

# **Generation What?: Dispatches from the Quarter-**Life Crisis

Bess Vanrenen



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Seemingly a bit ludicrous and even comical, the quarter-life crisis is actually a very real phenomenon afflicting more rudderless twenty-somethings with each passing year. In *Generation What?*, young up-and-coming writers recount their individual quarrels between hoping to exist on the fringes of childhood and wanting to participate in the arena of adult responsibility.

Some heartbreaking, some humorous, the essayists' disparate topics—passionless marriage, fallible parents, Peace Corps survival, cutting the college-life cord, and the like—run the gamut of disillusionment, denial, and yes, even deliverance.

The Lost Generation nursed the devastating wounds of World War I. The Greatest Generation conquered both the Great Depression and totalitarianism. The Beat Generation sped along the counterculture pathways. The Baby Boomers embraced protests and free love, while Generation X birthed mass technology and postmodern malaise. And Generation Y—the young people of the millennium who have more resources, technology, and education than any before—has . . . what?

Essayists include editors from *Broken Pencil* and *JANE* magazine and contributors to *The New York Times, The Village Voice, BUST, Adbusters,* and *PLENTY,* as well as young authors with books forthcoming from Harper Perennial and Simon & Schuster.

**Bess Vanrenen** currently calls Denver, Colorado, home, although she has also lived in Brooklyn, Reno, and Maadi, Egypt. For anyone hoping to induce a quarter-life crisis, Bess recommends graduate school.

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