



Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life: Or How I Learned to Love the House, the Man, the Child

Faulkner Fox

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When Salon.com published Faulkner Fox's article on motherhood, "What I Learned from Losing My Mind," the response was so overwhelming that Salon reran the piece twice. The experience made Faulkner realize that she was not alone—that the country is full of women who are anxious and conflicted about their roles as mothers and wives.

In *Dispatches from a Not-So-Perfect Life*, her provocative, brutally honest, and often hilarious memoir of motherhood, Faulkner explores the causes of her unhappiness, as well as the societal and cultural forces that American mothers have to contend with. From the time of her first pregnancy, Faulkner found herself—and her body—scrutinized by doctors, friends, strangers, and, perhaps most of all, herself. In addition to the significant social pressures of raising the perfect child and being the perfect mom, Faulkner also found herself increasingly incensed by the unequal distribution of household labor and infuriated by the gender inequity in both her home and others'. And though she loves her children and her husband passionately, is thankful for her bountiful middle-class life, and feels wracked with guilt for being unhappy, she just can't seem to experience the sense of satisfaction that she thought would come with the package. She's finally got it all—the husband, the house, the kids, an interesting part-time job, even a few hours a week to write—so why does she feel so conflicted?

Faulkner sheds light on the fear, confusion, and isolation experienced by many new mothers, mapping the terrain of contemporary domesticity, marriage, and motherhood in a voice that is candid, irreverent, and deeply personal, while always chronicling the unparalleled joy she and other mothers take in their children.

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