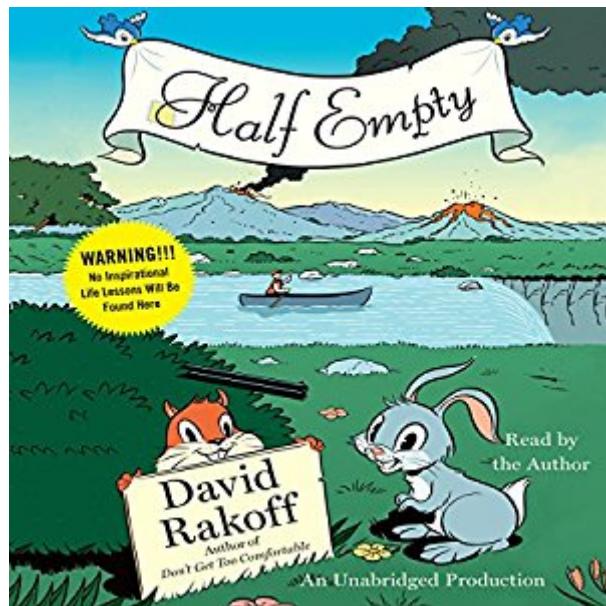


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# Half Empty



## Synopsis

The inimitably witty David Rakoff, New York Times best-selling author of *Don't Get Too Comfortable*, defends the commonsensical notion that you should always assume the worst, because you'll never be disappointed. In this deeply funny (and, no kidding, wise and poignant) book, Rakoff examines the realities of our sunny, gosh- everyone-can-be-a-star contemporary culture and finds that, pretty much as a universal rule, the best is not yet to come, adversity will triumph, justice will not be served, and your dreams won't come true. The book ranges from the personal to the universal, combining stories from Rakoff's reporting and accounts of his own experiences: the moment when being a tiny child no longer meant adults found him charming but instead meant other children found him a fun target; the perfect late evening in Manhattan when he was young and the city seemed to brim with such possibility that the street shimmered in the moonlight-as he drew closer he realized the streets actually flickered with rats in a feeding frenzy. He also weaves in his usual brand Oscar Wilde-worthy cultural criticism (the tragedy of Hollywood's Walk of Fame, for instance). Whether he's lacerating the musical *Rent* for its cutesy depiction of AIDS or dealing with personal tragedy, his sharp observations and humorist's flair for the absurd will have you positively reveling in the power of negativity.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 6 hours and 49 minutes

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Version: Unabridged

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

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Best Sellers Rank: #57 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Humor > Essays #86 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Nonfiction > Philosophy #165 in Books > Humor & Entertainment > Humor > Essays

## Customer Reviews

David Rakoff sadly isn't with us anymore and what he's left behind is not only a window into his own life, but a collection of stories that everyone can relate too. This book aptly titled "Half Empty", is

about pessimism and how it affects the author. Each "chapter" is a new story and each is better than the last. I believe during the time he was writing this he was also battling cancer, which amazes me because if this is supposed to be a pessimistic book, him not quitting and pushing on is a clear tale of giving it your best and this just might be his best work.

Despite the fact that David Rakoff is a wonderful writer of darkly funny essays about a wide variety of topics; this collection was not the best of the three published so far. The first half of the book induces feelings of *deja-vu* and has a dated feel to it. How relevant is a trip to Disney to visit a house of the future? How relevant is an essay on Jewish people who love to eat pork and shellfish? In light of current events; not very meaningful, insightful or even interesting. The numerous asides included, though meant to engage the reader, are actually annoying. Until the subject of his own illness is broached there is not much to recommend here. Perhaps there is truth in advertising though because of the clever disclaimer that appears on the cartoonish cover art.

I recently discovered Rakoff's books and articles and I can't get enough. He is fabulous, and I am terribly sad to learn he passed away much too young. Rest in peace, and thanks for such amazing contributions.

only vaguely recall,,, I am so impressed by the ease with which David details such variant topics, each an intriguing surprise.

I love the essays of David Rakoff, partially because having heard him numerous times on the radio, I can hear his voice when I read them, which is an added pleasure. I like his mix of pathos and dark humor. He's a very smart writer and a shrewd observer. I get a little sad when I think about the fact that he's gone. But these essays are great.

I became a fan of David Rakoff's after his death when Terry Gross on NPR's Fresh Air played an interview she had with him some time before his last illness. He had already been diagnosed with the Ca which would ultimately kill him. His attitude was most impressive. What a sad loss.

This is like having a very rich dessert. Small bites; enjoy the long and descriptive sentences that create a rich visual. I am an auditory person, and I get much more when I read it as though I was listening to one of my favorite programs, "This American Life". Sarcasm, insights----try it!!

I read it slowly because there won't be any more delightful stories and insights from this masterful writer.

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