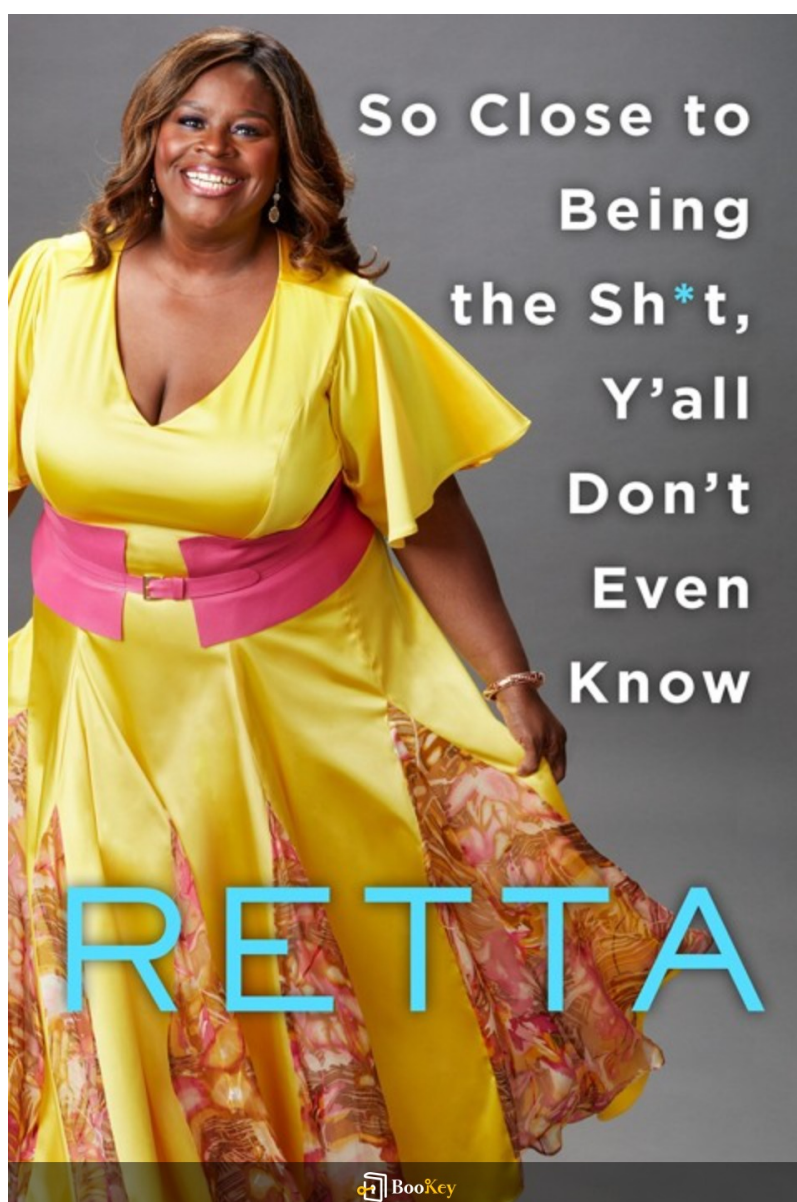


So Close To Being The Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know PDF

Retta



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About the book

Overview of "So Close to Being the Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know"

In her captivating book, *So Close to Being the Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know*, renowned comedian and actress Retta—known for her role in *Parks and Recreation*—shares a vivid portrait of her life through a series of essays.

Key Themes and Insights

- Journey to Stardom: Retta takes readers on an engaging ride from the stand-up comedy circuit to the glamorous world of Hollywood.
- Fame and its Complexities: With a blend of humor and honesty, she navigates the realities of celebrity life, offering reflections that resonate universally.
- Passion for Luxury: Her unabashed affection for all things luxurious shines through, making her relatable to anyone with a taste for the finer things.
- Personal Stories: The collection includes both side-splitting anecdotes and moving stories centered on family and identity, showcasing Retta's multifaceted experiences.

Conclusion

Retta's essays reveal her sharp comedic talent and indomitable spirit, making this book a heartfelt celebration of authenticity. Readers will find themselves both laughing out loud and touching their hearts as they discover

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why Retta is so close to being the sh*t.

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About the author

Spotlight on Retta: A Versatile American Star

Real Name: Marietta Sangai Sirleaf

Profession: Comedian, Actress, Author

Career Highlights:

- Gained fame in the comedy scene before achieving notable success on television.
- Best known for her iconic role as Donna Meagle on NBC's hit show "Parks and Recreation."

Education:

- Holds degrees in sociology and biology from Duke University.

Literary Work:

- Authored the book "So Close to Being the Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know," a comedic and personal reflection on her life that reveals her sharp humor and genuine personality.

Overall Impact:

Retta's journey through comedy, television, and literature exemplifies her remarkable talent and ability to connect with audiences, solidifying her

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status as a prominent figure in entertainment.

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So Close To Being The Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know

Summary

Written by Listenbrief

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So Close To Being The Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know Summary Chapter List

1. A Journey through Laughter: How Retta Became a Comedian
2. From Dreams to Reality: The Overcoming of Obstacles
3. Behind the Scenes: Life as a Hollywood Actress
4. Friendships that Matter: The Importance of Sisterhood
5. Embracing Authenticity: Lessons Learned and Future Aspirations

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1. A Journey through Laughter: How Retta Became a Comedian

Retta's journey into the world of comedy is one marked by resilience, determination, and a deep love for laughter. Growing up in Newark, New Jersey, she found solace and joy in the art of storytelling, often using humor as a way to navigate her childhood and bond with others. Retta's family, originally from the African American community in the South, not only instilled within her a strong work ethic but also a penchant for humor that was often a cornerstone of their gatherings.

From a young age, Retta dreamed of being in the limelight; however, the path from a hopeful dreamer to a successful comedian is rarely a straight line. Like many aspiring performers, Retta faced a multitude of obstacles along the way. After attending college and graduating with a degree in Sociology, her initial foray into the world of comedy began with an open mic night experience that would ultimately shape her future. Finding the courage to step onto the stage in front of an audience was not easy, but she learned to embrace the vulnerability that comes with sharing personal stories infused with humor. Each joke she delivered was a reflection of her life experiences, turning pain into laughter and frustration into comedy.

As Retta's comedic career began to take shape in the local stand-up scene, she encountered racial and gender biases that tested her resolve. Comedy is a

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tough industry, especially for women of color. Retta's story illustrates the importance of perseverance. She recalls nights when she faced hostile crowds or felt the sting of being the only woman or person of color on stage, yet these experiences only fueled her desire to succeed and prove her worth. She leveraged her challenges to hone her skills, responding to hecklers with quick wit and building a stage presence that was both commanding and relatable.

Behind the scenes, while navigating the complexities of being a comedian and also an actress in Hollywood, Retta faced the dichotomy of her public persona versus her private anxieties. Landing roles on shows such as "Parks and Recreation" opened doors for her, but it also introduced a level of scrutiny she hadn't fully anticipated. Retta speaks candidly about the behind-the-scenes realities—audition processes, casting couch realities, and competition in the industry— which often go unseen by the public eye. She learned early on that it was essential to remain grounded and connected with her roots.

Despite the ups and downs of her journey, one constant in Retta's life has been the value of friendship, particularly among women in the entertainment industry. Close friendships with fellow comedians and actresses were crucial during her career; these relationships became a support system that helped her navigate the often tumultuous world of show business. Whether sharing

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laughs after tough comedy gigs or discussing mutual struggles in the industry, these bonds enriched her experience. The importance of sisterhood shines as Retta recounts moments spent with friends who understood both the joys and pains of being in the public eye.

Retta's journey is also a testament to the power of embracing one's authentic self. Throughout her career, she has strived to stay true to her voice, blending sharp observations with vulnerability in her material. This authenticity resonates with audiences, allowing them to connect with her not just as a comedian but as a person. She imparts valuable lessons through her narratives, often highlighting that it's essential to find joy in one's own unique story rather than conforming to industry standards.

As she looks to the future, Retta is filled with aspirations that extend beyond comedy. She aims to produce content that reflects diverse voices and stories, challenging the status quo in Hollywood. Retta's journey teaches us that laughter can indeed be a vehicle for overcoming life's obstacles, showcasing that a commitment to honesty, humor, and connection can fuel greatness. In the end, her story is not just about how she became a comedian but about how comedy became a part of her identity, allowing her to inspire and uplift others along the way.

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2. From Dreams to Reality: The Overcoming of Obstacles

Retta's journey in the world of comedy is not only a testament to her talent but also an example of how overcoming obstacles can turn dreams into reality. Born as Marietta Sangai Sirleaf in 1970 in Newark, New Jersey, her path was paved with challenges that seemed formidable, yet she faced them with determination and resilience.

Growing up in a family that moved frequently, Retta had to adapt to new environments and make friends quickly, which laid the foundation for her charismatic personality. Her love for comedy sparked in her teenage years, inspired by the likes of Eddie Murphy and Robin Williams. However, pursuing a career in stand-up comedy was far from a straightforward endeavor.

During her early adulthood, Retta worked as a healthcare professional—something that may appear worlds away from the glitz of Hollywood and comedy clubs. This job was a means of stability for her during a period when she was still trying to figure out her path. Despite the security it offered, the pull of the laughter she yearned to create and share gnawed at her heart. It took considerable courage for Retta to make the leap from a steady job to the unpredictable life of a comedian.

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The turning point came when she decided to take a stand-up class, stepping into an environment that both intimidated and excited her. Retta faced her own self-doubt, battling the fear of judgment and the notion that, as a plus-sized Black woman, she might not fit the narrow mold often seen in comedy. These societal stigmas were hurdles she had to confront relentlessly. However, rather than allowing them to deter her, she harnessed these experiences and used them as fuel for her performances, transforming her insecurities into relatable humor.

Retta's early days in comedy were reminiscent of countless other hopeful comics who have faced rejection and performed to empty rooms. Her perseverance, however, led her to local clubs and showcases, slowly building a name for herself. One notable challenge she faced was the struggle to secure spots in comedy festivals that she believed could jumpstart her career. Many established festivals rejected her—you can sense the crushing disappointment in her recounting these experiences. But Retta didn't allow rejection to deter her; instead, she used them as stepping stones to improve her craft, continually honing her skills and developing her unique voice.

Through sheer tenacity and an unwillingness to give up, Retta eventually found herself performing at large venues, submitting herself to rigorous audition processes, and taking every opportunity to grow. Her breakthrough

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role on NBC's "Parks and Recreation" became a significant turning point. It not only showcased her comedic chops to a broader audience but also affirmed her place in a space traditionally dominated by a specific prototype—a triumph for diversity in the entertainment industry.

Retta's journey illuminates a crucial lesson about overcoming obstacles: persistence and authenticity are key. She emphasizes that it's essential to embrace one's unique story and perspective, despite the challenges. Many aspiring comedians or anyone pursuing a dream can relate to the fear of rejection; however, Retta's experiences remind us to keep pushing forward. Her story encourages individuals to stay true to themselves and use their struggles as a source of inspiration rather than a reason to give up.

The path from dreams to reality is seldom smooth, often littered with roadblocks, self-doubt, and external skepticism. Retta's journey exemplifies that while the pursuit may be fraught with challenges, embracing one's individuality and persevering through the obstacles are ultimately what brings dreams to fruition.

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3. Behind the Scenes: Life as a Hollywood Actress

Behind the glamor and the spotlight of Hollywood, Retta offers an insightful glimpse into the reality of life as an actress. The journey to finding success in this competitive industry is often peppered with highs and lows, and Retta's candid reflections reveal the unvarnished truth behind the curtain.

In her book, Retta vividly shares her day-to-day experiences shooting the series "Parks and Recreation." While many fans adored the show and embraced the characters, they seldom saw the long hours spent on set, the rehearsals, and the hustle that went into each performance. She describes the rigorous shooting schedules, where days would often stretch into nights, leaving little time for personal life or downtime.

One challenging aspect of being an actress in Hollywood, as Retta highlights, is the pressure to conform to the industry's expectations. There's often a solidification of typecasting in Hollywood, where certain actors are relegated to specific roles based on their appearance or previous work. Retta speaks about her own personal battles with typecasting; despite her talent, she frequently found herself auditioning for roles that aligned with stereotypes rather than her actual range of abilities. This frustration is not unique to Retta—many talented actresses face similar experiences that reflect the industry's limitations and biases.

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Retta also sheds light on what it's like to navigate the waters of Hollywood as a Black actress. She discusses the intersection of race and opportunity in the industry, where representation remains a significant issue. Retta's experiences echo those of other actresses who have publicly voiced the need for more diversity in roles, and she recognizes the responsibility to uplift and pave the way for future talents. Her journey included moments of doubt and difficulty, underscoring how vital it is for actresses of color to carve out their own spaces in a predominantly white landscape.

Moreover, the book delves into the dynamic of working alongside seasoned actors and newcomers alike. Retta often expresses appreciation for her colleagues on set, sharing humor and camaraderie with the cast, especially with her beloved co-stars like Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman. These relationships foster a supportive environment that is critical for creativity and confidence on screen. In behind-the-scenes anecdotes, she illustrates how humor became a foundational element of their working relationships, allowing them to navigate tough moments and celebrate successes together.

Retta's portrayal of the audition process reflects the pervasive uncertainty that many in the industry grapple with. She shares her stories of rejection and resilience, illustrating that perseverance is key to survival in Hollywood. For instance, she recounts an auditions experience where she initially did not

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land a part that she felt passionate about, emphasizing that such setbacks are not the end of the line but rather opportunities to learn and grow.

Overall, "So Close to Being the Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know" offers readers a raw and honest look at the authenticity required to thrive in Hollywood as an actress. Retta's journey from comedian to actress embodies the belief that success isn't merely found in accolades, but in the relationships fostered, resilience practiced, and joy experienced in pursuing one's craft. Her narrative serves not only as inspiration to aspiring actresses but also as a reminder of the importance of authenticity and perseverance within a challenging and often unpredictable industry.

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4. Friendships that Matter: The Importance of Sisterhood

In Retta's book "So Close to Being the Sh*t, Y'all Don't Even Know," the chapter on friendships underscores the profound impact that sisterhood has had on her journey, both personally and professionally. It explores the concept that true friendship, especially among women, plays a crucial role in fostering resilience and providing support, particularly in a challenging industry like Hollywood.

Retta shares insightful anecdotes that highlight the ebbs and flows of friendship throughout her life. She reflects on her childhood experiences, where she found solace and joy in her close-knit group of girlfriends. These early connections helped her navigate the difficulties of adolescence, a period often marked by insecurity. The laughter, support, and shared experiences with these friends not only enriched her life but also instilled in her the sense that she could be her authentic self, free from judgment.

One particularly poignant example Retta illustrates is the bond she formed with her friend group during college. These women were not just peers; they were a sisterhood that provided a lifeline during a tumultuous time. They celebrated each other's successes and rallied during failures, showcasing that sisterhood isn't just about having fun, but about lifting each other up during tough moments. In one vivid recollection, she describes how her friends

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helped her through breakups and personal crises, reminding her of her worth and encouraging her to pursue her dreams. This unwavering support was instrumental in her journey toward becoming a comedian, showing that the strength drawn from friendship often fuels individual ambitions.

As she transitioned into her career in Hollywood, Retta emphasizes the significance of maintaining those vital friendships despite the industry's often competitive nature. In an environment that can be isolating and filled with self-doubt, her sisterhood became a source of encouragement and clarity. Retta shares stories of how her friends not only celebrated her achievements but provided a comforting circle of empathy when she faced challenges in an industry laden with rejection and stereotypes.

Moreover, Retta's reflections on the importance of sisterhood extend to her experiences as a Black woman in Hollywood. She speaks candidly about the unique challenges faced by women of color in the entertainment industry, how these challenges can create a sense of isolation, and the importance of having a supportive network of women who understand those struggles. Retta's friendships with women like Maya Rudolph and other industry icons serve as a reminder that lifting each other up is essential, especially when navigating spaces that often feel unwelcoming.

Retta highlights the beauty of vulnerability in friendships, stating that being

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able to show one's true self to others is a gift. This connection enables them to provide honest feedback, which is invaluable for personal growth. She discusses how her friends have been her sounding board, offering insights and perspectives that helped her navigate her career choices. The candid conversations they shared reinforced her belief in the power of honesty and showed her that real connections can exist amid the glamor and superficiality of Hollywood.

In essence, this chapter of the book serves as a heartfelt testament to the importance of sisterhood. Retta's narrative emphasizes that friendships are not just a source of fun and camaraderie; they can be pillars of strength, guiding individuals through their journeys. In a world that often tries to pit women against each other, Retta advocates for the necessity of collaboration and support, echoing the idea that when women support each other, everyone thrives.

Through her journey and the friendships she's cultivated, Retta illustrates that sisterhood is more than just a bond; it is a lifeline that empowers individuals to chase their dreams, face their fears, and, ultimately, embrace their identities.

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5. Embracing Authenticity: Lessons Learned and Future Aspirations

Retta's journey through the realms of comedy and Hollywood brings to light the significance of embracing authenticity in a world that often demands conformity. Throughout her book, she shares invaluable lessons learned from her personal and professional experiences, emphasizing how staying true to oneself has been her greatest asset.

One of the lessons Retta highlights is the importance of self-acceptance. In an industry filled with pressures to fit certain molds, Retta discovered that her unique background and perspective were not obstacles but rather the keys to her authenticity. Early in her career, she felt the weight of expectations to change her appearance and mannerisms to align with typical standards of beauty and behavior in Hollywood. However, she gradually recognized that her quirks and individuality resonated more deeply with audiences than any superficial changes ever could.

Retta often recalls moments when she chose to embrace her identity as a plus-size Black woman in comedy. By openly sharing her experiences and challenges, she not only carved out a space for herself but also connected with a broader audience who appreciated the relatability of her narrative. For instance, her hilarious yet poignant takes on dating, societal beauty standards, and friendship resonated powerfully with many who have faced

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similar dilemmas. Retta's examples serve as a reminder that authenticity can be liberating and empowering—her comedic voice grew stronger as she learned to own her story.

Moreover, Retta emphasizes the strength found in vulnerability. By being honest about her insecurities and experiences, she encourages others to do the same. In her life, she faced various challenges, including the struggle with self-doubt and the fear of not being taken seriously as a comedian. But in sharing these fears openly, she found solidarity with her peers and fans alike, reinforcing the belief that vulnerability could be a source of strength. For example, during the development of her role in "Parks and Recreation," Retta sought to portray her character with raw honesty, opting to inject her own personality into her performances. This authenticity translated into a beloved character who broke barriers for representation in comedy.

As the narrative progresses, Retta also reflects on her aspirations moving forward, grounded in her authentic self. She expresses a desire to create and produce content that centers on diverse voices and stories, thus paving the way for future generations of entertainers who might feel marginalized. This ambition not only showcases her commitment to authenticity but also highlights her role as a mentor in the industry. Retta envisions a future where authenticity is celebrated, and representation in Hollywood becomes a reality rather than an aspiration.

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In response to her journey, Retta encourages readers to embrace their own authenticity—urging them to celebrate their differences and recognize their unique voices in a world that sometimes stifles individuality. She believes that by sharing our stories, we can foster a deeper understanding and acceptance of one another. The lessons she has imparted through her journey, such as self-acceptance, vulnerability, and the pursuit of representation, guide her future endeavors and inspire countless individuals to aspire towards that same level of honesty in their lives.

In conclusion, Retta’s experience exemplifies the transformative power of embracing authenticity. As she continues to write her story, she leaves an indelible mark on the industry, proving that true success comes from being unapologetically oneself and advocating for a future where everyone can feel free to express who they truly are.

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