



## South of No North

*Charles Bukowski*

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### **South of No North** Charles Bukowski

*South of No North* contains some of Bukowski's best work. Among the short stories collected in the book are *Love for \$17.50*, about a man named Robert whose infatuation with a mannequin in a junk shop leads him first to buy it, then make love to it, and then eventually fall in love with "her," much to the consternation of his real-life girlfriend; *Maja Thurup*, about a South American tribesman with an enormous penis who is brought to Los Angeles by the woman anthropologist who has "discovered" him and become his lover; and *The Devil is Hot*, about an encounter with Old Nick at an amusement pier in Santa Monica, where Scratch himself is caged and on display, fed only peanut butter and dogfood, exploited by a cynical carnie.

The collection also features two of Bukowski's finest and most famous short stories: *All the Assholes in the World Plus Mine*, an autobiographical rumination on the treatment of his hemorrhoids, and *Confessions of a Man Insane Enough to Live With Beasts*. (The latter story originally was published as a chapbook of 500 copies by Bensenville Mimeo Press in 1965.)

The short stories collected in the volume are evocative of Bukowski at his best, when he was one of the premier short story writers still at the top of his talent.

- Wikipedia

### **South of No North Details**

Date : Published May 31st 2002 by Ecco (first published 1973)

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Author : Charles Bukowski

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## From Reader Review South of No North for online ebook

### Robin Friedman says

Charles Bukowski (1920-1994) had a gift for creating evocative titles. The title of this book, "South of No North: Stories of the Buried Life" (1975) captures hauntingly the sense of loneliness, alienation, and aloneness that underlies the 27 short stories in this volume.

Bukowski began writing short stories at an early age while he supported himself doing odd jobs and through work at the Post Office. He then turned to poetry and, eventually, to writing novels at the urging of John Martin of Black Sparrow Press. Bukowski continued to write stories and columns for underground newspapers in Los Angeles. Some of the stories are included here.

As are the novels, Bukowski's stories are raw and gritty. They are filled with life in Los Angeles flophouses and cheap rooming houses. The stories feature chronic alcoholism, crude sexuality, sexual frustration, horseplaying, violence, and joblessness. They are a chronicle of the life of the down-and-outer.

Many of the stories are told in the voice of Henry Chinaski, the autobiographical character that is at the center of Bukowski's novels. But interestingly, some of the stories in this collection feature other characters and settings. The collection includes, for example a fanciful story set in the old West, "Stop Staring ... Mister", and stories with imaginative, if macabre themes, including "No way to Paradise", "Maja Thurup" and "The Devil was Hot".

The dominant impression these stories convey is one of loneliness and isolation. Whether the character is Chinaski or another individual, Bukowski writes of individuals who lack social connectedness and sense of purpose. His characters are perpetual outsiders who mock a world they cannot share and simultaneously tear themselves apart. Dostoevsky's Underground Man is a distant cousin of most of the characters we meet in Bukowski's stories. Another book that I find similar in tone, set in New York City rather than the west coast is Hubert Selby's "Last Exit to Brooklyn" which shares much of the grimness, loneliness, sexual obsession, and search for love that I find in Bukowski.

Some of the works included in this collection are more vignettes than short stories. There is little in the way of development and in some cases the climax of the story is nonexistent or misfires. There are interesting settings, however, in many of these stories and as sketches many of them work well.

The stories that exemplify the theme of loneliness for me include the first one in the collection, titled "Loneliness" and the story "Remember Pearl Harbor?" which tells of Chinaski's rejection for military service in WW II. These stories are good at sketching the nature of the rootless, lonely individual. Some of the other stories in this collection that I thought good are "Bop Bop against that Curtain", "Christ on Rollerskates", "Hit Man", "Pittsburgh Phil & Co" (a fine story about gambling at the racetrack) and "Confessions of a Man Insane Enough to Live with Beasts."

Bukowski writes simply with short sentences in a style filled with expletives and references to sexual and excretory functions. I became interested in Bukowski's writings several years ago, put them aside, and then reread some of them after viewing an excellent film on Bukowski's life: "Bukowski: Born into This". Bukowski is hardly a writer for all times and all seasons. But there is a toughness and raw humor in these books, and a sense of loss and sadness that make Bukowski's books highly evocative of certain kinds of blue and lonely feelings. The stories are metaphors of a buried life than many people see in themselves at times in somewhat different ways than the ways presented in Bukowski's writings. That is why, I think, Bukowski continues to have a following and to be read.

Robin Friedman

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### **Vderevlean says**

Deprimant pentru o lectur? de început de an, prea pu?in amuzant. Monoton în subiecte ?i personaje: scriitorul ratat ajuns la marginea vie?ii, alcoolic, mizer, al?turi de câteva prostituate ?i 2,3 prieteni la fel de rata?i ?i deprima?i. ?i tot a?a, cale de 250 de pagini.

Contrapondere dur? la o imagine de succes a scriitorilor americani ?i a vie?ii pe care ar duce-o. Câteva texte bune, îns? nu e ceea ce mi-am dorit. Îl prefer pe Bukowski poetul.

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### **Delara H F says**

Absurd... Totally absurd

Who the heck does he think he is messing with papa?!! Seriously?

Awfully horrifying catastrophic!!

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### **Cristina Boncea says**

Pe de-o parte am fost dezam?git? de această colec?ie de povestiri, pe de alt? parte, în continuare am r?mas cu un sentiment nemaîntâlnit pân? acum de mine în literatur?, o stare care s-ar putea transcrie drept confuzie.

Avem de-a face cu o serie de povestiri scurte ce vizeaz? vie?ile anumitor personaje care-?i rememoreaz? tinere?ea american?, îns? în prim-plan îl avem pe Henry Chinaski, un posibil alter-ego al autorului. Ce au în comun aceste povestiri, în mare parte, sunt violurile, be?ivii, s?r?cia ?i prostituatele. Henry Chinaski este pe de-o parte un scriitor de succes care are lumea în picioare, îns? pe de alt? parte apare în diferite ipostaze umilitoare, lucrând în medii de joas? spe?? ?i neilustrând vreo speran?? la un tip de via?? superior, ini?ial. Celelalte personaje sunt de asemenea de sex maculin, prezentând diferite întâmpl?ri cu prec?dere din spa?iul hollywoodian, ducându-?i cu greu existen?a de azi pe mâine ?i uneori comi?ând crime pentru a face ni?te bani în plus. Starea predominant? este aceea de abis al vie?ii, exploatând la maxim punctul prin care mul?i oameni ajung s? treac? la un moment dat ?i anume, cel în care nu au nimic ?i pe nimeni care s? le ofere un scop sau o ?ans? de sc?pare din acest abis.

Unul dintre personaje chiar spune la un moment dat c? se simte atras doar de oamenii dec?zu?i, nu de cei care au haine frumoase ?i propriet??i pe numele lor; i se pare c? doar cei asemenea lui au tr?it cu adev?rat. Personajele nu sunt doar cinice îns?, ci de-a dreptul agresive, insuportabile, singuratice din proprie alegere. Exist? destul de multe scene explicite de sex, îns? mai ?ocante mi s-au p?rut pasajele care vorbesc despre diverse afec?iuni precum hemoroizii sau despre alcoolism. Titlul, de exemplu, este preluat de la una dintre povestiri, în care un b?rbat cheltuie?te respectiva sum? de bani (17,50\$) pentru a-?i cump?ra un manechin, pe care îl folose?te pe post de juc?rie sexual?. Am spus la început c? am r?mas cu un sentiment ciudat dup? această lectur?, pe care nu-l pot identifica în totalitate momentan, datorit? faptului c? a?tept?rile mele de la Bukowski erau foarte mari ?i chiar m-am blamat c? nu am parcurs lucr?rile acestui autor mai devreme. De la primele pagini, îns?, mi s-a p?rut c? nu pot identifica vreun element original, vreun lucru despre care s? nu mai fi citit înainte sub această form?.

Cartea în sine este un abis care te poate trage în?untrul lui, punându-te în pielea unor personaje care nu ?i-ai dori s? fii niciodat?. Tipul de oameni pe care l-a exploatat autorul prin aceste povestiri este cel care a trecut deja de multe stagii de auto-distrugere, r?mânând doar omul în forma sa pur?, f?r? prea mare uz de ra?iune sau sentimente. Fiecare personaj în parte este sigur pe sine ?i încearc? s? supravie?uiasc? într-un univers propriu limitat, întrebându-se deseori cum de nu ?i-a g?sit înc? moartea. Trebuie s? recunosc c? această abordare este foarte interesant? ?i poate aici apare conflictul meu interior vizavi de carte: de?i nu m-au impresionat extraordinar pove?tiile în sine, unele atingând chiar ?i cotele ?tiin?ifico-fantasticului, faptul c? Bukowski a reu?it s? p?streze aceea?i m?sur? calm? ?i indiferent? la dezastrul din jur în fiecare dintre ele spune foarte multe lucruri despre el ca scriitor.

A?adar, pot spune c? nu am renun?at înc? la curiozitatea mea în ceea ce-l prive?te pe acest mare artist, îns? pe viitor mi-ar face plăcere s? citesc un întreg text, cu început, final ?i încheiere, scris în aceea?i manier? simplist?, dar debordând de înc?rc?tur? emo?ional?. Pentru mine ar putea reprezenta un dezavantaj faptul c? Bukowski a ales s? illustreze doar anumite scene, f?r? prea mult context în prealabil, care au f?cut imposibil? acea conexiune pe care o caut în timpul unei lecturi. Se poate spune, deci, c? magia sa const? mai degrab? în for?a cu care men?ine atmosfera sfidatoare, în orice circumstan?e, aproape independent de text în sine. După p?rerea mea, aceasta nu are cum s? fie una dintre cele mai bune lucr?ri ale sale; nutresc speran?a c? voi g?si pe viitor ?i elementele care i-au lipsit acestei antologii.

## Koen Kop says

The majority of these stories are (semi-)autobiographical. What does Bukowski's alter ego do? He drinks, he fucks. He's a bum. When he's not on a drinking or fucking spree he tries (and fails) to hold down any mean job, or he's in hospital recovering from some booze-induced ailment. He hates his fellow men that are clean-shaven and have steady jobs. (I like clean-shaven men with steady jobs: more often than not they are decent, idealistic people with a self-deprecating sense of humor that arises from the realization that their life-long hard work will only do so much to make this world a better place.) The few stories that don't feature his alter ego are all about .... drinking! ...fucking! Here's one: Big Jim fucks all the ladies, for Big Jim has a big cock and wins all the fights . One day Big Jim humps somebody's girl friend. The somebody objects and challenges Big Jim to a duel. But not to worry: the girl friend shoots her boy friend dead. End of story. Next story: Some big guy rapes hippie chick at knife-point, after knocking down one of her two male companions - who are unarmed, therefore don't interfere. After the act the girl informs her buddies that solely from a sexual point of view it wasn't all that bad and 'You guys almost don't exist'. The three of them continue on their hitch-hiking way. End of story. Get the picture? This world is for the big, strong, mean and well-hung (tom)cats. You have a sensitive soul, or your prick is just average? You're out. (You're female? You're fucking material - that is, if your ass/tits/legs are tops - otherwise you don't exist.) Get this: I'm not a prude - I like sex (like you); I do the hard drug ethanol (like most of you) and soft drugs like nicotine and marihuana (all of them an occasional basis - like most of you.) But -my, how politically correct! (I'm not.)- unlike Bukowsky (and again, like most of you) I don't look upon the other gender as an amalgamation of butt, boobs and legs. And then: a whole book full of stories where the mind and the senses have been numbed by alcohol: it gets so vacuous, so repetitive. Besides, most of these stories don't go anywhere; they just end in mid-air. One example: Guy has a row with his girl-friend. Guy walks out the door, takes a drive, buys a quart of liquor, gets back in his car, opens the door to alluring young girl - girl is unwilling; he shows her the bottle; girl steps right in. End of story. On the positive side: fast-paced, funny (here and there), straightforward unembellished story-telling (like Hemingway) - but the subject matter is too limited, adolescent, or downright boring. A big no-no.

After writing this review I took a look at what some other Goodreads people had to say about this book. Here's Lucas Podesta's review: ' Hey, let me tell you about 25 different times I got drunk and had sex.' That



sua vida, pois nunca se deixou reger pelas convenções sociais . Liberdade ou libertinagem?  
Há também humor, sarcasmo, coisas por revelar e a honestidade do autor. Apreciei o humor.

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### KamRun says

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### cristinastancu2016 says

Un volum de povestiri scurte semnate Charles Bukowski. Pentru mine, ini?ierea literar? în lumea acestui





ε?ναι ?νας απ? τους αγαπημ?νους μου συγγραφε?ς, διαβ?ζοντας τα βιβλ?α του με κ?νει να νι?θω καλ?, να χαζογελ?ω, να σκ?φτομαι διαφορετικ? τα πρ?γματα και να βλ?πω με ?λλο μ?τι τους διαφ?ρους χαμ?νους της ζω?ς.

Εδ? ?χουμε να κ?νουμε μια συλλογ? απ? ε?κοσι επτ? διηγ?ματα, στα οπο?α πρωταγωνιστο?ν μεθ?στακες, αλ?τες, ε?κολες γκ?μενες, αποτυχημ?νοι τ?ποι που προσπαθο?ν να βρουν μια χαμαλοδουλει? για να πληρ?νουν το νο?κι και τα μεθ?σια τους, τεμπ?ληδες οлк?ς, αφεντικ? που ε?ναι ?,τι πρ?πει για σ?κοι του μποξ, και π?ει λ?γοντας. Επ?σης σε πολλ? διηγ?ματα αφηγητ?ς ε?ναι το alter ego του συγγραφ?α, ο γνωστ?ς και αγαπημ?νος Χανκ Τσιν?σκι. Π?σο γαμ?τος ε?ναι αυτ?ς ο τ?πος; Τ?ρα, με τι ?χουν να κ?νουν τα διηγ?ματα; Με τι ?λλο εκτ?ς απ? μεθ?σια και κρασοκαταν?ξεις, απ? ?στατο σεξ και ατελε?ωτο κυν?γι του ποδ?γυρου, απ? χαμαλοδουλει?ς και τον καθημεριν? αγ?να να τα βγ?λει κανε?ς π?ρα;

Τ?ρα, ?σον αφορ? την γραφ?, δεν χρει?ζεται να πω κ?τι το ιδια?τερο, κ?τι διαφορετικ? απ? αυτ? που ?δη ?χω πει για προηγο?μενα βιβλ?α του Μπουκ?φσκι που ?χω διαβ?σει: Ε?ναι φοβερ?, ακαταμ?χητη, ρεαλιστικ?, τρελ?, αναδεικν?ει με τον πιο δυναμικ?, ?ντονο και απολαυστικ? τρ?πο την χαμοζω?, σε κ?νει να θ?λεις να τα βροντ?ξεις ?λα και να πας να μεθ?σεις σε κ?ποιο μπαρ με τους πρ?τους μαλ?κες που θα πετ?χεις μπροστ? σου και μετ? να πηδ?ξεις ?ποια γκ?μενα σου κ?τσει. Απ? την ?λλη, σκ?φτεσαι, δεν ε?ναι και ?σχημα να ?χεις λεφτ? στην ?κρη, δικ? σου σπ?τι, μια μ?νιμη δουλει?, μια οικογ?νεια της προκοπ?ς, να μην μεθ?ς σαν τελειωμ?νος μπεκρ?ς και να κινδυνε?εις να κολλ?σεις ?να κ?ρο αφροδ?σια απ? τις τυχα?ες γκ?μενες που μπορε? να σου κ?τσουν... ?μως αυτ?ς ο τρ?πος ζω?ς ?χει το ενδιαφ?ρον και την πλ?κα του. Και ο Μπουκ?φσκι ?ταν μ?στορας σ'αυτ?. Και αυθεντικ?ς.

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### Alia (???) says

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### Po Po says

This is a book of short stories. Dark, gloomy, brutal and real. I adore Bukowski's colorful vocabulary and rough 'round the edges vernacular.

