ForeWord Reviews

LGBT

I like to Watch
Christopher Pierce
Cleis Press
978-1-57344-422-4
(January 2011)

The nuances of voyeurism and sexuality make for a powerful blend in this first-ever anthology of erotica for gay voyeurs and exhibitionists. Adeptly edited by Christopher Pierce, who also edited *Biker Boys: Gay Erotic Stories* and authored *Kidnapped by a Sex Maniac*, the stories in the collection explore a range of situations involving the desires of both those who like to be watched and those who like to do the watching.

Pierce briefly details his first encounter with voyeurism, when a high school wrestling teammate discovered him in a delicate moment of self-gratification, and then insisted he continue while the teammate watched. The experience led him to become fascinated with voyeurism and exhibitionism.

He writes, “Having sex alone or with others is often stimulating enough, but the extra thrill of watching or being watched (or both at the same time) adds the perfect element to the mix, like a certain seasoning that elevates a dish that is merely delicious into the realm of the sublime.”

Pierce’s expert editorial “cooking” allows him to feature many standout stories, ranging from a hit man watching a sexual encounter through his rifle’s scope to a couple who invite a third man into their bedroom so one of them can watch and direct the action. No matter what the situation, the authors are expert at explaining the emotions that crop up on both sides of an encounter.

Perhaps the most intriguing story in the collection is Gregory L. Norris’s “The Rookie,” in which the author employs the second-person narrative. By creating a world in which “you” are the protagonist, Norris brings the reader into the action, as if he or she is the one being watched. The device works well and serves as a good example of the type of inventiveness that Pierce found when selecting stories for his anthology.

Most of the authors in *I Like to Watch* have extensive experience writing erotica, and their expertise shows in every story. The tales are sharp, sexy, and often graphic, but the erotic adventures don’t overpower the narratives. Characters are well drawn, even in the shortest

stories in the collection, and their engagement in voyeurism and exhibitionism is given context, making the action even more compelling. For the first collection of this type, Pierce has given the genre a strong kick-start.

Elizabeth Millard