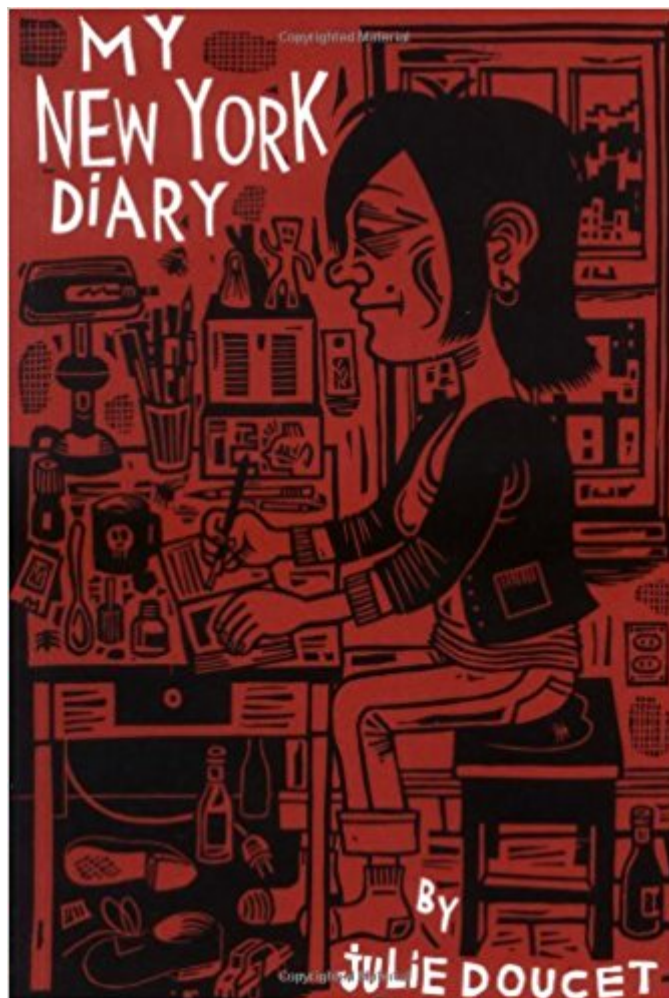


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# My New York Diary



## Synopsis

THE CLASSIC GRAPHIC NOVEL, BACK IN PRINT Back in print is the classic graphic novel by the acclaimed (though no longer working in comics) iconic artist Julie Doucet. In My New York Diary - one of the first contemporary graphic novels - Doucet abruptly packs her bags and moves to New York. Trouble follows her in the form of a jealous boyfriend, insecurity about her talent, her worsening epilepsy, and a tendency to self-medicate with booze and drugs.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Doucet follows her popular underground comics series Dirty Plotte with an autobiographical graphic novel chronicling her six-month stint as a New Yorker. The book opens when Doucet is 17, just graduated from an all-girls' school in Canada. Before she leaves for New York, she loses her virginity, confronts the deadly monotony of art school and endures a suicide attempt by an odd and pathetic boyfriend. It's soon clear that Doucet learns things the hard way, but in New York City she finds another boyfriend and gives love a second shot. It isn't long, though, before she's in a downward spiral, suffering from both a mysterious bout of seizures and the new boyfriend--who, it turns out, is grimly possessive and a bit of a psycho to boot--so Doucet must plan an escape from him. Full of their author's most intimate and painful moments, Doucet's comics bring a depth of humanity and a deadpan humor to a succession of personal calamities. Doucet's unapologetic candor captures the harsh realities of her life and the pluck (and luck) that gets her out of one self-inflicted jam after another. Much like her life, her black-and-white drawings are complex,

detailed and cluttered, and transform the hard knocks and bad decisions of a somewhat innocent underground cartoonist into wonderfully charming tales of urban survival. (Dec.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

paper 1-896597-24-6 Among the younger generation of alternative comix artists, Doucet (best known for her comic book, *Dirty Plotte*) stands out for her engaging combination of a cartoonish style and frank realism; her postfeminist autobiographical tales are tough and self-effacing, bitchy and sweet, and all peopled with her rubbery characters with goofy oversized heads. This beautifully produced volume collects two short stories, both set in Doucets native Montreal, and the long title piece, a tale of misbegotten bohemianism in latter-day Manhattan. *The First Time* records Doucets unromantic deflowering, soon after graduating from convent school, by an aging hippie. The great backgrounds, full of visual jokes, also contribute to *Julie in Junior College*, a hapless tale of her subsequent days in art school. The bulk of this b&w collection is made up of Doucets episodic New York diary, a memoir of her year in the city that begins in romantic bliss, builds to a messy breakup, and ends with her escape to Seattle. Endpaper photographs prove Doucets claim that her Washington Heights neighborhood is exceedingly grimy, not just in her deliberately messy drawings. If anything, her rich comedic style softens the scuzziness the endless cockroaches and garbage-strewn sidewalks seem funny in her heavily littered frames. With her new beau, Julie guzzles beer by the case, begins to worry about work, and longs to move closer to the action on the Lower East Side. As her career takes off (theres a RAW party scene with a cameo by Art Spiegelman), her lovers career goes nowhere, and he grows increasingly angry and needy, a pattern that culminates in a particularly awful scene on the subway. All of Doucets panels charm with their clutter and with her self-portrait as a sartorially challenged, scraggly haired waif (literally wide-eyed) whos not as weak as she first seems. The hand-lettering, with some misspellings (French is the artists first language), adds to the overall effect: spunky and smart, Doucet is the true voice of grrrrl power. -- Copyright ©1999, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Julie Doucet moves from Montreal after finishing art school and moves to the Big Apple. This autobiographical journal shows what it's like to try and make it in New York City. She sublets her Montreal apartment, hooks up with a new boyfriend and her personal life starts to unravel around the same time her artistic career gets noticed. Many of the incidents are familiar to many of us when she decides to pull up stakes and move to Seattle. The people she trusted were not what they

seemed. A classic story of how the innocent become prey to those who would take advantage but told in a way that doesn't omit the uncomfortable details. Recommended.

Visually this book is stunning. Every panel is dense with lush line work and detailing. The stories are young woman coming-of-age type that are fun and interesting. It's clear that the original art was shrunk down quite a bit to fit into this book format so it's a little small. I doubt there's much audience for it but this would be a perfect candidate for an IDW Artists Edition. If you're into this type of material this is a must-have book from the 1990's. Highly recommended.

In *My New York Diary*, Julie Doucet writes about her life after high school, including art school and her time in New York City. This slim volume details boring classes, bad boyfriends, her personal battle with seizures, a miscarriage, and more. Doucet does a good job with the English language, especially considering she is a native French speaker from Canada. Although the writing is honest and deals with many painful issues, it is very much one-sided (this is a diary, after all). I found myself wishing that Doucet had fleshed out the stories more instead of simply detailing her own points of view, like how possessive and psycho her boyfriend becomes over time. These plot lines are interesting enough to draw you through the book (no pun intended), but you end up feeling that there is much more here. This writing style is the mark of a young writer, perhaps. A note about the artwork in this graphic novel. Doucet is a fine artist, but each and every frame and page are so incredibly jam-packed with clutter - bottles, cans, forks, records, dirty dishes, etc. etc. etc. - that I began to get claustrophobic just looking at it all. It made me wonder if the author is a serious hoarder bound for reality television fame, or if she just draws that way. Instead of giving the reader more information, the cluttered style actually distracts from the story. I wonder if the author tried to use her cluttered drawing style to make up for a thin and lopsided story. If you are a fan of autobiographical graphic novels, especially by women artists, you might want to take a look at *My New York Diary* and support this increasingly interesting genre. I have one small complaint. Although my volume just took a few hours to read, the binding came loose and the cover fell off. I am not sure if this is a widespread problem with Drawn & Quarterly books, but it is something you should be aware of if you collect graphic novels.

Excellent.

Rarely do you see women in comics, this is a true treat. I love her style of art and story telling.

English does not appear to be the first language of the author--there was a lot of awkward language and typos, frankly -- and that was very distracting. Also, though I sympathized with some of the situations the character got herself in, I did not actually like her as a character -- she appeared spoiled, sheltered, and made really terrible mistakes in her life that I expected her to learn from by the end of the book. Since this is a diary, I assume the events are laid out how just as they happened, but it made for a wandering story that did not have a nice, buttoned up ending (or even a resolution). She also seems to have a disdain for New York that I did not appreciate.

The book had stickers on it that looked like it was from a library. It looked tacky and I tried to take them off but then ripped the cover a few times...

I can't believe they are selling this so cheap. This is one of my single favorite graphic novels of all time. I put it up there with Maus, David Boring, or even Dark Knight Returns for personal favorite. I just love Julie's honesty and her artwork is mind blowing. My young artist life wasn't exactly like this but its so honest you relate to it with your own troubles and lost friends, lovers, funtimes, badtimes, disasters...I also loved the Film/Comic sequel, My New Newyork Diary. Check that out too, but start with the original.

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