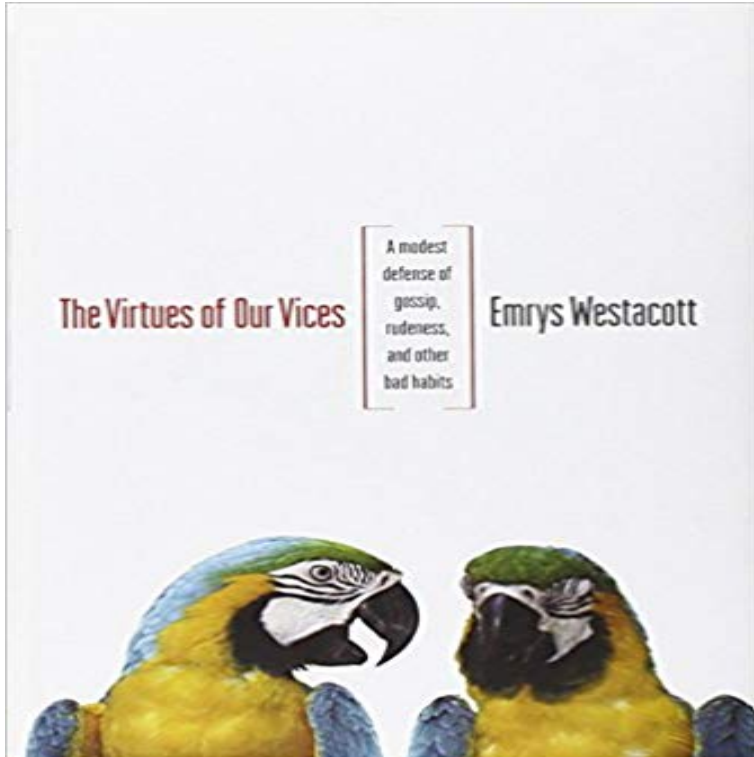


The Virtues of Our Vices: A Modest Defense of Gossip, Rudeness, and Other Bad Habits



Are there times when its right to be rude? Can we distinguish between good and bad gossip? Am I a snob if I think that NPR listeners are likely to be better informed than devotees of Fox News? Does sick humor do anyone any good? Can I think your beliefs are absurd but still respect you? In *The Virtues of Our Vices*, philosopher Emrys Westacott takes a fresh look at important everyday ethical questions--and comes up with surprising answers. He makes a compelling argument that some of our most common vices--rudeness, gossip, snobbery, tasteless humor, and disrespect for others beliefs--often have hidden virtues or serve unappreciated but valuable purposes. For instance, there are times when rudeness may be necessary to help someone with a problem or to convey an important message. Gossip can foster intimacy between friends and curb abuses of power. And dubious humor can alleviate existential anxieties. Engaging, funny, and philosophically sophisticated, *The Virtues of Our Vices* challenges us to rethink conventional wisdom when it comes to everyday moral behavior.

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