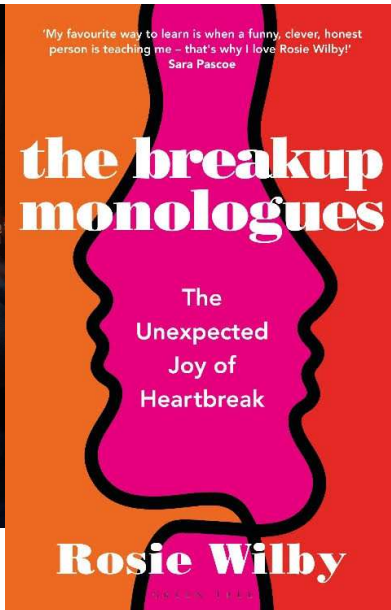




**THIS WAY OUT**  
THE INTERNATIONAL LGBTQ+ RADIO MAGAZINE



Janet Mason



Rosie Wilby

Welcome to our premiere "IN PRINT" series  
expanding the conversation beyond the broadcasts.

This week on the radio, we hear author Rosie Wilby read from her book. Janet Mason, long time contributor for This Way Out honors us with this inaugural review/interview. -----THANKS Janet and Rosie!

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The breakup monologues by Rosie Wilby  
a short review and an interview

By Janet Mason

Love makes the world go round. As a creative writer, I am often under a rock. But as a long-time member of the LGBTQ community, I recognize that love (and lust) makes us different and it sets us apart. So, when I found out about a book called the breakup monologues, *The Unexpected Joy of Heartbreak* by Rosie Wilby, I was intrigued. But in many ways, you wouldn't think that this book was my cup of tea. I'm an old school lesbian in a long-term relationship. I haven't been through that many breakups, but I kept an open mind and learned a few things from the book. For starters, I learned that I have been lucky. And gratitude is always a good thing.

Rosie Wilby is an award-winning comedienne, podcaster, speaker, and journalist based in the United Kingdom. She was dubbed the "the Queen of Breakups" by BBC Radio 4 following the success of her podcast, *The Breakup Monologues*.

I recently had the opportunity to ask Rosie some questions based on my reading of the book.

Rosie Wilby:

"The Breakup Monologues project all came about years ago when I got dumped by email. I did joke at the time that I felt much better after correcting my ex-girlfriend's spelling and punctuation. However, in reality, I was in a state of shock. So, I set about investigating the real psychology of heartbreak. I always find it comforting to understand something. The first creative manifestation of this understanding was a live solo show all about my breakup. Then I started *The Breakup Monologues* as a podcast with other performers and writers sharing their stories with me. Then I turned it all into a book combining my own journey with other people's stories and with some science."

"The Breakup Monologues podcast and book were preceded by my live comedy show called *Is Monogamy Dead?* which was largely based around the results of a survey I conducted asking, 'what counts as cheating?' This became my first book, which was longlisted for a queer writing prize here in the U.K."

"In my comedy, I often joke about how embarrassingly liberal and progressive my mum was when I was a teen. She would often tell me about female friends that she'd been very close with and how she might've been a lesbian in a different era. I found it all a bit cringe at the time. But I realize now that I was one of the lucky ones. I've had partners who are not accepted by their families – and in turn find it difficult to accept themselves. And yes, as you say, this makes it incredibly difficult for a partnership to flourish. Enforced secrecy can be a pretty toxic thing.

"Over the last few years, we've seen the emergence of a whole new language around breakups. So, I have a chapter which breaks down the meanings of

ghosting, bread crumbing, submarining, curving, benching, icing and more. Although some of these behaviors have existed throughout history, they are becoming more common as cutesy, fun slang terms legitimize them and the technology of dating apps facilitates them. It's very easy (some of us might say too easy) to disappear nowadays.

"I open the book by stating that heartbreak is universal whatever your sexuality, gender or age. We all go through what is effectively a withdrawal process – as we acclimatize to a new life without our drug (or partner) of choice. However, I also note that queer women do tend to go through more breakups in a lifetime than anyone else and, more hopefully, do seem to do it more consciously, amicably and compassionately. We often stay friends with an ex. I also investigate the nuanced differences between our romantic orientations and our sexual ones... and how I've typically formed my social and cultural identity around my romantic orientation (lesbian) rather than my purely sexual one (which is more bisexual / pansexual). I have always unequivocally defined as lesbian. But one chapter in the book describes my experience of participating in a 'sex lab' experiment. And, during that rather bizarre turn of events, I was forced to admit that my sexuality is broader than the label I've constructed for it.

"The subtitle of the book was inspired by the fact that I believe that breakups, once we've got over the initial shock, can provide an opportunity for transformation and growth. I know many people who have started new projects, adventures, and careers in the wake of a heartbreak. Ultimately, they've been able to form healthier relationships with more suitable partners too.

"As much as my book is about breakups, it's also about how we ultimately stay together having learned from our rollercoaster past. I believe that having had lots of breakups makes it easier to know yourself – both in terms of what you want and what you don't.

"I'm still touring The Breakup Monologues podcast over here in the U.K. and recording new live episodes (which are available to listen to free on all good podcast platforms around the world). So, I'm not quite done with discussing breakups. But I am tinkering with a new podcast pilot called "Looking for my Sister." It's about missing siblings, vanished twins and past lives and I'll be releasing it as a taster on The Breakup Monologues podcast feed soon.

Rosie Wilby is an award-winning comedian, author and podcaster who has appeared many times on BBC Radio 4 programmes including Woman's Hour and Four Thought. Her first book *Is Monogamy Dead?* was longlisted for the Polari First Book Prize and followed a trilogy of solo shows investigating the psychology of love and relationships. Her new book *The Breakup Monologues* is based on her acclaimed podcast of the same name. She is on Twitter @rosiewilby and Instagram @breakupmonologues

In addition to writing for This Way Out, Janet Mason is also the author of Tea Leaves: a memoir of mothers and daughters (Bella Books). Her novels THEY, a biblical tale of secret genders and The Unicorn, The Mystery are both published by Adelaide Books.

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