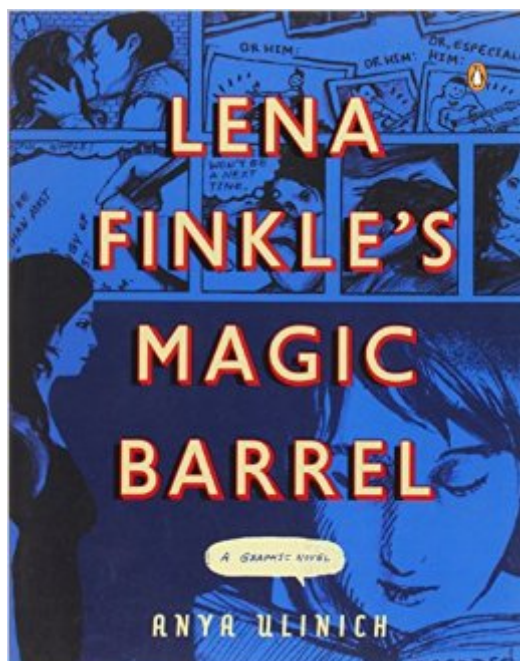


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Lena Finkle's Magic Barrel: A Graphic Novel



Synopsis

A New York Times Notable Book Funny, painful, outrageous . . . Anya Ulinich is the David Sedaris of Russian-American cartoonists. "Gary Shteyngart Anya Ulinich turns her sharp eye toward the strange, often unmooring world of a grown-up dating in this darkly comic graphic novel. After her fifteen-year marriage ends, Lena Finkle gets an eye-opening education in love, sex, and loss when she embarks on a string of online dates, all while raising her two teenage daughters. The Vampire of Bensonhurst, the Orphan, Disaster Man, and the Diamond Psychiatrist are just a few of the unforgettable characters she meets along the way. Evoking Louis C. K.'s humor and Amy Winehouse's longing and anguish, and paying homage to Malamud and Chekhov, Lena Finkle's Magic Barrel is a funny and moving story, beautifully told.

Book Information

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Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (26 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Lena Finkle's is the autobiographic memoir of writer and graphic artist Anya Ulinich. A priori, the story of a divorced mother of two, late 30s, coming back into the dating world sounds too mundane or uncool to be the subject of a graphic novel. However, Ulinich's alter ego Lena Finkle is not your usual woman. It is Ulinich's multifaceted personality and self, her honesty about who she is, and the way she narrates the story what makes the book the interesting entertaining story it is. The book is engaging and entertaining. This is a book for adults as there are nudity, sex scenes and adult themes in it. The story is far from linear because Lena's adventures in dating, which are pathetic-kind-funny and very entertaining for the reader, are accompanied by flashbacks of her

past childhood and teens ages in Russia and her first years as immigrant in America, conversations with her mother, best friends and lovers. Ulinich is both a graphic artist and a writer, so this graphic memoir is as much visual as it is readable, with much more words than most graphic novels. I found fascinating the way she incorporates long two-people conversations into an image (even with her alternative thoughts while talking!), with a sort of puzzle-ish compound of bubbles that adjust cosily to each other. Regarding the illustration system, Ulinich alternates very realistic virtuoso drawing with childish caricature-ish drawing when she speaks of her childhood and teens in Russia. I love the graphic depiction of her anxiety after the final episode with The Orphan, which is just brilliant. Ulinich is very honest about who she is, how she feels, and how she approaches reality, relationships, love, sex, immigration, gender roles, and Jewish and national identity.

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