

# Alix Earle:

## New TikTok 'It Girl' takes internet by storm

COMMENTARY

Gaby Friedman /  
Reporter

A 22-year-old student at the University of Miami, Alix Earle, has taken social media by storm in recent months. Earle is a popular influencer on the video sharing platform TikTok, where she is most known for her "Get Ready With Me," commonly referred to by the acronym "GRWM," videos.

These videos consist of individuals filming themselves getting ready for the day or an event, sharing their makeup or hair routines in short 15-second to 3-minute clips.

Over time, Earle has accumulated a total of 3.9 million followers, with a massive spike in her following in December, when her popularity initially rose. Earle's TikTok popularity is on the rise, with her daily followers increasing by approximately 100,000 per day. Earle also has a strong pres-

ence on Instagram, with a total of nearly two million followers.

Earle's rapid rise to fame has been publicly compared to popular influencer, Charli D'Amelio. D'Amelio is the second most followed user on TikTok, with a following of approximately 149.6 million.

As a result of the accessibility and opportunities on TikTok for overnight popularity or going "viral," Earle has become the next overnight sensation. This popularity is not unwarranted because Earle has been an extremely positive role model to which young people can look up to.

The trending makeup routine that Earle created has particularly entered the spotlight, with the products she mentions noticeably increasing in sales as people around the world attempt to recreate her look.

Earle has been labeled by many as social media's newest "it girl" – a term used for someone who has appeal for their lifestyle, appearance and engaging personality – not

only because of her influence on the beauty industry, but also because of her honesty and relatability.

Earle has repeatedly made videos discussing her struggles with acne and the process she underwent to clear her skin and more importantly, regain her confidence. Earle has also spoken about the toll acne took on her mental health, and on many occasions, has spoken out about beauty filters and social media's unrealistic standards for young people.

This has been incredibly impactful, as seeing a creator with this scale of presence speaking out about these stigmatized topics can be monumental in giving young people an uncensored understanding of their favorite creators, particularly so they do not have an unrealistic expectation of their own appearances based on what they see on social media.

Brands have picked up on Earle's new found popularity, reportedly paying between \$40,000 to \$70,000 for a

brand partnership with Earle, depending on the success of the campaign. Most recently, Earle went on an all-inclusive trip to Dubai with makeup brand Tarte, bringing her even further into the spotlight but not necessarily for the right reasons.

This trip was estimated to have cost \$65,000 per guest. This steep cost included a Jeep experience, individual villas for each guest and many branded gifts from Tarte. Though this trip was an incredible opportunity for influencers to collaborate and for the beauty brand to receive more exposure, the timing of the trip was insensitive during this time of global economic crises. The trip showed viewers an extreme luxury, while many are struggling with basic necessities.

More broadly, "GRWM" videos have become popular not just for Earle, but for many creators on TikTok. These videos have taken the platform by storm with the hashtag "GRWM" having over 67.9

billion views and rising. These videos have given smaller creators a chance to grow a following on TikTok and small businesses a chance to promote their products.

GRWM videos have had an extremely positive impact by showing a different side of social media, not only just posting the final look but the process from the beginning. Posting the overall process and not just the outcome gives young people on the platform a more realistic understanding that social media is curated and shows a more vulnerable side of their

Graphic by Anahi Pellathy

most beloved creators.

Alix Earle is representative of a colossal step in the right direction for social media, especially TikTok, to be a more comfortable and relatable platform and to set more realistic expectations for young people looking up to large creators such as Earle.

## REVIEW | 'Anxious People' challenges biases, encourages empathy through ridiculous characters and plot

Elena Alexander /  
Sports Editor: Print

When I first started reading "Anxious People" by Frederick Backman over winter break, I was not particularly enamored. I could only read in short spurts and had little focus. One afternoon, however, I sat down to read and all of a sudden it came alive for me. Over the next few days sitting on my grandparents' plush beige couch, I devoured "Anxious People."

Backman's novel, which I found last summer in a bookstore that recommended it for fans of Matt Haig's "Midnight Library," chronicles a robbery-turned-accidental hostage situation.

In an unnamed Swedish town that doesn't normally deal with remarkable events, a bank robber tries, and fails, to steal exactly 6,500 Kronors from a cashless bank. In an attempt to escape, the robber unintentionally crashes an apartment

viewing and ends up holding six prospective buyers and a real estate agent hostage. When the bank robber finally gives up the hostages, the police hear a shot, rush into the apartment, and find a rug soaked with blood – but no bank robber. So what happened?

"Anxious People" is essentially a mystery novel, but instead of a character finding clues along the way to solve the mystery, more details of what happened are revealed to the reader as they go on. The main storyline occurs over a single day, and it is told over and over again from the perspective of each character.

Every iteration reveals more details about what really happened, along with the backgrounds of each of the characters. While finding out more about the day's events, we learn about the bank robber, hostages and police officers, and the circumstances that led them to that day.

Like the plot, all of the characters have strange first impressions. For example, readers get to know a snarky and emotion-

ally unintelligent bank CEO, an actor who's side hustle is getting paid to crash apartment viewings to drive down the price, a retiree who can list out the entire Ikea catalogue in their sleep, and a fiancé who eats limes when they are anxious.

Throughout the book, though, readers start to figure out why the characters are the way that they are. I loved getting to know each of the characters and understanding what makes them so strange.

"Anxious People" challenges your biases. In one particular moment, I discovered a key detail about one of the characters and realized that I had spent the entire book up to that point with an unfounded assumption about the character I didn't even realize was an unfounded assumption. This (what I can only guess was intentional) breakthrough by Backman made me appreciate and scrutinize the book in a whole new way.

Backman's novel is expertly laced with detail and easter eggs; as soon as I finished it,

the first thing I did was start to read it again to spot the details and clues that I missed the first time.

Moreover, the book builds empathy. It emphasizes that all humans have the shared experience of thinking we are idiots, or "Stockholmers" as described in the Sweden-set story, not really knowing what we are doing in this world but pretending and trying anyway because we have to.

These methods build empathy by reminding readers that everyone has their own backstory that has led them to become the person they are today, and they all deserve a chance to be understood.

Like Haig's "Midnight Library," "Anxious People" is written with a similar straightforward plot progression. Backman does not describe settings or people with intricate adjectives and imagery, but rather with mundane and humorous similes.

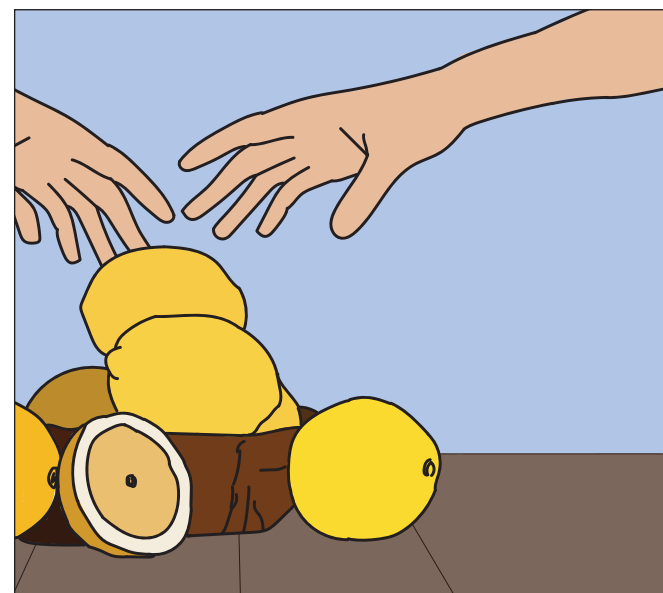
I genuinely laughed out loud when reading the book, the type of laugh that makes any family member in the room ask,

"What's so funny?"

The book is not only humorous, but also highly reflective. While reading, I would go from laughing in one paragraph to being somber and reflective in the next. It covers serious topics about mental health and musings on life using the narrator's stream of consciousness. The reader is directly addressed in these moments

to make them feel the message more personally.

These emotive qualities, along with the satisfaction of figuring out how the robber escaped, made the novel engaging and kept me turning the pages. "Anxious People" is a lighthearted but also fulfilling read that makes the reader reevaluate and appreciate human connection.



Graphic by Clara Martinez