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## *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches*

The world's least loved insect comes to life in Ekaterina Smirnova's illustrations

Cockroaches usually elicit fear, revulsion, and squishing, but for artist and amateur entomologist Ekaterina Smirnova, they bring inspiration. *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches* will help everyone terrified of their six-legged roommates: through Smirnova's illustration and explanation, the entire life cycle of the typical cockroach is laid bare. Humorous, informative, and a little disgusting, *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches* is a necessary component of every city-dweller's bookshelf.

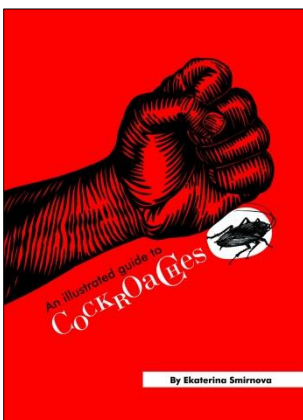
The striking red, black, and white pages of *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches* provide unusual facts about the most extraordinary insect. Beyond basic information, like descriptions of the different species of roaches, including the chilling ten centimeter Madagascar hissing cockroach, Smirnova tells stories about roaches in space, televised roach races, and even how an enterprising prisoner used roaches to distribute contraband cigarettes between jail cells. "Except for the polar regions, a cockroach has a visa for all continents," Smirnova informs us as she explains the history of the ubiquitous insect.

For Smirnova, *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches* started as an experiment to see whether she could make the most disgusting thing she could think of visually pleasing. Before she knew it, the bugs had totally absorbed her, to the point where she was studying them under a microscope while eating dinner. *An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches* is a study of the power of graphic design, and Smirnova succeeds in bringing cockroaches—already in our homes—into our hearts with her adorable and fun illustrations.

**Ekaterina Smirnova** (<http://www.katapostrophe.com>) is an artist and graphic designer from Novosibirsk, Russia. The first solo show of her watercolors will be in July 2011, and she has shown in numerous group shows, including the Central New York Watercolor Society Spring Signature Show, the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts 100th Annual Juried Show, and the Northeast Watercolor Society Annual Members Exhibition.

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### ***An Illustrated Guide to Cockroaches***

**Ekaterina Smirnova**

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