



How Loathsome

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The new series by the artist of *Gloom Cookie* and *Courtney Crumrin!* Do the town with gender outlaw Catherine Gore and her disreputable friends. It's Friday night and Catherine is dragged to an S&M play party to see what passes for sex these days. There, the beautiful, enigmatic fem fatale Chloe takes Catherine by surprise. Chloe is a girl with a secret. Catherine is intrigued, and the two form a tight bond. But is it love, or desperate obsession? Part *Queer as Folk*, part *Trainspotting*, this deeply personal, sexually bizarre, drug-addled adventure is a gothic exploration of the not-so obvious nature of gender. Collects the 4 issue mini-series.

How Loathsome Details

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Author : Ted Naifeh , Tristan Crane

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From Reader Review How Loathsome for online ebook

johnny dangerously says

A baffling and shallow piece on 'edgy' sexual counterculture. I bought it because I love Naifeh's art, but the writing is putrid, and, yeah, loathsome. The characters are caricatures going through pointless plots that only exist to show their content-- pseudo incest, strap-ons, and a trans woman talking to herself in the mirror (how original!). I nabbed this on a deal years back because I loved the Courtney Crumrin books and wanted to see how Naifeh's art deal with more adult subjects, but I couldn't get past how bad the writing was. If you must buy it, focus on the graphics; the writing is only memorable for its equal potential to bore and enrage.

CuntyLicious says

If i had to pick one gothic graphic novel to be the one & only Book to read, i'd pick How Loathsome without hesitation.

The Gothic Culture is enriched by its ample diversity & inclusiveness of minorities within Minorities. People of Color & queer folks. folks we never get see them or know about them due to popular, pasty, exceptions of what passes for a goth.

It makes sense how the general idea of goths are moody, white suburban youth who applies eyeliner & hate their parents is & still, the norm in the pop culture mentality.

Yes, i stole this line from the Bitchy Miss Boy George, who successfully, dragged Marc Almond face down back & fro on the floor, when she was asked about the latter side musical project: the Gothic cabaret assembly , Marc & The Mambas

Which is partly true. if you're the kind whose only experience with interacting with the culture is through the recorded cackle of Vanilla missionary ,puny minded, white bleached american tv shows or your Sunday lecture, or worse, mid 00's Vampire freaks.com.

Televangelism & heteronormativity bashing aside.

The graphic novel illustrate the closest look of a real Nigh life of your average goth in LA back in the far gone & mostly treasured 90's; by those who were born half decade later and claim that *we* missed most of the fun; if we're not the bane of their existence. *Old bat tendencies dies hard*.

The cast are a colourful lot of queers, blacks, and white Europeans. drug & sex addicts, capricious Divas & clique mentality club goers hungry for attention of their queens & kings who work part time at your average & plain, white shirt & blue jeans sewing room shops.

a shrilled gasp of bewilderment & disgust

how's your fluorescent pink skull coloured nostalgic shades? blurry or shattered? *stifle a laugh*

Yes. it shows the glamorous side & the underbelly of the beast of the culture & its lurkers.

No melodramatic, suicidal poetry, no demons to haunts you, other than your mind inner voices & bad drug trips hallucinations & the bitter after taste of aimlessness & disappointment.

and yet. that what makes the story so poignant & meaningful. The aimlessness & disappointment; and the aftermath.

It's not a happy read, it's not a bubbly, filtered, kid friendly trip to the dark side of cool. it's is a stark, realistic, portrait of being a stranger among strangers in an uncaring world. both hideous & sublime.

lesleymac says

I wanted to like this so much more than I did. I can't blame this book for the fact that there's not really a market for books with relatively normal transfolks. But one more book saying trans = decadent, shocking, dirty..? It seems to perpetuate a lot of stereotypes...

Anthony says

My library is kinda weird when it comes to GNs. Take this book about transgendered druggies living in modern America. Not exactly a book for the masses. However, it's extremely well written and it rises above it's fashionably deviant pitch. There are echoes in this narrative. Echoes of loneliness in Laramie. Echoes of late nights at Club Retro. And the chick-dude who looks like Neil Gaiman reminds me of both Criag and Georgette. As if they were merged into a perfect creature.

And since I never saw her-his penis, the perfection remains. Just like criag.

Devowasright says

one of the most perfectly written graphic novels i've ever read.

David Thomas says

This graphic novel is about equal parts drugs and gender fluidity. There were a few characters that kept me guessing if they were dudes or ladies, until I realized that most of them were either both or neither. Not much plot to speak of but not boring.

Lilah says

Peels back a layer of the various goth/queer/fetish subcultures in San Francisco, a wander through different lives anchored by an internal monologue rather than a set story - the observations ring true, but more out of familiarity rather than anything truly groundbreaking. If you've read Danielle Willis, you've been here before - this time, with artwork, which is grim and lovely and perfectly suited to the narrative. It's far too rare that

when seedy underworlds get visuals, the people stay real - the characters here were more human than stereotype which I really appreciate.

Thomas says

I know Tristan, so I am obviously biased, but that doesn't change the fact that this is an amazing gorgeous slice of San Francisco life. Reading it feels exactly like cruising SF drag bars and goth clubs on drugs; you can smell the piss and smoke and puke and the BO of the weird sweaty B&T wannabes. Captures the feel of a world with stirring precision.

Completely absolutely effing mind-blowing in concept and execution.

Ladyiconoclast says

This book reminds me what comics are for. This story, in this medium, is perfect and beautiful. If you've ever been queer, gender non-conforming, kinky and/or on drugs in San Francisco, you will see parts of your experience in this story.

Sarah says

This is genderfuck at it's most blunt and in-your-face. Originally published as four separate comics, this collection brings together Catherine's adventures all over the Bay Area from parties full of goth wannabes to acid trips into the desert to a multi-gender drag show. Catherine never uses the word bisexual, in fact you get the feeling she would puke on the idea of using any labels, however she certainly shows strong sexual interest in people of many different genders.

Read the rest of my review at bisexual-books.tumblr.com

Edward Nichols says

Definitely in my top 5 graphic novels now. Loved it. Refreshingly honest and articulate which is especially commendable when dealing with the tricky subject of gender identity. Loved the illustrations as well.

Alexis Hall says

Brought to you courtesy of Reading Project 2015.

I dithered about putting this on the mild indifference shelf or not. It resonates with me and doesn't at the same time. Is at once meaningful and frustrating.

This is a graphic novel that actually belongs to me. Whoop.

It's a series of interlinked stories about ennui and alienation what seems to be -- from the perspective of someone who has never been to San Francisco -- the San Francisco queer underground.

But it's a scene that, to me at least, transcends geography.

On the other hand, I'm kind of wearied by ennui and there's only so much alienation a queer can take, y'know?

I mean yes: people take drugs, blurred gender boundaries are a thing, all these things intersect with various other things, other alternative subcultures and the sex industry. And then there are the rich and the bored and the lost who treat all this like an adventure playground.

This isn't exactly what you'd call cutting edge stuff. But it's all presented with a faint undertone of ZOMG. When it feels authentic, it seems almost by accident - yet there are moments when it really does. People and scenes I recognise. Thoughts I have thought. And the rest of the time it edges onto fetishisation.

Gah. I dunno.

Complicated. Not terrible. Not awesome.

Kristen says

This graphic novel was a little too "adult" for me and lacked a bit in the plot line. The graphics were fantastic though and I did enjoy it a bit.

Adrienne says

I read this in an hour while sitting on my friend's couch immediately before our book group meeting, and that was a while ago - not to mention the day after a big long kung fu test, so I was, overall, pretty exhausted as well. Grain of salt?

I wasn't a big fan of the graphic novel, but I didn't hate it either. The story revolves around a disjointed group of gender-queer people in San Francisco, who attend S/M parties, do lots of drugs and drink lots of alcohol, and sleep around. That is to say: it was a very different perspective on life than I get. It was interesting to examine our impressions of characters' genders, especially because those are influenced by the graphic that goes along with the novel and because the characters are not always what they seem at first glance. Our conversation consisted of things you don't typically hear ("Look -- right there. That's a penis. Ask the straight girls, they'll tell you.") in general conversation.

Anyway, I got this sense that the novel was trying to be *so meaningful* with the characters' ennui. Deep sigh. I'm sick of ennui.

There were also random unrelated black and white parts interspersed with the general, sepia-toned story. I wasn't too sure what was going on with those (but see above, re: tired and reading fast).

Overall, I would venture a guess that it did a good job at capturing its specific subculture of people, but having very little direct experience with the S/M + drug culture, I can't really say for sure.

Peter says

How Loathsome is... a graphic novel variation on Jesus' Son if the main character had been Trans-gendered. Several short stories culminate in a deflated climax where no characters change. They simply become more resolute in destroying them selves (I don't care what you do in the bed room or what gender you call yourself... more power to you. But cocaine and heroine are still cocaine and heroine: not the answer just a problem). I'm not sure if the book is trying to link the two practices together or not, but had the narrative focused on the love story at the beginning of the book this would have been GREAT!

And these are great stories, fantastic characters, and unbelievable art work. All I'm asking for is a character arc. But by the end of this the characters are exactly where they were at in the beginning. And you could say that was the point, but that point is so much more interesting from the point of view of one character who has changed looking back at the others. Then the lack of change has a point of comparison and therefor content.

I would also like to point out that making fun of pretentious goth kids who speak in a Victorian vernacular is still funny.
