

# [PDF] Shine Shine Shine

## Lydia Netzer - pdf download free book

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### Books Details:

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Author: Lydia Netzer

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### Description:

What is a "normal" life? For Sunny, it means wearing a blond wig (she's been bald since birth), medicating her autistic son (who wears a helmet because he bangs his head against walls), and teaching her brilliant but socially clueless husband, Maxon, how to interact with other humans (they whiteboard equations so he knows how to respond to compliments). When Sunny's wig falls off during a car accident, exposing her bare head to her neighbors for the first time, she starts to realize that this "normal" life she has built is actually a huge problem. Everything about Shine, Shine, Shine is charmingly odd, full of feeling, and beautifully written. Lydia Netzer has created a cast of characters so unique and surprising, you want to follow their story long after it ends. These are real people making real choices about their lives--even if those lives are different from everyone else's. This is a superb debut. --Caley Anderson

**Books to Read in Trees: An Amazon.com Exclusive Essay from Lydia Netzer**

When I was a child, I read in a tree.

My favorite reading spot was 20 feet above the ground, in a natural seat formed by the branches of an enormous pine tree. I often scuffed my knees on the climb up, book shoved into my waistband, fingernails dirty with the sap I absently picked at while I read. Raised by two school teachers with jobs in Detroit, I only had access to my reading tree during summer vacations.

In Detroit, we lived in a condo, we went to the library, and I read material the library deemed appropriate for children: Judy Blume, Marguerite Henry, Madeleine L'Engle, Susan Cooper. In Pennsylvania, in the summer, we lived on this isolated old family farm, and I read the only material my mother deemed appropriate for humans: 19th century British literature.

It was tough getting those lousy hardbacks to stay in my waistband all the way up the tree, but I managed to stick it out through George Eliot, most of Dickens, Ivanhoe, and the Brontes. American lit was off the table, even the stuff from 100 years ago. Harpoonists sweating half-naked over oars? Lusty puritans cavorting in the northern woods? Extracted heart throbbing in the baseboards? Forget it. I guess my mother figured out that if I could wring any damaging sexual content out of *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, or if I still wanted to procreate after stomaching the gloom of *The Mill on the Floss*, there was nothing she could do.

I know it wasn't all prudishness. She was proud of my willingness to put away the horse books and sci-fi for the summer, and delve into something toothier and challenging, that I could only wrestle with in the absence of school, and the city. In the company of trees and the occasional woodpecker I could pine for those lordlings and bold orphans, and fear consumption and workhouses and the disapproval of maiden aunts.

Now I've sent my son and daughter up that same tree, with Percy Jackson novels or *American Girl* books tucked into their belts. I did not inherit the wary eye with which my mother viewed books written by Americans, but I did take away the sense that for me, summers are reserved for braver reading. Summers are for books that stretch you, for cracking open the unknown, and having the mental space to immerse.

This summer, I will not be reading Thackeray, okay? Sorry, mom. I'll now admit that reading *The History of Henry Esmond* made me want to walk into the sea in despair. But this summer when I pack to go to the farm, I'll be loading up with books that are big and unfamiliar, like Ben Marcus' *The Flame Alphabet*, books I need space to comprehend, like Robert Goolrick's *Heading Out to Wonderful*, books that are best devoured in the big uninterrupted chunks of time that only vacation from regular life can give me, like Chris Cleave's *Gold*. And I might just climb that reading tree myself this year, to see what big ideas may linger.

--This text refers to the edition.

## Review

"Not only entertaining, but nuanced and wise...blending wit and imagination with an oddly mesmerizing, matter-of-fact cadence, Netzer's debut is a delightfully unique love story and a resounding paean to individuality." —*People* (People Pick)

"Netzer's storytelling method is as poetic as her language. She slowly assembles a multitude of pinpoint insights that converge to form a glimmering constellation...a stellar, thought-provoking debut" —*The New York Times Book Review*

"Over the moon with a metaphysical spin. Heart-tugging...it is struggling to understand the physical realities of life and the nature of what makes us human....Nicely unpredictable...Extraordinary."  
—Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

"You're pulled into the drama through the incredible natural beauty of her writing ... deftly and wittily done ... people say her style reminds them of Anne Tyler, but she reminded me a little bit more of Don DeLillo." —Liesl Schillinger, *The New York Times Book Review Podcast*

"Entirely winning...a refreshingly weird story about the exuberant weirdness of familial love." —*The Wall Street Journal*

"Netzer deftly illuminates the bonds that transcend shortcomings and tragedy. Characterized by finely textured emotions and dramatic storytelling, Netzer's world will draw readers happily into its orbit." —*Publishers Weekly*

"Netzer has beautifully crafted an original story with a cast of characters who make up an unconventional but strangely believable family...This story will shine, shine, shine for all adult readers." —*Library Journal*, starred review

"The novel traces Maxon and Sunny's relationship from their childhoods in Burma and Appalachia to outer space, revealing the futility of chasing an ideal of what's normal...*Shine Shine Shine* breaks free of the gravitational pull of traditional romantic clichés." —*The Washington Post*

"Lydia Netzer's luminous debut novel concerns what lies beneath society's pretty surfaces — Sunny's congenital hairlessness, her husband's remoteness, their son's autism. What makes it unexpectedly moving is how skillfully Netzer then peels back those layers, finding heartbreaking depth even in characters who lack ordinary social skills." —*The Boston Globe*

"Netzer has penned a modern take on alienation, building a family, making connections — creating memorable characters and an odd, idiosyncratic, but highly believable narrative along the way." —*The Toronto Star*

"Netzer uses [Sunny and Maxon] to explore the limits of love, family and what it is that makes us human and to create a tale that is utterly compelling and original." —*Chatelaine*

"There are certain novels that are just twisty, delightfully so. *Shine Shine Shine* is one. In this first novel, Lydia Netzer takes a hard look at being completely human through the eyes of two people who are kinda not...*Shine Shine Shine* may ask an old question. But Netzer's answer to how to be who you are is fresh from the heart." —*New York Daily News*

"Netzer's first novel, the wacky, touching and deliciously readable *Shine Shine Shine*, draws heavily on her own unconventional life...this unassuming novelist... is the 'it' girl of contemporary literature." —Kerry Dougherty, *The Virginian Pilot*

"[Sunny and Maxon's] peculiarities form an endearing story in *Shine Shine Shine*, Norfolk resident Lydia Netzer's first — and amazingly inventive — novel. . . . Netzer's munificence of spirit lights her story with compassion. . . . *Shine Shine Shine* transcends not only geography, whether in Burma, Pennsylvania, Norfolk or outer space, but also the science and the struggles, the weirdness and the woe; it aims straight for the heart and the humanity that unites us all. Netzer, whose imagination knows no limits, infuses her debut with love — and reminds us that normalcy can be vastly overrated." —*The Richmond Times-Dispatch*

"This is a novel about the strangeness of being human. Lydia Netzer says she wrote it when she was

pregnant with her first child and feeling "paralysed with fear that I was too weird, too self-absorbed, too unskilled to have a child, and that whatever baby had the bad luck to be born of my uterus would be permanently scarred by my failings". Hopefully, she feels better now. Or at least, a lot less alone in her imagined weirdness. After meeting Sunny and Maxon, I know I do." —*The Independent*

"*Shine Shine Shine* is a novel...but "Shine, Shine, Shine" could easily refer to Netzer's writing abilities, the way she handles the craft of storytelling, and the way her novel captures and holds the reader's attention...Netzer is a master storyteller. She leads the reader through a landscape full of beauty and charged with pitfalls, actual and emotional, while holding your eyes to the page, and your fingers itching to turn to the next page." —*Sparkling Diversity* column, *The Virginian Pilot*

"At its considerable heart, *Shine Shine Shine* is about birth, and as such it is profoundly a feminine novel. Netzer keeps the novel nicely balanced and accessible to male readers, however, by dissociating birth from purely biological terms and recasting it as psychological, spiritual, sexual and technological. It's a heady plateful to be sure, but Netzer handles it with a strong voice." —Brent Andrew Bowles, *The Virginian Pilot*

"I can't say enough good things about *Shine Shine Shine*, and it's almost impossible to put the book down once you crack it open. Well-paced, well-plotted, and told with a fresh, lyrical and bold narrative style, Netzer's debut novel is compelling, smart, strange and enjoyable. It shines as brightly as Sunny's bald head and the luminous stars Maxon sees in space." —Sarah Rachel Egelman, *TheBookReporter.com*

"*Shine Shine Shine* is an exquisitely written debut novel about family. All of Netzer's characters are quirky and unique, as well as damaged. Not every novel features a bald Caucasian woman, born in Burma, who is married to a rocket scientist on the autism spectrum. Even so, *Shine Shine Shine* is never quirky for the sake of quirkiness — Sunny, Maxon and all of the supporting characters are fully fledged and realistic so that they draw the reader in almost immediately with their strong and life-like voices. A story of personal growth and discovery that is unlike any you have read before, *Shine Shine Shine* will not fail to entertain and move you." —SheKnows.com

"A funny, compelling love story from the freshest voice I've heard in years. *Shine Shine Shine* picked me up and left me changed in ways I never expected. Intelligent, emotional, and relentlessly new, Netzer answers questions you didn't know you were already asking and delivers an unforgettable take on what it means to love, to be a mother, and to be human." —Sara Gruen, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Water for Elephants* and *Ape House*

"From the icy dead surface of the moon to the hot center of the human heart, Lydia Netzer's debut novel takes you on a rocket ride that will rattle your bones. Part science fiction, part pure magic of the human kind, Netzer makes a book that is wholly her own, and endlessly fascinating. At every turn, you think she cannot astonish you again, and then she does it one more time. And then again and again and again. This is an astounding first novel by a writer who is unique in her immense gifts." —Robert Goolrick, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *A Reliable Wife*

"Creating one of the most compelling protagonists I've read in a long time, Lydia Netzer manages to capture the outsider in each of us. Whether looking at the moon, a child, the suburban landscape, or the face in the mirror, Netzer shows us something we've never seen before, something we thought we knew. A beautifully written story where the exception proves the rule: the things that seem to divide us are, ultimately, the very things that unite us." —Brunonia Barry, New York Times bestselling author of *The Lace Reader* and *The Map of True Places*.

"A perfectly structured gem of a book that held me spellbound as I unraveled the twisted histories of

this unconventional family. You've never read anything like it, and yet Sunny's story is every woman's story. We are all outsiders, all alone in space, all trying so hard to find a place called home. I loved this book." —Joshilyn Jackson, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Gods in Alabama* and *Backseat Saints*

"An astronaut, an autistic child, a bald woman and a meteor collide, churning up the ground around a couple of decades-old murders. Life and death intersect in this wildly inventive love story I will be talking about and thinking about for years to come. If Yann Martel and Mary Gaitskill had a literary baby, it would look a lot like Lydia Netzer." —Karen Abbott, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Sin in the Second City* and *American Rose*

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