It's best to know this from the start: Augusten Burroughs is mean. Augusten Burroughs is also outrageously X-rated. If you can get past those two things, Burroughs might just be the most refreshing voice in American books today, and his collection of acerbic essays will have you laughing out loud even while cringing in your seat. Whether he is stepping on the fingers of little children or giving you the blow-by-blow on a very unholy act, Burroughs manages to do it in a way that fills conflicted fans with both horror and glee. Spanning from the surprisingly Machiavellian portrayal of his role in a Tang commercial at age seven to his more recent foray into dog ownership, Burroughs has what seems to be an endless supply of offbeat life experiences. Much like earlier David Sedaris collections (Barrel Fever or Naked), there are occasional fits and starts in the flow of the writing, but ultimately, Magical Thinking is worth reading (and re-reading). If you're familiar with Burroughs's memoirs, Running with Scissors, and Dry, you may find parts of Magical Thinking repetitive, since these essays bounce around in time between the other two. In fact, in an ideal world, this collection would have come first, as it offers an excellent introduction to Burroughs's fascinating life. --Vicky Griffith

My Personal Review:
Augusten Burroughs has lived a fascinating life, made more hilarious and fascinating by his story telling. It is a great introduction to his life and writing, although it was not the first to be published. His humor is self-deprecating and sometimes mean, yet still charming, witty and fun. We've all wanted to be able to be as forthright as Burroughs and this is a great way to live that vicariously through him.

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