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PROPOSAL FOR CREATIVE THESIS

SATURN RETURNS:  
MY IMPENDING ADULthood

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SATURN RETURNS: MY IMPENDING ADULthood is a 200 page collection of personal essays, each of which serves as a lens through which the “adult” world is examined, admired, feared, misunderstood and judged as the narrator travels through her twenties. This book explores the complex struggle the narrator has as she works to accept that she must grow up, despite nearly three decades of persistent resistance.

The further removed from childhood the narrator grows, the more she clings to the aspects of her youth she fears she’ll lose when she resigns to enter the adult world—a world she believes is as foreign and stifling as it is terrifying.

The term “Saturn Return” is an astronomical occurrence in which the sixth planet returns to the exact spot it was when the individual was born. The first time this happens, the individual is approximately twenty-eight years old and has presumably made it through the quarter life crisis (which generally occurs several years beforehand). This transitional process often entails feeling doubt, confusion, and insecurity, and spurs examination of the projected path of development. It is generally seen as a period of unrest and maturation, and is viewed by many as the true beginning of adulthood.

Most of the essays in this collection analyze the portion of the narrator’s life beginning with the build-up to her quarter life crisis and ending with the return of Saturn. The turmoil she experiences during this transitional period causes her to revisit several occurrences from her younger life, which she attempts to contextualize and understand within the framework of her current struggle. Everything from getting a tattoo to going to the dentist to being lied to by her second-grade teacher is examined.

SATURN RETURNS illustrates the specific ways in which innocence can be incrementally lost, while at the same time celebrating the ways in which portions of this innocence can be preserved and appreciated. The essays in this collection show the narrator struggling to apply the insights her struggles have afforded her into forming a new, more informed understanding of the world and of herself.

In the title essay of the book, the speaker examines a specific instance in which her quarter life crisis has bled over into the seams of her daily routine and has affected her job, her studies and her social life. This low-point in her life frames the book and prepares the reader for the other essays, which chronicle how she arrived at this point and where she will go from there.

Because the genre of creative nonfiction is as broad and varied as the subjects it attempts to examine, the essays in this book draw tonally and linguistically from works in several veins; the variety of subjects explored in Meghan Daum's *My Misspent Youth*, the bareness of Joan Didion's *Slouching Toward Bethlehem* and the relentless humor in David Sedaris' *Me Talk Pretty one Day*. The tone of the essays in SATURN RETURNS varies according to the subject-matter: from humorous and light to self-deprecating and self-accusatory.

Because the phenomena of Saturn Return is experienced by everyone as part of the aging process, this book aspires to serve as a guide to the demographic of twenty-something readers whose struggles are often ill-represented or ignored by the literary world.