

## I'm Not Scared of You or Anything

**Jon Paul Fiorentino**

**Maryanna Hardy, Illustrator**

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Award-winning Montreal author, poet, editor, and Concordia University creative-writing instructor Jon Paul Fiorentino writes the thoughts that we all might have, especially those of us who are loners, losers, or social misfits of one sort or another, using them to create surreal little worlds that show what it might be like to actually live them out. How about living as a fake martial-arts expert, a competitive pillow fighter, a busker, or a rock star wannabe from Winnipeg? How about, at the age of thirty-eight, interviewing your own mother and getting her to tell you what she really thought about you as you were growing up—and having her say, “you were a pudgy, pubescent pain in the butt”?

If you’ve ever suspected that the veil between the ordinary and the surreal was very thin—that just a small step to the left would take you to a place where things are not quite what they seem—then these stories, with their touch of absurd humor shrouded in darkness and often hazed over by drugs, drink, or mental illness, may be just what you’re looking for. But be warned: they are not designed for comfort, and their silliness is far more unsettling than funny.

Maryanna Hardy’s quirky illustrations, especially the exquisite cover design, gracefully enhance the dark humor and wit that are amply displayed in this collection. The Montreal artist’s work has been published nationally and internationally, short-listed for several awards, and exhibited in galleries.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Winter 2015)

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