



Blues for Cannibals: The Notes from Underground

By Charles Bowden

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Blues for Cannibals: The Notes from Underground By Charles Bowden

Blues for Cannibals continues the quest Bowden began in *Blood Orchid*-to discover the headwaters of the sickness that seeps through the American soul, and to consider what it might mean to come fully alive in a time of exalted consumption, global pillage, gated communities, and wholesale destruction of the environment. Down, down he leads us, in intoxicating, nearly hallucinogenic prose-past the Yaqui, the Anasazi, and other ghosts of our collective history, past the hookers, winos, and assorted have-nots outside the prosperous circle by the fire. We meet a prisoner obsessed with painting presidents, sex offenders whose desires are not as alien as we wish, a murderer whose execution does not cure what ails us. "I wound up looking at a world where cannibalism is life," Bowden writes, "and of course, given the diet, a life without a future." He mourns a young artist who couldn't find a reason to keep living and tends a mesquite tree that won't die. And down among its metaphoric roots, he reacquaints us with the appetites-fierce, flawed, human-that might save us too. *Blues for Cannibals* is scripture for an age when bushes no longer burn.

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Blues for Cannibals: The Notes from Underground By Charles Bowden Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #257061 in Books
- Brand: Brand: North Point Press
- Published on: 2002-02-06
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 1.14" h x 5.83" w x 8.56" l,
- Binding: Hardcover
- 288 pages

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Editorial Review

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Starred Review Bowden, a midwesterner who discovered his spiritual home and totem, the mesquite, in the brutal and beautiful Sonoran Desert, trained as a historian but was destined to become a journalist witnessing life in a violent and volatile world ruled by "cannibals . . . who create nothing but who can consume everything." In a fiery and poetic indictment that continues the feverish social and moral inquiry begun in *Blood Orchid* (1995), he profiles rapists, drunks, outlaws, a suicidal artist, ne'er-do-wells, and do-gooders; suffers grievously over tortured and murdered children; brilliantly links the story of an institutionalized self-taught artist and convicted killer who obsessively paints pictures of presidents with a blazing reassessment of Lyndon Johnson; chronicles an execution; mourns the death of four friends; and vividly portrays the mighty nineteenth-century Yaqui war leader Cajeme. As furious, wounded, lustful, and compelling as Algren and Miller, Bowden confesses his depthless hunger for women, good food, red wine, sunlight, gardening, and freedom, and warns, presciently, of an inevitable wave of violent change. Fueled as much by love and compassion as by sorrow and rage, Bowden's red-hot blues embrace life in all its confounding intensity. *Donna Seaman*

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Review

"He seems to me a literary descendant of both Henry Miller's mad and energetic jazz riffs and the passionate rhetoric of James Agee."--Bill Holm, *Hungry Mind Review*

"A thrillingly good writer whose grandness of vision is only heightened by the bleak originality of his voice."--Ron Hansen, *The New York Times Book Review*

About the Author

Charles Bowden is a journalist whose work appears regularly in *Harper's*, *Esquire*, *GQ*, and other national publications. He is the author of several previous books of nonfiction. He lives in Tucson.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Catherine Poppe:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in most way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of often the crowded place and notice by means of surrounding. One thing that at times many people have underestimated that for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a e-book your ability to survive raise then having chance to stand up than other is high. For yourself who want to start reading a new book, we give you that Blues for Cannibals: The Notes from Underground book as starter and daily reading e-book. Why, because this book is greater than just a book.

Edward Bastian:

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Randy Mosley:

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