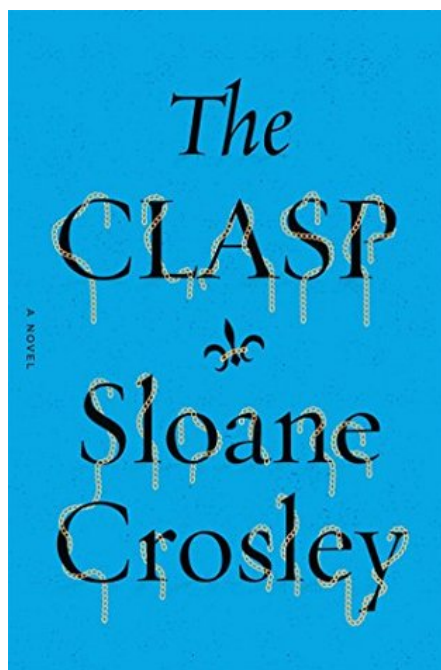




The Clasp

Sloane Crosley

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Clasp

Sloane Crosley

The Clasp Sloane Crosley

Part comedy of manners, part treasure hunt, the first novel from the writer whom David Sedaris calls "perfectly, relentlessly funny"

Named a Hot Fall Read by Huffington Post, Harper's Bazaar, Vanity Fair, The Chicago Tribune, BuzzFeed, Library Journal, Hello Giggles, Bustle and TIME

Kezia, Nathaniel, and Victor are reunited for the extravagant wedding of a college friend. Now at the tail end of their twenties, they arrive completely absorbed in their own lives--Kezia the second-in-command to a madwoman jewelry designer in Manhattan; Nathaniel the former literary cool kid, selling his wares in Hollywood; and the Eeyore-esque Victor, just fired from a middling search engine. They soon slip back into old roles: Victor loves Kezia. Kezia loves Nathaniel. Nathaniel loves Nathaniel.

In the midst of all this semi-merriment, Victor passes out in the mother of the groom's bedroom. He wakes to her jovially slapping him across the face. Instead of a scolding, she offers Victor a story she's never even told her son, about a valuable necklace that disappeared during the Nazi occupation of France.

And so a madcap adventure is set into motion, one that leads Victor, Kezia, and Nathaniel from Miami to New York and L.A. to Paris and across France, until they converge at the estate of Guy de Maupassant, author of the classic short story "The Necklace."

Heartfelt, suspenseful, and told with Sloane Crosley's inimitable spark and wit, *The Clasp* is a story of friends struggling to fit together now that their lives haven't gone as planned, of how to separate the real from the fake. Such a task might be possible when it comes to precious stones, but is far more difficult to pull off with humans.

The Clasp Details

Date : Published October 6th 2015 by Farrar, Straus and Giroux

ISBN :

Author : Sloane Crosley

Format : Kindle Edition 385 pages

Genre : Fiction, Contemporary, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Abandoned



[Download The Clasp ...pdf](#)



[Read Online The Clasp ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Clasp Sloane Crosley

From Reader Review The Clasp for online ebook

Clare says

I love her essays/humor, and after this novel I think she should stick to that. It was lifeless and trite and I cared very little about her characters. The only pleasing parts were when her wry and quick humor showed through. I won't be recommending it, unlike *I Was Told There Would Be Cake* (which was wonderful).

Teresa says

Abandoned after over 100 pages. Self absorbed almost 30 somethings attending a college friend's wedding with snide, sexually graphic content. Mother-in-law's story about the missing necklace is the first time I was interested in possibly continuing, but then the content goes back to the former trend. Not for me and didn't want to read further.

New category needed - post college coming-of-age?

Erin says

Crosley's writing is the gem of this novel with her constant wit that had me laughing out loud (which isn't an easy fete with me). As someone in her late twenties, I found the main characters relatable and sympathetic in their own, individual ways, as they reflect this time in our lives when we begin to question our self-purpose and what people we choose to remain in touch with from our younger years. The plot does drag at times, but the writing is so beautiful and spot on that I kept turning the page. I'm excited to see what Crosley has in store for her second novel.

Meg says

It had potential but some plot lines seemed a bit rushed or not fully flushed out to me. I didn't love how the book ended, there wasn't enough resolution with multiple characters' development.

Jenna says

A central plot device/metaphor in this book involves an over-the-top costume jewelry necklace ("the Starlite Express") whose magnetic clasp is not up to the task of supporting the overly extravagant and weighted, rough-edged, unprocessed ornaments the necklace's iconoclastic, self-centered designer insists on hanging upon it. The dreamy necklace thus sheds, rejects, its wearer.

Similarly, the designer insists on using cloisonné -- (please bear with me on the QVC jewelry show talk here) -- insists on incorporating cloisonné into the necklace in a manner in which it is not intended to be used. Cloisonné is one of those things you'd recognize if you see it. Basically, it involves pouring brightly colored enamels into an ornate, usually flowery setting, where they harden and set into a beautiful and durable

pattern. However, this young diva designer insists on pouring the enamels into an unstable, essentially warped base. Hence, the usually durable and beautiful cloisonné ornamentation cracks and flakes away, leaving behind a mere unfinished "color by numbers" outline, as one character describes it. Essentially, the necklace resets itself, catalyzes a kind of do-over or forced restart.

How does all these jewelry and necklace imagery work as metaphors for conveying essential identity conflicts that arise when one's emerging adult self reveals itself as somehow incompatible with all the fanciful dreams with which one has been freighted since idealistic and inexperienced youth? Very well, I think, in the case of this book- at least a 3.5 star degree of well.

Now, I'm not a jewelry person. With the exception of two significant rings, the only ornaments I ever wear are necklaces and bracelets from the fair trade store, which are usually made out of recycled bottle caps or bike chains or plastic grocery bags or something. And when they break, as they inevitably must, it never generates in me the desire to engage in deep postmodern musings about the palimpsest and the simulacra and whatnot. I usually just chalk it up to, what can I expect when I'm unwilling to ever pay more than twelve dollars for some trinket? So, imagine my surprise to find myself so very engaged by Crosley's novel, which uses not only jewelry-making and jewelry and necklaces as motifs for conveying meaning, but is also structured around and based off yet another literary work also "about" jewelry and necklaces: specifically, Guy de Maupassant's "THE Necklace" (emphasis mine), a story which also functions as a central plot device in the novel. Yet - perhaps like a repaired V.2 of the Starlite Express necklace - somehow all this unlikely mish-mash works.

I read the second half of this during arduous travel that involved questing for something in a way, and this worked out extremely well, since the latter 50% of the book involves a kind of European scavenger hunt/road trip/Amazing Race kind of scenario.

This portion of the novel also functions as a kind of Bildungsroman, or whatever that genre might be called in our modern era, when very-late-blooming is oh so common. And so, our questing young (but not that young) adult protagonists, experiencing different degrees of unsuccess in their professional fields and in search of maturation and self actualization, are, as they themselves admit, several solid years too old anymore to chalk up their developmental delays and lost-ness to a quarterlife crisis. Nor, with our longer lifespans, are they yet safely within the broad realm of what could be termed a midlife crisis. There would need to be some new interim descriptive term for what they are going through, and the novel is concerned with exploring this limbo.

I'm aware Crosley is a successful humorist/essayist, and though I've never read any of her prior works, it seems to me that her talent in these areas must have helped her create a debut novel that avoids the mumblecore banality of your typical "privileged liberal arts college grads in postgrad crisis" work of fiction. Instead, Crosley is witty and deft enough to offer up something vaguely reminiscent of Mansfield Park, Northanger Abbey, Joseph Andrews, or Tom Jones. Like Fielding and Austen, Crosley has a bighearted and sympathetic "people who live in glass houses..." view of her bumbling, misguided, sometimes annoying protagonists, and her seeming "there but for the grace of God went I" brand of empathy is contagious and redeeming.

In the end, Crosley offers an accomplished first novel that explores our nascent adulthood revelations that the raw, collegiate dreams on which we've hung our futures may or may not be held up by our mature wants and capabilities, and maybe that's okay - probable, desirable, even? - and what do we do then?

Laura says

Despite the fact that it's utterly ridiculous at times, I really enjoyed this witty twenty-something self-examination/jewelry heist first novel of comic essayist (I Thought There'd Be Cake) Sloane Crosley. I liked the (mostly) fast pace, the made-for-movies snappy dialogue and the literary references. The characters have some minor realizations, which I think is more plausible than any major overhauls, and I liked their inner musings as they fumble their way to semi-adulthood.

One complaint, and it's not specific to this book as it seems I've come across this in several books recently, but I just hate long (or short, actually) passages in a foreign language with the assumption that the reader is multi-lingual. Forgive me for forgetting my high school Spanish and my one year of college French! Please spare me from Google Translate.

Melissa says

Damn you, Mindy Kaling and your "everyone cool is reading The Clasp" tweet. It was over-written, boring and had no likable characters. And slow as hell - it took me two long weeks to read. Never again, Mindy.

Jenny Shank says

Dallas Morning News, 10 October 2015 07:28 PM

In Sloane Crosley's debut novel *The Clasp*, sad-sack Adrien Brody look-alike Victor Wexler has lost his job as a "mid-level data scientist" at Mostofit.com, "the Internet's seventh-largest search engine." Victor tells no one about his layoff and retreats into his New York apartment, "where so many hours were spent alone, plowing through toilet paper because his prime toilet hours were on his own dime now."

The last time I lost a job, I spent my newly found free time using my own paper goods and office supplies and trying not to worry about money while reading Crosley's hilarious essay collections *I Was Told There'd Be Cake* and *How Did You Get This Number*. They did the trick, distracting and cheering me with their funny observations about a young woman's life in Manhattan and the weird situations she encounters while moving or volunteering at the American Museum of Natural History and accidentally walking out with a live butterfly from an exhibit.

Is Crosley as engaging a novelist as she is an essayist and humorist? Well, yes and no. The plot of *The Clasp* is totally wackadoo, seemingly cobbled together from stuff Crosley felt like writing about, such as Florida, Paris, L.A., college friendships and Guy de Maupassant. The relative of a minor character reveals her secrets to Victor and then promptly dies, and we don't learn that she was even sick until after she's already departed. Three friends independently decide to fly to Paris from New York and L.A. on the same weekend. Thugs materialize to randomly beat up Victor, leaving him with a black eye and then disappearing from the novel.

Yet Crosley makes every madcap page enjoyable. Who knew Guy de Maupassant was such a stitch?

The Clasp begins with a standard literary device in which long-separated college friends come together at a wedding. Unemployed Victor, Kezia, his college crush who works in the jewelry industry, and their friend Nathaniel, the golden boy turned L.A. screenwriter of limited success, about to turn 30, converge on a

Florida mansion where their hotel heiress friend is marrying an equally wealthy man.

Victor loves Kezia, Kezia loves Nathaniel, and Nathaniel loves himself and also a hot Hollywood starlet named Bean. As Kezia retreats to a man's hotel room to almost have a one-night stand, Victor drowns his sorrows and ends up passed out in the bedroom of the groom's mother, Johanna.

The next morning, Johanna gently suggests that Victor's been snooping and then reveals where she keeps her jewelry collection, together worth as much as the Hope Diamond. A sketch of a necklace believed to be the one that inspired Guy de Maupassant's "The Necklace," "the most famous and tragic short story in [the] history of French letters," captures Victor's attention. Johanna tells a fascinating tale that suggests the necklace is hidden in a French chateau.

From then on it's as if Crosley said, forget this tired wedding-reunion literary device, I'm going rogue. Kezia's demanding and insane boss, the jewelry designer Rachel Simone, orders her to fix a faulty clasp on one of her creations. Victor researches Guy de Maupassant and sets out on a wild goose chase. Nathaniel comes to terms with his own failures. Crazy stuff happens, and the setting shifts to France, where Mostofit, the search engine that's moribund in the U.S., is inexplicably revered.

Along the way, Crosley delights with her droll observations, such as: "Rich people had a thing for outdoor showers. They needed to reconnect with nature. Victor, who had the occasional roach problem, knew just how unnecessary this was. If you do nothing, nature will reconnect with you. Only people safe in the knowledge that their moments of roughing it are fake and their moments of comfort are real get a kick out of standing on a rock and fiddling with a corroded knob."

The Clasp includes moments of reflection about friendship and the way people change, such as Nathaniel's thought about Kezia: "If she stopped remembering him the way he used to be, he feared that version of himself would cease to exist." But mostly, The Clasp excels in its one-liners and goofy situations, as Crosley proves that her wit would be fresh enough to enliven even yesterday's leftovers.

Jenny Shank's novel, "The Ringer," won the High Plains Book Award and her satire has appeared in McSweeney's, The Rumpus, The Toast and The McSweeney's Book of Politics and Musicals.

Nnenna says

3.5 stars

Kezia, Nathaniel and Victor were really good friends in college, but then they graduated, moved to different cities and started to drift apart. Many years later, they're reunited at the wedding of another college friend. At this wedding, Victor accidentally falls asleep in the groom's mother's bedroom. When he comes to, the groom's mother has discovered him; the two of them start conversing and she reveals a family secret, telling him a story about a long-lost necklace. Victor decides to try and find this necklace and the story takes off from there.

There's another interesting layer to this novel, and that's the author's inclusion of the short story "The Necklace" by Guy de Maupassant. This story served as inspiration for this book and is also incorporated into the plot. I really enjoyed this blend of history with the present and it made me want to sit down and read the short story (which I still need to do!).

I liked Crosley's writing- it's clever in a subtle and cheeky way. I also think she did a great job developing

the characters. They felt like fully-formed people to me. Crosley explores the theme of friendship in a set of characters that are still on the path to “adulthood.” With older friends, it’s interesting to consider if you would befriend the person they are today (if you weren’t already friends with them). Naturally, people change, for better or worse, and the person you first became friends with may not really exist years later.

Although the plot did become rather outlandish, I enjoyed this novel and the questions it raised. I’m curious if I’d enjoy her nonfiction works (*I Was Told There’d Be Cake* and *How Did You Get This Number?*) more or less than her first novel.

Jennifer says

Tying a silly plot to a classic like Guy Maupassant's *The Necklace* doesn't make it any less silly. There is some enjoyable writing in *The Clasp* with lots of clever, funny lines but at the core the machinations of the plot are really quite dreadful. I enjoyed listening to the character's banter but as soon as I stopped to think about what they were all really doing it fell apart. It probably doesn't help that I recently read *The Interestings* which had the same banter/clever lines but with much more substance.

MARILYN says

I'm definitely not the target audience for this book. I personally found the story and characters silly and pretentious. I think younger people would like it more than I did.

christa says

Ugh. A group of college friends, sociopaths, meet up again for a fancy rain-soaked wedding in FancyLand and the group’s luckless misanthrope, I’ve forgotten his name already, stumbles drunkenly into the matriarch’s bedroom and gets a tour of her jewels (not a euphemism) and is told a story of a mysterious necklace that is so compelling that he takes his last nickels and heads to Europe to find this sure-thing bundle of gems. Meanwhile, his best gal pal from college who he’s desperate for, is also in Europe on assignment for the super famous jewelry designer she works for and she’s sharing a bed (there is a pillow barrier) with the far more successful third of their awkward threesome.

I had to quit at halftime because the plot kept taking me places my yawn didn’t want to go. Super annoying characters. Also: too co-inky-dinky for someone who was really struggling to suspend disbelief.

Oriana says

Well this was absolutely splendid.

I like Sloane a lot, but I've always liked her with a kind of aggressive defensiveness -- I know she is the cute new thing (still, even after two bestsellers), that many people find her overly precious and frivolous, but I know too that I am squarely in her target demo, and that, as I've said elsewhere, reading her essays is a bit

like reading a rarefied version of my own life. I put her in whatever category it is that also holds Emily Gould: a smart young(ish) lady writer whom many find to be especially perceptive and clever and zeitgeisty -- and just as many others find trite and intolerable, and long ferociously for her to fail.

And just like Emily, after a few very successful collections of essays, Sloane has turned to fiction. So I was wary; although I did like Emily's *Friendship*, I knew that it was not high art, not really *great* literature, just perfectly serviceable and fun -- in short, something that I would have to defend myself for enjoying. I was expecting as much from *The Clasp*.

Delightfully, I was wrong. This book is *terrific*.

Here we have the story of three college friends now a half-dozen years post-graduation. They are in a bit of a nonurgent love triangle, they are all creating greater or lesser fictions of the lives they've crafted for themselves and trying to believe them. They are brought together at the wedding of another friend, which winds up setting into motion a quest that will bring them all to France, each on a very different journey although they do it (sort of) together. Kezia, a jeweler's assistant, is searching for the only artisan seemingly in the entire world who can save the weird prototype her loony boss has created. Victor, recently fired and teetering on the brink of serious isolation and depression, is searching for a necklace that has not been seen since the Nazis stole it from its rightful owner. Nathaniel, a self-obsessed screenwriter who, in his mid-twenties, is beginning to fear that his best days are irretrievably behind him, is searching for... well, a good time, some French girls to fuck, and some delicious cheese. The overlapping adventure that ensues is zany, hilarious, tragic, poignant, and revelatory.

So first of all, these characters are marvelous. Our mains especially, but the supporting cast too is well drawn and believable. For ex, here's a very cool thing Sloane does: for various reasons, at different times, each character describes the plot of de Maupassant's "The Necklace," and each explains it pretty differently, revealing huge chunks of personal slant, memory, and motivation. How clever is that? What a great way to do characterization!

Or another for ex: all the parts in France (not Paris, mind you, but the little town of Rouen) are so, so real -- clearly Sloane has been there, walked those cobblestones and eaten in those restaurants. She even has a bead on the particulars of a French person trying to speak English, replete with articles wrongly left in: "And if you have not eaten food, I have made the anchovies *avec* cream. Unless you are not eating the fish?" says the sweet but stern proprietress of a bed & breakfast in which two of our heroes find themselves one evening.

Second of all, Sloane's trenchant wit is very much on display, so all the way through, the book is ebullient and joyful to prance around in. Here's an incisive little bit I liked:

Rich people had a thing for outdoor showers. The needed to reconnect with nature. Victor, who had the occasional roach problem, knew just how unnecessary this was. If you do nothing, nature will reconnect with you. Only people safe in the knowledge that their moments of roughing it are fake and their moments of comfort are real get a kick out of standing on a rock and fiddling with a corroded knob.

Here's another:

She debated sharing her thoughts with him. Was this a person to whom confessions are made? All of a sudden their whole relationship felt unreal, as if she had fabricated it, even in college.

Nathaniel was a guy she had met because they had been smart and stupid in equal measure, and that landed them on the same campus.

Third -- and most delightfully -- this book is just extremely well done, on a nuts-and-bolts level, which, gallingly, is rarer and rarer these days. It's well put-together in terms of plot arc, character development, and pacing; it's got real layers, from surface characterization to deeply built-in literary allusions to well-researched and well-explained digressions on jewelry and history and culture. It moves confidently and smartly through time and space, hauling you along by the scruff while you giggle all the way.

So anyways, in summation: ooh la la, *trés bien*, Sloane. I was expecting to be pleased and instead I was totally wowed. More, more, more!

Lisa says

I was disappointed with this novel probably because my expectations were off based on what I'd heard about it. Maybe it isn't the worst book of the year if I didn't expect something different. I expected more literary fiction because of the link to Maupassant but it is cheap chick lit. I knew it was a problem when the short story, The Necklace, was described no fewer than six times throughout the book. Some lines are funny but I think a reader needs to be younger than 20 years old to care. It isn't even a quick read because so much makes no sense since the writing is so bad. I had to reread passages to try to understand. For instance: "like two hairs coming out of one pore but pleasant"?! The author confused scurvy with vitamin D deficiency. The entire plot is ridiculous from stealing a drawing to everyone ending up in France. Stupid book that should never be associated with Maupassant.

Christie Ralston says

Five years ago I happened upon Crosley's "I Was Told There'd Be Cake" and loved it. Her voice was so sharp and clear in it. I still pick it up from time to time. So when I heard she was publishing her first novel I was so excited. Unfortunately, after getting around 50 pages into it, the book was nowhere close to living up to my expectations.

The story centers around three college friends meeting up years after graduation, first for a glamorous wedding and then by chance (kind of) in France on a whirlwind adventure. There's Kezia, a jewelry designer's assistant; Nathaniel, a Hollywood writer wannabe; and Victor, a loser working for a third rate company who gets caught up in a magical story about a necklace whose history is intertwined with that of Guy de Maupassant.

Frankly, the story is over-the-top. Don't get me wrong - it's meant to be. But Crosley makes such real characters that they seem so out of place in the super unrealistic story. The dialogue at times can be hard to swallow and cheesy. Unfortunately, I have a feeling this book will date quickly due to the kind of references Crosley chooses to employ.

If you're going to read anything by Crosley, I would highly recommend starting with one of her essay collections.

