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Savage Love

Douglas Glover
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Savage Love takes twenty-first-century liberties to the max, refusing to succumb to an inner censor that resists exposure to what makes the sensitive uncomfortable.

Love and lust, infatuation and infidelity, all the deep-down primal urges—Douglas Glover tackles every instinct with a bizarre spin or a brutal twist. This gifted author transfixes his audience with the unthinkable, drawing word pictures that some may prefer not to see in the middle of a lonely night. Illuminating.

At times the common man is depicted as a "bare" step above an animal, yet an innate goodness surfaces that attempts to soothe the pain of living. Glover's collection of short stories and micro-fiction presents an archaic worldview with sophisticated manipulation. He targets the contemporary urbanite with thought-provoking descriptions and strange characters.

In the title piece, an unimaginative lover confronts the reality of competing with an exciting rival: "While lovemaking between Ona and Betsy had dwindled to an occasional hasty encounter in the dark between his fetid sheets, often so mechanical and dispassionate as not to disturb Twinks his cat, sleeping at the foot of the bed. Shelby and Betsy embarked on a fugue of compulsive exhibitionism and public sex."

Details are provided for the curious. Blunt erotica, cruel violence, and sordid scenarios are depicted throughout these human-animal stories. Dank and festering with a purpose, this carefully contrived writing lifts the veil of civility and the constraints of society, reducing a person to a lower state of being in periods of stress and confrontation. Reminiscent of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is its underlying message that primordial instinct may override modern sanity.

In "A Flame, a Burst of Light," Glover describes a graphic battlefield scene: "The brown girl's soldier boy dies at her breast. For an hour she commits adultery, becomes his lover, vows she will meet him in Paradise, kisses his cracked and infected lips, whispers dirty endearments in the shell of his ear where her tears catch."

Douglas Glover has taught creative writing at numerous colleges and universities. He is currently on the faculty at the Vermont College of Fine Arts. His work appears in anthologies and has won international awards.

Not for the timid, this gut-wrenching collection of physically and emotionally charged fiction lives up to the outstanding reputation that Glover has attained. His distinctive voice may echo into the next century and beyond.
JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (Winter 2014)

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