ForeWord Reviews

LITERARY

Fondly
Colin Winnette
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Spiked with grotesque humor and words fashioned to probe the brain, these two novellas traverse the human inner world.

Offbeat, a bit creepy, and, perhaps, even an encounter one will never forget—Colin Winnette knows how to fashion his words not merely to create story, but to probe one's brain. This rising star on the literary scene has already established a reputation for revealing human character, and *Fondly* will not disappointment those waiting for more of his dysfunctional, quirky escapades.

Lurking within the shadows of his two "fond" novellas is the ghost of a yesterday gone awry, laying in wait to sabotage the present and the future. Not to be confused with criticism, this achievement actually deserves a high mark for flipping the age-old theme: one cannot relive the past. *Yes, one can, and in a bad way.*

Laced with intoxicating, dark humor, every weird situation and bizarre phrase has been implemented to get the reader's attention. Once riveted, the action really begins.

Opening with "In One Story, the Two Sisters," numerous hypothetical scenarios place the siblings in revolting, or plain ludicrous, setups that extend the realm of imagination into uncomfortable zones. Each self-contained vignette explores a possibility: two sisters live in the country and are in love with the same old man, two sisters share a keyhole, or two sisters are bound and gagged and put in the trunk. A message, often oblique, sometimes straightforward, appears in all, but the ultimate meaning remains a matter of interpretation, exactly as the author intended.

In this passage, the sexual reference is subtle: "She tended the garden. She watched the horses move, watched them breathe. She stayed up late and touched the horses and brushed their manes and thought of her sister, who was somewhere out there, along with their youngest horse, finding her own way."

The second story, "Gainesville" tempts the reluctant mind with generational madness.

Like a disease running through the veins, these characters cannot prevent themselves from repeating the mistakes of their forebears. Stopping short of predestination, Winnette delves into an unexplainable replay of sordid, violent events to a degree that credibility is tested.

Again, it is the effect, not necessarily the plot, that will linger. A Texas family bloodline is splattered across the pages in a disturbing love-hate struggle. Told like a biblical parable, sans religion, reading this tale is like watching a chain of cars careen off the same treacherous cliff. Entertaining—like a series of hauntings on Halloween night.

Colin Winnette is an award-winning author of a short story collection and a novel. *Fondly* is his third release.

Though promoted as a book that retells "patterns of violence and love," this meticulous work meanders into an occult world of compulsive, near ritualistic fatalism. A learning experience (as well as a warning) to people combating childhood trauma, Winnette's writing delivers an emotional punch followed by a discreet wink.

Julia Ann Charpentier