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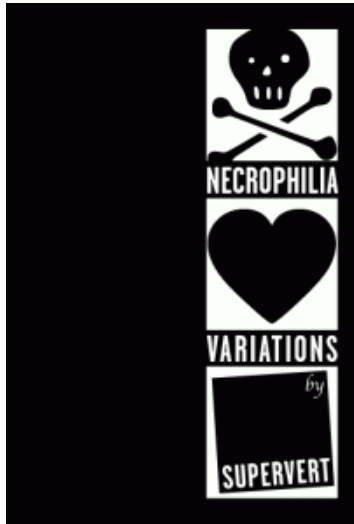
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Necrophilia Variations by SUPERVERT

July 24th, 2010 Jessica Brown



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"When someone you love dies, should you masturbate?" – Opening line, "Prescription for Grief"

I have to admit, as I have so many times before, that I am a sucker for covers. If I'm in a bookshop and I happen to spot, out of the corner of my eye, a title I am completely unknowledgeable of, and if this title has an interesting cover, I am quite likely to pick it up and inspect it. I may not walk out of the shop with that book dangling from my hand in a plastic bag, but it will have captured my attention, at least for a moment or two.

My first introduction to SUPERVERT followed that exact protocol. I was browsing the shelves at Barnes and Noble, spotted a slim black tome with stark, though minimalistic, white lettering and simple illustrations and immediately wanted to know exactly what

it was I was staring at. I felt a bit stupid, as it was obvious from the title that the book was about necrophilia. As a horror writer, I felt damn near compelled to buy it; as a somewhat productive (that can be called into question, I suppose) member of society and the kind of person who enjoys anonymity, I felt compelled to not be seen walking around the store with it. I was torn in two directions, and in the end, mostly due to not really having fifteen dollars of dispensable income at the moment, I left empty-handed.

I never did get that book out of my head, though. I searched it up on Amazon, where it wasn't much less expensive and didn't grant me the luxury of snagging it on the dirty cheap through a reseller. However, it did allow me to browse

the book more than thumbing through a physical copy while trying to maintain its pristine binding at the bookshop permitted, and after I'd pored over those few pages I was convinced my initial reaction to the book was a bit misguided.

It wasn't really about necrophilia at all.

A few weeks ago I found myself at the same Barnes and Noble, eager to pick up something new. I wasn't in the mood for another horror novel, and yet I didn't feel like picking up any anthologies, either, as I had a stack of those (some of which I made appearances in) at home to leisurely sift through. I wanted something completely different, something that would make me think long and hard about things I wasn't normally prone to spending much time contemplating.

Suddenly I remembered the little black book I'd spotted on the shelf over a year prior, and I knew I wanted to at least look at it again. I couldn't remember the name of it, though, and I wasn't about to go ask the middle-aged woman at the information kiosk, "Hey, can you tell me the name of that book about necrophilia you used to have?"

Thank god for wireless access points.

A few minutes later and I was scouring the back wall, hoping they still stocked it. I have horrible luck finding things in brick and mortar stores when I have a real agenda, but this time I lucked out. It was still there.

I took my copy to the café and, as nonchalantly as I could, ordered a cold coffee and sat down to read my new purchase.

It didn't take long for me to fall completely and irreversibly in love.

Necrophilia Variations, while certainly covering the idea of sex with the dead, is much more than just a book about corpse shagging. Sure, there's a bit of it in there, but it's not an attempt to shock or deliver cheap and twisted thrills. There's a bit of that in there, too, by the way.

Necrophilia Variations is, at its core, a study on modern humanity, our self-imposed boundaries, what keeps us from pushing beyond them and, most importantly, what provokes us into throwing them aside. How can sex and death be so obsessed over, and why do we hold them so far apart from each other? What happens when we bring them closer together? Why do we react the way we do when confronted with death, and why do we occasionally eroticize it? What is perversion? Do corpses even care what we do with them? Would they prefer we find a way to enjoy them? Can the dead find salvation through the sexual whims of the living?

I could go on and on about the different questions this little book poses. In fact, I bought a Kindle copy just so I could mark up the various philosophical passages in order to meditate on them further. My digital edition now looks like a child playing in a meadow decided to smear buttercups all over it.

Despite the intent to bring uncomfortable questions to the forefront of the readers' minds, the short stories in *Necrophilia Variations* stand well on their own as fiction pieces. Despite each being written in the first person viewpoint of a male protagonist, the individual tales contain a voice and idea all their own. In one, a man ponders the future of mourning as digital technologies become more complex; will we eventually be able to use the dead as a commodity for Internet voyeurs? In another, the idea of death junkies and suicide bombers is explored; would some young men strap bombs to themselves because it attracts groupies? In another, a quieter idea is brought up; is it possible for women to become more attractive when they are in mourning? Does grief amplify beauty and, therefore, a woman's more erotic qualities?

My favorite piece is the aforementioned "Prescription for Grief." When someone dies, their loved ones are expected to (and often do) mourn intensely, wailing and throwing themselves into fits or drowning in depression. Would it not be better for all involved if wakes and funerals were less morose and more sexually bacchanalian, complete with lewd inscriptions on headstones and mourners pleasuring themselves while memorializing the dead?

Every once in a while, I find a book that affects me so greatly that it lingers long after it's been devoured and placed back on the shelf. I have a feeling that SUPERVERT's collection will be with me forever, worming its way deeper and deeper into my brain until its presence is untraceable. Still, the ideas will remain, possibly to my dying day, reminding me that despite the cessation of my flesh the pleasure may go on for much longer.



Posted By: Jessica Brown

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[\(http://alookatabook.blogspot.com/\)](http://alookatabook.blogspot.com/) Jessica Brown is a lifelong fan of horror film and



fiction and resides near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, only a few short miles from Living Dead ground zero. Her short fiction has been featured in Pill Hill Press' Twisted Legends collection, Books of the Dead Press' Best New Zombie Tales anthology and in several Library of the Living Dead collections. Her first novel, In the Teahouse, is slated for publication through Library of Horror Press. Be on the lookout for it in the near future.

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