Clarion Review

Poetry

The Life and Times of Paul the Poet and His Writing Utensils
Paul Kokkinis
Lulu
978-1-4243-1952-7
Three Stars (out of Five)

Perverted Slinkys an ode to Paris Hilton's cell phone and a poet's relationship with his pens and pencils are just some of the jokes and jibes that make up Paul Kokkinis' two-volume flip-book of drawings and poems.

In the first volume *Paul's 32 Thought Provoking and Stimulating Illustrations (plus one bonus pic) — Rated R For Fun* the drawings range from the comical (one hysterical sketch is of an aging man begging the one hair left on his head not to leave him) to the sexually graphic "Slinkys Gone Wild" to the bleak. In "Man's Real Best Friend (the one he wants to keep on hand)" Kokkinis depicts a man's hand holding a beer bottle that embodies every vice known to humankind from drugs to phone sex while the beer bottle itself is an (extremely) anatomically correct female form.

While there isn't an obvious cohesive theme drawing the reader from page to page there's plenty to think about. Each of the full-color pen and pencil illustrations has a cryptic quality about it as if there were hidden clues that must be unraveled to be fully appreciated.

The second volume *A Poetic Short Story: The Life and Times of Paul the Poet and His Writing Utensils* is a collection of poetry that tells the story of the poet and his ongoing relationship with his pens and pencils: they seduce get angry request the equivalent of funeral services when they run dry and the author cheerfully accommodates. In this brightly lit slightly surreal writing world quality matters even when choosing a pen from the Dollar General Store. After the selection Kokkinis discovers:

But her writings were irregular liquefied explosions of ink
And her excess flow ruined a lot of my papers and plus I got a paper cut
I guess you get what you pay for

Best to stick with name-brand writing utensils.

Later though he finds one more to his liking and romance blooms:

Her writings are beautiful but sad and deep dark blue

I hold on tight.

Kokkinis' outrageous imagination subdued style and sly observations about the human condition coupled with his intriguing if not slick illustrations make these books a treat for the literary adventurer's bookshelf.