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Naked Serial Killers in Volkswagens — Review

David Louden · Thursday, October 29th, 2015

The vast swell that is the Americas invites exploration. It was built on exploration and exploitation so it's damn near incredible that now, in 2015, there are still writers that can take you on uncharted adventures across the land of the free.

Catfish McDaris is more than "one of the greatest weirdo writers" plying his trade today. When you say his name you invoke the spirits of America's finest literary talents. John Fante, William S. Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, Charles Bukowski. These are men of such limitless ability than their names transcend categorization to become their own genres. McDaris is one of the last writers on the planet able to call men like this peers.

Naked Serial Killers in Volkswagens is his latest offering. A surreal, self-aware, trans-formative look at the American Dream, consumerism, gender, sexuality, mental health and our place in a land that prioritizes one over the other. His central character, Bagre, a third-person semi-biographical misfit, takes to the road with Mercedes, a sexually charged associate of an associate, tasked with typing up Bag's manuscript as he becomes the modern-day world's answer to John Wayne in a world that no longer needs, nor wants a John Wayne.

McDaris' writing brings together two worlds that I love. In parts he's equal to John Fante, conjuring up comparisons to *Wait Until Spring, Bandini*, *West of Rome* and *Brotherhood of the Grape*. At others, *Naked Serial Killers* drops into the world of metaphor, surrealism and parable. McDaris' writing could easily take over where religion falters such is his skill. Burroughs' translucent The Soft Machine springs to mind as the author paints the most beautifully, fluid portrait of a modern man with a language so rich you'll put on fifty pounds just by reading the god-damn thing. That is not to say Catfish is anything less than his own man. Try as you may, you will never be able to replicate the linguistic dance that pours from his brain, through his typer and on to the page. There's a solid gold gift at work here.

If you're wondering whether there's "something lurking deeper behind your words than fornication, defecation, and masturbation" you need not worry. McDaris' art is one that takes the day-to-day mundanity of life, of human interaction and bodily function and raises it aloft; elevating it to a status alongside the angels.

Excerpt from *Naked Serial Killers in Volkswagens*:

> “I’ll be in New York City as soon as I can. Where are you staying?” “I met someone else. He’s a photographer in Tribeca. My vagina is on exhibit in a museum and it’s making me lots of money.” “I thought we were getting married? I thought we had a future together? Now you’re parading your pussy all over the Big Apple. I guess it is better I see the true you before we ever jumped the broom.” Bagre hung up, thinking every dark cloud has a stinky lining. He looked out from the train station and this weird naked man with a Swastika tattooed between his eyes was driving a Volkswagen. He got out of the VW singing Helter Skelter by the Beatles and pulled a goat from the back seat and was trying to fuck it. Bag wanted to shove a grenade up Charles Manson’s ass, but he felt sorry for the goat.

Naked Serial Killers in Volkswagens poses more questions than the State Prosecutor having found you in his child’s closet at 3AM dressed as a purple dinosaur with chocolate smeared across your dongle. It’s a fierce, compelling, intelligent read that at 52 pages is ohhh soooo painfully short. Read and re-read but do it slowly, you have the inner workings of brilliance at your fingertips. A deliriously dreamy book with a set of ten ton balls on it.

Purchase *Naked Serial Killers in Volkswagens*

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