the Prairie". The first was by Half-Pint herself, in *Prairie Tale: A Memoir*. Her Little House days are recounted but by far, the majority of the tome is dedicated to her pill-popping and wild Hollywood life after the show. Then came the truly hideous *The Way I See It: A Look Back at My Life on Little House* which half the book is merely episode recaps (really). So, I hoped upon hope that my third attempt to visit Walnut Grove in a book would be beneficial. Thankfully, the bully of the prairie has come through, and has given us a remarkable memoir in "*Confessions of a Prairie Bitch: How I Survived Nellie Oleson and Learned to Love Being Hated*". Alison's memoir is a doozy. First, you get an inside glimpse into the making of the show, starting with a blow-by-blow account of how she got the role that would define her as an actress, the incomparable Nellie Oleson. One of the most surprisingly delightful recounts are the hours she spent in the hair and makeup rooms donning that truly hideous Nellie wig. Her insights into her costars are witty, slightly sarcastic, and eye-opening. Her friendship with Melissa Gilbert really make the chapters fun and she reserves some venom for Melissa Sue Anderson, who played Mary. There is plenty of dish on the people in the show, all in good fun and none of it comes across as nasty.

While I watched Little House a few times as a kid, I didn't become a big fan until recently when I re-read the books from childhood and bought the boxed set when it was on sale at B&N. As a child, Nellie scared the daylights out of me - mostly because I was bullied a lot in school and she reminded me of those mean girls. As an adult, I kind of loved her brazen bitchy style. While she was

annoying, she was pretty damn smart. I did like how she grew up though and was sad to see her leave the show (but was thrilled when she came back for visits). Since I read "Prairie Tale" suggested that I may want to preorder Confessions of a Prairie Bitch... and I did, immediately. It sounded like a much more enjoyable read than the former book. While I liked Prairie Tale okay I didn't relate much to Melissa at all. I didn't grow up rich. I didn't have a seemingly great family. I didn't drink until I was 21. I never rebelled. So while her story was interesting to me, I couldn't really relate. It was also told in more of a dramatic sad fashion, than in the dark-humor fashion that I greatly prefer and understand. I got Confessions the day it was release and it killed me to have to finish my book I was reading before I could delve into it (I'm anal like that). I kept looking at the cover just KNOWING a great story lied beneath it's pink pop art cover. While you can't always judge a book by its cover, this one is exactly what its cover depicts - sassy, spunky, edgy and hilarious. While I didn't have a gay father, I had a similar abusive relationship with my older brother so from the early stages of this book I felt like Alison was a kindred spirit. It's rare to meet someone that has and appreciates dark humor and isn't weirded out by it.

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