

## Colours

**Leon Dale**

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*Avid readers of erotica will appreciate the titillating tidbits in Dale's highly charged memoir.*

Leon Dale's explicit memoir of sexual awakening holds nothing back. In *Colours*, the first-time author chronicles his life under the umbrella of his sexual experiences, from the earliest hints of sexuality as a child to his intense midlife experimentation. It's a frank, no-holds-barred description of a life lived by a man with big appetites and the women who fulfilled his cravings.

Writing in a direct, conversational style, Dale beckons readers into his dreary Manchester, England, childhood. "Grey, choking fog" and "belching cotton mills" paint the picture. He proceeds chronologically, using colors to illustrate and differentiate the periods of his life. Each chapter carries its own color, a device that is more successful in some instances than others. While chapters titled "Red Lights" and "Green Lights and Green Fever" are apropos, giving a good idea of the sexual exploits and feverish experimentation contained therein, others are less evocative and feel a little forced. "Browns, Ambers, Tans, and Purples," for instance, conjures few ready images, and though the colors do appear in various scenes, their meaning isn't always clear. Combined with the cheerful, multicolored paint splashes on the book's cover, the color theme is perhaps belabored beyond the point where it supports the story.

Dale's natural style creates an authentic English voice throughout, with phrases like "I won't argue the toss" inviting readers to feel like they're his mates and he's just telling stories like any other guy. The tales themselves are frankly sexual and chronicle in detail a variety of fleshly pleasures, running the gamut from masturbation to group sex. Though the cover art does include an amorous couple on the beach, unassuming readers might mistake *Colours* for a tame romance. Dale asserts that his book is not simply about his sexual exploits, but an overwhelming proportion of the narrative is dedicated to the details of these very exploits. Most of the sexual content could be considered conventional erotica, although there are forays into unusual acts that might make some uncomfortable.

A self-described "alpha male," Dale tells his story with a certain braggadocio, and though he does address his own shortcomings on occasion, this is largely a tale of his big moments. He discusses his failed first marriage and the irresistible, insatiable woman who tore him away from this stable relationship, yet his moments of regret are few. He's here to celebrate his experiences, not ponder his inner workings. This perspective limits the level of empathy evoked in later chapters, when Dale's sensual world comes crashing to the ground.

While those expecting a conventional memoir may be shocked by the content of *Colours*, avid readers of erotica will appreciate Dale's titillating tidbits and may even want to come back for more. Indeed, the ending of *Colours* intimates that Dale's downtime doesn't last and that he may write a second volume in the future.

SHEILA M. TRASK (June 3, 2014)

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