



Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet

Adam Howe

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From Adam Howe, winner of Stephen King's On Writing contest, come three original novellas of hardboiled crime, graphic horror and pitch-black gallows humor.

DAMN DIRTY APES

Washed-up prizefighter Reggie Levine is eking a living as a strip club bouncer when he's offered an unlikely shot at redemption. The Bigelow Skunk Ape - a mythical creature said to haunt the local woods - has kidnapped the high school football mascot, Boogaloo Baboon. Now it's up to Reggie to lead a misfit posse including a plucky stripper, the town drunk, and legend-in-his-own-mind skunk ape hunter Jameson T. Salisbury. Their mission: Slay the beast and rescue their friend. But not everything is as it seems, and as our heroes venture deeper into the heart of darkness, they will discover worse things waiting in the woods than just the Bigelow Skunk Ape. The story the Society for the Preservation of the North American Skunk Ape tried to ban; Damn Dirty Apes mixes Roadhouse with Jaws with Sons of Anarchy, to create a rollicking romp of 80s-style action/adventure, creature horror and pitch-black comedy.

DIE DOG OR EAT THE HATCHET

Escaped mental patient Terrence Hingle, the butcher of five sorority sisters at the Kappa Pi Massacre, kidnaps timid diner waitress Tilly Mulvehill and bolts for the border. Forcing his hostage to drive him out of town, it's just a question of time before Tilly becomes the next victim in Hingle's latest killing spree. But when they stop for gas at a rural filling station operated by deranged twin brothers, Dwayne and Dwight Ritter, the tables are turned on Hingle, and for Tilly the night becomes a hellish cat-and-mouse ordeal of terror and depravity. The meat in a maniac sandwich, Tilly is forced against her nature to make a stand and fight for survival. Because sometimes the only choice you have is to do or die...to Die Dog Or Eat The Hatchet.

GATOR BAIT

Prohibition-era 1930s... After an affair with the wrong man's wife, seedy piano player Smitty Three Fingers flees the city and finds himself tinkling the ivories at a Louisiana honky-tonk owned by vicious bootlegger Horace Croker and his trophy wife, Grace. Folks come to The Grinnin' Gator for the liquor and burlesque girls, but they keep coming back for Big George, the giant alligator Croker keeps in the pond out back. Croker is rumored to have fed ex-wives and enemies to his pet, so when Smitty and Grace embark on a torrid affair...what could possibly go wrong? Inspired by true events, Gator Bait mixes hardboiled crime (James M. Cain's The Postman Always Rings Twice) with creature horror (Tobe Hooper's Eaten Alive) to create a riveting tale of suspense.

"It's an explicit, hard-hitting, twisted funhouse ride into pulpish horror wrapped loosely in a tattered skein of irreverent, jet black humor. In short, it's a freakin' blast." --Walt Hicks, author of Dirge of the Forgotten

"Every page ratchets up the tension another notch even as it descends deeper and deeper into terrible darkness. Out of all the books I've read for Ginger Nuts of Horror, this is definitely the most intense." -- David Dubrow, author of The Blessed Man and the Witch

"With Die Dog Or Eat the Hatchet, Adam Howe hasn't written one of my favorite books of the year, he's actually written three of my favorites. Stories that are tight, toned, and genre-confounding. Horror fans and crime fans are going to come to blows over who gets to claim Howe as one of their own, but they're both going to be wrong because Howe's his own thing." - Adam Cesare, author of Tribesmen and Mercy House

"The recipe for Adam Howe's DIE DOG OR EAT THE HATCHET is: Two parts Joe Lansdale, One part Justified, and a heavy dose of WTF. The result is a swampy cocktail darker than any backwoods hayride, stronger than the meanest Sasquatch, and crazier than anything you'll find chicken-fried at your local state fair."-Eryk Pruitt, author of Hashtag and Dirtbags

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet Details

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From Reader Review Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet for online ebook

??? 2.? says

Late last year, after being introduced to the *Swamp Noir* genre, via a rare little gem entitled *Gator Bait*, I was kindly offered the opportunity to delve a little deeper into that mad mind of Adam Howe. I was provided a free copy of this collection of novellas in exchange for an honest review. These stories are all loosely tied together by the theme of dangerous animals lurking in the shadows.

Damn Dirty Apes the first story in the collection ask the puzzling question, “What is skunk ape porn?” Reggie Levine, the bouncer down at the Henhouse is about to learn more than he ever cared to know on the subject when one of the girls has a close encounter of the weird kind. After the man in the ape suit goes missing, Reggie teams up with an “expert” skunk ape hunter to go on a little snipe hunt of their own. Much wackiness ensues. ★★★??

*“This...this is crazy,” I stammered. “I’m not fighting a fucking monkey!”
Chains nodded like he understood perfectly. “Then I guess you’re getting beat to death by one.”*

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet is a pitch black tale of a sadist mass murderer. *The Sorority Slayer* has been playing possum for a few years at the state nuthouse, waiting for that perfect chance at escape. It all goes off without a hitch and he’s nearly home free until he pulls into the wrong filling station. What follows is a twisted dog-eat-dog serial killer showdown. Caution: avoid reading directly after a meal! ★★★★★

“Dwight fetched a sling blade down from the pegboard wall—some folks called it a Kaiser blade, Dwight always called it a sling blade.”

Gator Bait follows Smitty “Three Fingers” who’s on the run from the law after a nasty encounter with a jealous cuckold. He’s in desperate need of some cash when he chances upon a jumping little joint, out in the willywags, serving up grade-A firewater with a side of burlesque. He offers up his fine piano playing services in exchange for a little room and board. Good thing he’s “sworn off dames for life” ’cause a jealous cuckold ain’t nothing compared to that “grinning gator” out back. ★★★★?

“She was built for both dairy and beef and I waggled the cigarette between my lips approvingly.”

I’m not sure if *Damn Dirty Apes* was an earlier tale, but I did notice the author let slip with the Queen’s English much more often than the other two stories. It could be that I just wasn’t as interested in the Big Foot lure, but to me, the story seemed a little less refined. However, the *Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet* tale was a blast start to finish with nary a complaint to list. And I really dig that ’30s Noir style in *Gator Bait*, but I was never in any doubt as to the inevitable outcome. Overall a fine collection of sick, twisted, and darkly humorous tales (just the way I like ’em). An easy four-star rating. Recommended.

“These stories are intended only for those with strong stomachs and sturdy hearts. To put it in laconic

vernacular: NO WIMPS BEYOND THIS POINT! And please...don't feed the animals."

—Randy Chandler

Jason Parent says

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet is a three-novella collection from a Brit with a Lansdale, Hap and Leonard-sort of masterful connection with the American South. And despite other comparisons I have seen to some of horror's best, it is the horror-thriller great Lansdale to whom I would most readily compare Howe's tales here - think Steel Valentine and Bullets and Fire, then add a wicked sense of dark humor that had me giggling like a madman as I read in public places.

I don't know how else to say it: I loved this book!

Still, Howe holds no punches. He doesn't shy away from any topic, any turn of a phrase, so don't expect these tales to do so.

It's a toss up for me which story I like best, though I think the nod goes to Damn Dirty Apes over Die Dog, then Gator Bait. Here is a bit on each:

1. Damn Dirty Apes - This story has an instantly likeable protagonist in Reggie found at the least likely establishment: a strip club. A bouncer, Reggie meets a host of oddball characters, including a fellow stuck in his glory days as a high school mascot and a man who hunts a Bigfoot-sort of creature called a skunk ape. Long story short: man goes missing, skunk ape blamed, Reggie and hunter take the case.

This story was darkly hilarious from beginning to end, and although much of the humor is low brow, the writing that backs it is full of wit and freshness and obvious skill. Instead of devolving into monotonous debauchery, as so much "extreme" horror does at the expense of story and craft, Damn Dirty Apes keeps up suspense and is enthralling from beginning to end.

The only minus I saw was the predictability of the abducted character's fate (view spoiler) a very small point and me reaching for a minus

4.97 stars, with a perfect hero

2. Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet - This story has themes that may be taboo to some readers, though not glorified or taken without tact. An escaped serial killer meets his match in a woman who underestimates herself and twins who might just be worse than he is.

I loved the primary antagonist, Hingle, a warped blade man after my own heart. Yes, I admit that there may be something wrong with me, because I was actually rooting for him throughout. He reminded me of Soldier from the Hap and Leonard TV series, so another nod to Lansdale. Yeah, I was rooting for Soldier, too

A bad man with charisma meets a heroine without. I truly believe she's made better by the experience. (Save for the psychiatry bills should she survive).

I was also confused at first by the title, which comes from Lansdale according to the author notes. But then a dog showed up and a hatchet, and all was right with the world. This one reminded me of a Masters of Horror

episode pitting killer against killer with gruesome results.

4.95 stars, with a perfect villain

3. Gator Bait - The title says it all here. This one had the bad guy against worst people and an ending after my heart.

4.85 stars, with a perfect gator

What amazes me about Gator Bait and Damn Dirty Apes, and to a slightly lesser extent, Die Dog, are the stories' flexibility in era. Each story may have taken place as far back as the 60s or as modern as today, albeit in less developed areas of the country. If not for a few inventions like a cell phone here and the Internet there, time might have been irrelevant.

It certainly played no part in the style of the stories. Noir, with plenty of dark humor (though decreasing as the stories progressed) reminiscent mainly of the eighties but with a heaping dollop of something Sam Spade made vulgar but delightfully so.

The writing is fluid, filled with a voice that draws you in and keeps you. Any criticism I have would concern the occasional joke I have heard before or cliche, the latter of which however fitting the feel, atmosphere, and language of the story as they do now in rewatches of almost anything Humphrey Bogart.

This book was a joy to read. I highly recommend it to fans of Lansdale, Ketchum, and the horror-thriller, noir and crime genres

Andrew Smith says

Comic Horror. Is there such a thing? Well I can answer that question, and the answer is yes – here it is. The only problem is, it isn't that funny and it's not particularly scary either. But it is gory, very gory. Amongst the delights in store for the characters in these three novellas is the opportunity to be horribly tortured, to be decapitated and to be eaten alive by an enormous reptile. It's all integral to the plot, of course.

My quick reflections on the stories:

Damn Dirty Apes

The most slapstick of the bunch, and also the longest of the three. I found this tiresome tale involving the search for a creature along the lines of the mythical Bigfoot appallingly tedious. If I were to award it two stars I'd consider this to be generous.

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet

There is at least a relatively cohesive plot here, but this one really does overdo the butchery. There are some funny lines though and I grew to have some feeling for the characters on the receiving end of much of the savagery. But this story, more than the other two, seems to struggle in the endeavour to blend the the humour with the bloodletting. Maybe three stars worth here.

Gator Bait

This is the pick of the bunch. Yes, there are blood and guts aplenty, but it's much closer to a straight, dark tale than the other two (and clearly that's the way I like 'em). And the humour isn't such a distraction; it's hardly more subtle, but it is more sparingly utilised. Four stars for this one.

Truth to say, I took a punt on this, only to find that it just not a style I was ever going to fully appreciate. I've read some rave reviews of this book and I'm sure that it'll do the job impressively for its true target audience. But not for me. Three stars – because I'm in a good mood.

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

This book is a collection on 3 novellas.

First up you have

Damn Dirty Apes

Reggie used to be a prizefighter before he went up against Boar Hog Brannon.

He got his butt kicked and is now serving as a bouncer at the Henhouse.

The Henhouse was a titty honk on the outskirts of town. The joint wasn't much to write home about, and why the hell would you? Dear Mom, Getting a lap dance and thought of you.... Lit by neon beer signs, fairy lights, and a gaudy glitter ball about the T-shaped stage, the place had a seedy Pleasure Island ambience.

One of the local ~~idiots~~patrons decides to make a monster porn starring his stripper girlfriend and his best friend (who just happens to dress in his old mascot outfit-large ape)

During amateur porn time..the legendary Bigelow Skunk Ape takes a liking to his buddy, Ned and takes off with him.

So it's up to Reggie, the videographer Lester, his stripper/pornstarwannabe girlfriend and a Monster hunter to head off into the woods to try and "rescue" Ned.

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet

Terrence Hingle is in the looney bin for chopping up some sorority girls. He escapes and takes with him a waitress from the near by dive because she drives a volkswagen Bug.

"Ted Bundy drove a Bug." The man grinned. "Did you know that?"

No. No, she hadn't known that. What person in their right mind would?

On the escape they meet up with a couple of really sweet brothers.

And stuff happens.

Gator Bait I had already read this one..but it's freaking awesome.

Poor Smitty aka Three Fingers. He gets caught with his hand in the honey pot.

By the Honey Pot's husband and ends up losing a couple of the fingers on his hand. It could have been worse since there was a "cigar cutter" involved.

He takes off running.

Smitty ends up in the swamp at a bar named "The Grinnin' Gator".

Smitty needs some cash and a place to re-adjust so he takes a job playing the piano at the bar. But this bar has a story, Croker who owns the bar has a little something extra out back.

Big George.

Big George was captured by Croker on a gator hunt he took with his dad..Croker's leg didn't make it. Daddy might be scarce too.

But poor Big George ended up getting hunted and brought back to the Grinnin' Gator. He is Croker's bestie though and he makes sure that he gets lots of goodies.

Now there is the sad little fact that Smitty has sworn off the Dames after losing his fingers over one..but then enters Grace.

She just happens to be Croker's wife.

Then the shit hits the fan.

Booksource: The author of this book did provide me with an ARC copy of this book. He knew what he was getting into...

This might be one of my longest reviews so in keeping with that I'll just feature everyone on my friends list that has braved this [gorefestbook](#).

You have Kelly and Mitchell together we probably broke the internet with our gifiness. Quit crying. You know you like them.

Then you have Melki who's bear avatar I completely understand now...she is waiting on some "morsels" And Susan who should hide that cute little doggie of her's eyes when she is reading this kind of material.

Janie C. says

Adam Howe fans: Did you know that Adam is on tour right now to promote this book ? I was reading his blog, and found that he will be appearing on several dates. You can find more details here: https://www.goodreads.com/author_blog.... The best part is, it's an online tour, so you don't even have to go out! Just let your fingers do the walking.

This book. Oh, how I enjoyed it! For me, the piece de resistance was the very end of Gator Bait, the third novella in this volume. Justice is served, oh yes! I practically cheered aloud.

Will you like these three novellas? Do you enjoy noir, criminal drama, gallows humor, extreme violence, cryptids and the movie Wrong Turn (just the first one)? Perhaps. I slunk through the pages like a dame looking for trouble, and I found it. Now it's your turn.

I received a complementary e-copy of this book from the author in return for an honest review. Thanks, Adam; it was a blast!

Melki says

Well, well, well . . .

If you've never had the pleasure of reading Adam Howe, the Londoner who can out-Lansdale Joe R. Lansdale, here's your chance.

Here be three tantalizing tidbits to wet your whistle, leave you feeling beaten with a tire iron, yet somehow wanting more.

First up, there is the delightful **Damn Dirty Apes** which concerns some local yokels filming a "nature documentary" (aka fake monster porn video) about the legendary Skunk Ape, finding more than they bargained for when the Real Thing shows up. There are so many LOL lines here, I gave up writing 'em down, though as an occasional viewer of the WWE, this one really tickled (and stuck to) my ribs:

Eliza was driving the camper. At Salisbury's command, she'd press a button on the dashboard console to activate the loudspeaker, and a godawful honking yowl would echo over the woods. It sounded like Ric Flair being sodomized by a moose with its pecker greased in pepper spray.

Yeah.

Story number two, is the title tale - **Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet**. It begins with a quote by Ted Bundy, so you can kind of guess how it's gonna go.

It's been four long years since the awful sorority house massacre, in which five young women were slaughtered by Terrence Hingle, and now . . .

I'm pretty sure I stopped breathing while reading this one.

Let's just say it's not for the squeamish, faint of heart, or anyone who believes Mike Huckabee makes a whole lotta sense.

(view spoiler)

The final thrill is the marvelously swampy **Gator Bait**. This well-written, slyly funny baby should appeal to fans of both noir and Southern lit.

There you have it folks - your chance to say, "Adam Howe? Yeah. I knew him when." So read these and say that. Then shout the man a beer for some tall tales well told.

SUSAN *Nevertheless,she persisted* says

I was provided a ARC of this book by the author in exchange for an honest review.

"Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet" is a book that contains three novellas that are beautifully executed. The book is engaging, funny, descriptive, well paced.....suffice it to say it is a roller coaster of emotions. The novella "Die dog or Eat the Hatchet" had me riveted to each page, there were times that I forgot to breathe. It was a terrifying tale that was a combination of "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" meets "The Hills have Eyes". You were right there in that house of horrors.

"Gator Bait" ,I had read this novella before and 5 starred it. Excellent,atmospheric read.

"Damn Dirty Apes" was hysterically funny. It was "Road House" meets "Finding Bigfoot".

Mr Howe is a gifted,talented author. His writing grabs you from the first sentence and as you finish the book you are sorry it is over. If you haven't given him a try you are missing out.

Dino-Jess ★ The Book Eating Dinosaur ★ says

I'm pretty sure I have PTSD from reading this.

Die Dog Or Eat The Hatchet is a crazy collection of three whacked out, fucked up stories from the bizarre mind of Mr. Adam Howe. The story which this collection is named after is by far the best, but I liked all of them.

Damn Dirty Apes:

This was the longest of the stories and probably the most WTF of all three. It has a cameo by Nic Cage, dinosaur descriptions, and Marky Mark references, what's not to love?

The action sequence gore fest at the end is terrifically disgusting and overall this was excellent.

4 Stars

Die Dog Or Eat The Hatchet:

Congratulations, Mr. Howe. You actually made me gag, and vomit in my mouth a little bit with this story.

I was so squicked out reading this that I was holding my kindle as far away from my face as possible and reading out of the corner of my eye because that will totally make a difference to how my brain will interpret the gore on the page, right?

Dwight and Dwayne were some of the sickest characters I have ever read. Some of the stuff they did....
shakes head

I'm permanently scarred from the scene with the arm and the lady on the bed. I will also never look at a birdcage the same way again. I'm not going to expand on these things, if you want to know more, read the book yourself.

This story was absolutely disgusting and I loved it.

5 Stars

Gator Bait:

I read this one earlier in the year as a standalone.

It had me on the edge of my seat, while screwing my face up at some of the squicky bits and just generally loving everything about it.

Dark, dingy, dirty. Very enjoyable.

4 Stars

I'm very, very impressed. Mr. Howe, I salute you and your sick ideas. I look forward to reading more of your craziness in the future.

4.5 Stars overall.

Thank you kindly to Mr. Howe for providing me with a copy of this collection in exchange for an honest review.

Kelly (and the Book Boar) says

EDIT: Because this gets released today, it's good in a disturbingly gnarly way, and the author hasn't proven to be an asshat so he deserves a float.

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet is a collection of three novellas. I'll be *cough* "reviewing" *cough* each separately. As always, this is giffed to the max so read at the risk of burning all your data in one go.

DAMN DIRTY APES

"The greatest trick the skunk ape ever pulled was convincing the world that he doesn't exist."

Reggie Levine used to be a hot shit prizefighter – that is until he came across one Boar Hog Brannon. (Mitchell has been impossible to live with since reading those words. No, Mitchell, we aren’t giving this an automatic 5 Star. DO. NOT. ASK. AGAIN.)

Anyway, old Reg retired his boxing gloves and retired his ass to a permanent spot at the local uhhhhhhh, “watering hole” . . .

It’s there Reggie drinks his breakfast, lunch, and dinner and serves as a bouncer for the proprietor, Old Walt . . .

Sidenote: I’m just gonna go ahead and leave the following here for me to come back later when I need some “inspiration” . . .

When a couple of locals decide to delve in to the world of adult film . . .

Nope. I’m talking about some fetish porn in the form of a dude wearing a mascot costume that smelled like a fart in an elevator. It’s right before the *big finish* *wink wink* when the movie crew finds themselves abruptly interrupted by a surprise guest . . .

(Can’t tell which is Bigfoot and which is Clay Matthews.)

Anyway, I digress. With the starring male now MIA and a local Skunk Ape hunter hot on the trail, Reggie finds himself recruited to save the day.

This was a ton of fun. Action-packed with plenty of humor. 17 Stars from Mitchell, but 3.5 (rounded up) for me since I knew where it was going the whole time. I don’t post spoilers, but if you follow my reviews enough you’ll notice I seem to fixate on certain characters and pop culture icons (not Goldblum this time Jeff, so STFU). That’s not to say I still didn’t have a superfuntime :)

DIE DOG OR EAT THE HATCHET

Y’all ready for this?????

So much ewwwwww. Me likey.

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet is a charming little tale of Terrence Hingle a/k/a “The Sorority Slayer.” Terrence found himself residing in the nuthouse after an . . . “encounter” with five members of Kappa Pi . . .

(Note to all men: Yes. This is **exactly** what women do whenever we get together.)

After biding his time Terrence makes his grand escape. Things are going along swimmingly until he makes a stop for gas and meets brothers Dwight and Dwayne . . .

and Terrence finds that despite all his rage, he is still just a rat in a cage.

This book is seriously f'd up. It gets a billion stars from both Mitchell and me. Now, if you'll excuse me . . .

GATOR BAIT

*“It’s a delicate operation I’m running here. Any man rocks the boat, he’s going overboard.’
Or below deck, I thought.”*

An . . . uhhhhhh unfortunate incident . . .

forced our MC to hightail it out of the city with no money to his name and minus a couple of fingers to boot. Ending up in a **“backwater tonk in the willywags”** it’s soon discovered that he can play a right fine pianey which earns him a job and the moniker “Smitty Three Fingers.”

Home of some world famous hooch and bare-it-all coochie gals, The Grinnin’ Gator is quite the destination. Smitty discovers he’s landed himself a pretty sweet gig. He has a roof over his head, is earning pert near city dollars even though he’s back in the stix, and he’s been lucky enough to stay on the owner’s good side so he’s not too worried about a close encounter with the resident badass, Big George . . .

Everything will remain gravy as long as he remembers he has **“sworn off dames for life”** . . .

When I saw the title Gator Bait my mind immediately went in one direction . . .

Which, of course, morphed into something else . . .

Which led to . . .

Which is pretty much the same as saying . . .

or #sloosh since I don't have a peen and all that.

Even though I bought it awhile back, I **finally** heard enough to get off my dumper and read the dang thing. At under 100 pages I really have zero excuse for being tardy to this party. If you're a fan of the ewwww as well as some seriously developed characters and story all wrapped up in a tight little bundle, this one's for you. And the noir tone? Yummmmmmm. Just like icing on the cake. Unfortunately Mitchell came across this quote . . .

"Big George's diet consisted mostly of chickens and rabbits . . . and once a PRIZED BOAR HOG . . . "

So he was out. He also demanded that I give it 1 Star, but I just shoved a sock in his mouth and found a replacement buddy to finish the read with me . . .

Frank Engator says 7 Stars (he's new at this reviewing stuff and how the Goodreads rating system works) so we have to cap it at 5. He also sympathizes with ol' Smitty and his lack of digits since he suffers the same affliction. Should've kept your damn paws out of the honey pot, Frank!

*This ARC was provided to me by the author after he saw my review of Gator Bait (a story which I PAID FOR, thank you very little). Adam Howe writes stuff I want to read. It doesn't matter if we're "friendly" on Goodreads – it's hard to find someone who writes stories that are simultaneously twisted and yet oh-so-very-entertaining. He also delivers novellas of the perfect length with just enough mindf*ckery to keep me on the edge of my seat, but not enough to make me run away from them screaming.*

Sh3lly (grumpybookgrrrl.com) says

Wow, what a ride!

I had previously read Gator Bait, which is the third story in this collection. I gave that one four stars. My review is here.

1) DAMN DIRTY APES. Five Stars!

Reggie was a boxer who had to start working as a bouncer in a Podunk stripper bar after getting hurt. It's not something he ever thought he'd be doing for long, but well, time passes quickly, and he just got used to it. Poor Reggie gets roped into a hunt for a mythical creature called a skunk ape.

By John Gieg

The frame adds such a nice touch. (*Incidentally, he would totally fit right in with many of the characters I've*

read about in various monster porn stories.)

Sooooo anyway, as the plot develops, we've got this guy named Ned, who runs around town in an ape suit he's never cleaned and that smells worse than ass, which he inherited after stinking it up so badly as the mascot, the coach couldn't possibly do anything else with it. His friend, Lester, buys a camera from his uncle for \$50 and they decide to start filming *gonzo porn*.

"And that's when it hits me." Lester mimed a lightning bolt striking down from the sky. *"When it comes to 'gonzo' porn," he said, "the Bigfoot porn market's already pretty much cornered. But skunk ape porn? Well, that's like an untapped oil field."*

Lester and the dude in the ape suit were out in the woods trying to make a stag movie - the "film" was to be the female's (Eliza) audition tape for *Tryout Tramps*. They're getting it on, when suddenly a REAL skunk ape shows up and drags Ned (ape suit dude) off into the woods.

There are some really great lines in this story and it is over the top hilarious. *Just what I like.*

Jameson T. Salisbury, Skunk Ape Hunter, shows up looking like a "department store Santa who'd turned Injun," with a "thicket of chest hair, like he was wearing an animal pelt undershirt."

Reggie gets roped into trying to hunt the skunk ape with Salisbury. The bait? A bucket full of:

"Coyote urine, skunk pheromones, swine excrement; ripe slaughterhouse offal; a few pieces of roadkill I scraped up on the drive to town-

Crazy times commence as the group try to find the skunk ape and run into some meth-cooking bikers who are out for blood. Fantastic story! Haha

2) DIE DOG OR EAT THE HATCHET. Three stars.

This is more just me not liking the serial killer torture type plots very much. Very scary, violent, brutal. But satisfying in resolution. Would make a great horror movie (all of these would actually).

In the end, a bit too traumatizing for my delicate, kittens and rainbow loving heart. :P

Overall thoughts:

Adam Howe is a fantastically talented writer who blends humor and horror perfectly. I haven't read anyone who does redneck/hillbilly noir as well. Okay, to be honest, I haven't read ANY other stuff like this. Is it an official genre? :) Well, regardless, this collection was awesome.

I received a digital version of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

Steve says

4.5 stars.

Damn Dirty Apes - 4 stars. Strangest noir I've ever read. This one creates its own category: skunk ape noir. This one is Deliverance on a hell's brew of crack and meth. Writing is outstanding!

Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet - 4 stars. Gruesome. And that's all I have to say about this one.

Gator Bait - 4.5 stars. I read this one about a month ago. This one was completely formulaic, completely predictable, and completely awesome. The writing was outstanding and the story, while nothing new to the noir genre, was like watching a train wreck: you know exactly what is going to happen but can't look away.

Bill says

Adam really shows off his "horror/crime" neo-noir chops and demented humor with his latest collection. His characterizations are spot on and well-drawn for such short formats. No doubt about it, the dude can write and obviously has some grave emotional and mental issues. And I mean that in the best possible way.

DAMN DIRTY APES - Eliza and Lester take Ned the Boogaloo Baboon out in the woods to make themselves a nature documentary when a smelly, hairy monster breaks thru the forest canopy and snatches Ned. Could it be the Bigelow Skunk Ape? Sure smells like it.

Mongoloid masturbation, gonzo porn, ruthless biker gangs and an urban assault vehicle disguised as a Minnie Winnie. Damn.

"...skunk apeing's no place for a lady." True dat.

A wild ride into the forest in search of a mythical creature that turns into one crazy mofo.

DIE DOG OR EAT THE HATCHET – A truly twisted tale told in alternating points of view.

When Tilly takes on an extra shift at the restaurant she could not have anticipated what the night had in store for her. What she gets for her good deed is a trip thru hell with a pair of psychos and an escaped mental patient that just so happens to also be a mass-murderer. Next time, I suggest calling in sick to work.

This one hits you hard like an ornery mule-kick to the cranium. Brutal and violent and strangely gratifying somehow.

Good Roscoe. Good Boy.

GATOR BAIT – I had read this one previously to reading it in this collection and it is just as satisfying the second time around.

An eight fingered piano player, sworn off dames and on the lamb, ends up in a broken down swamp tonk only to find himself knee deep in moonshine, deceit, adultery and murder. What more could you possibly

want? How about a humongous monster alligator named Big George with a taste for human flesh. Yeah, that should round it out nicely.

This was really a great story. A hard hitting and well written tale of noir on the bayou.

Meet you down at The Grinnin' Gator for some strippers and shine.

Adam's work oozes with all the right amounts of violence and dark humor. All of the stories in this collection are very well done and highly recommended! I am looking forward to see what else he can kick out. Solid 4.5 Stars rounded up because Adam has some serious skills on display here!

I received an ARC of this collection from the author in exchange for an honest review. This is it.

*4-7-16 - I increased a half star and rounded up to 5 stars because a good friend of mine got me thinking about this one again and it is pretty bad ass.

Karl says

With the publication of “Die Dog or Eat The Hatchet” Adam Howe’s second book he has been able to take my appreciation and enjoyment of his writing up a number of notches, and it was up there pretty high to start with, after reading his first published work “Black Cat Mojo”.

“Die Dog Or Eat the Hatchet” is an interesting use of a title. The story contains both a dog and a hatchet, however, the two do not ever meet in any way shape or form, although there is a clever use of a hatchet within the story. And the doggie does chase someone up onto a roof. More about this story later. At the conclusion of the book under “Story Notes” Mr. Howe explains that the title was granted him by Hisownself Mr. Joe R. Lansdale. This should tell us something, and all of them good.

The book contains three stories. The Contents are:

- 007 – Forward by Randy Chandler
- 011 - Acknowledgments
- 015 – “Damn Dirty Apes”
- 115 – “Die Dog Or Eat the Hatchet”
- 191 – “Gator Bait”
- 237 – Story Notes

Contrary to the first conclusion that might be reached the “Damn Dirty Apes” are a motorcycle gang who also cook crack. Our hapless main character named Reggie is a bouncer in a “showgirl” (think strippers) dive bar in the small southern town of Bigelow. It’s there that Reggie through his failed prizefighter skills tries to keep a semblance of order in the establishment.

Reggie’s best friend Ned, and high school buddy, was also the Bigelow football teams mascot named “Boogaloo Baboon”. Boogaloo has gone missing while filming a hardcore porno film out in the woods, allegedly captured by the legendary Bigelow Skunk Ape. There is film documentation of the event, though filmed somewhat fuzzily. Enter Jameson T. Salisbury, the famous Skunk Ape hunter and his “Minni

Winnie". This story will make you laugh out loud and enjoy the fact that you are reading this fast moving account of the adventures and misadventures of these fantastic characters.

“Die Dog Or Eat the Hatchet” could almost have been one of those fifties black and white movies, or an episode of the old “Twilight Zone” with more twists and turns than Lombard street with even more hairpin turns and sharper drops.

The last story in this book is “Gator Bait” and is perhaps my favorite. There were a number of sleazy books published in the sixties like “Swamp Lust” or “Vice Town” and many others that all featured exceedingly desirable femme fatales mobsters and hardboiled hero’s, and there were enough of them to garner their own category of “Swamp Fiction”. Adam Howe has brought us back into that world, and congratulations to him for doing so. This story alone is worth the price of admission.

An excellent collection, by a multi talented writer, though perhaps not for those romance readers or sensitive members of the audience out there.

Matthias says

Two months ago, I wrote the following:

“Adam Howe has a very sick mind. Here's to hoping they never find a cure.

Full review soon!!

It's only once in a blue moon that soon actually means soon, so I hope you can find a pinch of forgiveness in your hearts after this false but well-intended promise. I normally would have jumped into reviewing this post-haste, much in keeping with this novel's fast and murderous pace, but then stuff happened like work and girlfriend and family and holidays and THIS BOOK'S AUTHOR LEAVING A COMMENT ON MY PRE-REVIEW. I considered playing it cool and all that, but damn, he said he's LOOKING FORWARD to the full review. The cliché-ridden text I was going to write up wouldn't fly, not with him in the audience. He's a crazy cat. He conjures up psychos, deranged beasts and exploding limbs when he is pleased, and I'd hate to find out what he'll come up with if he isn't. He shook hands with STEPHEN KING, so he can even bring in reinforcements if need be.

I considered not writing anything. You know, play dead. So I went on to other projects, such as reading other books and writing other reviews and then I read Stephen King's "On Writing" and loved it and then I was reminded of how Howe was shaking hands with the King and you know why he was shaking hands? I don't know either but I guess him winning the "On Writing" contest has got something to do with it!! Like, he took my recently found aspiring writer's Bible and noticed it wasn't a Bible but a game and then went ahead and won it. Wow! Then I somehow sensed the truth. There's no avoiding this. I have to write this review or I'll be dead next Tuesday, mauled by a hellhound named Gino or a carnivorous cow whose name doesn't matter because SHE EATS PEOPLE WHO ASK ABOUT IT.

So at first I was going to do the thing that everybody half-awake during the nineties would do when presented with a story full of cool, fucked-up characters and great dialogue: compare the book to something Quentin Tarantino or the Coen brothers would make a movie out of. But Tarantino, every '90s nerd's ticket to

the cool club, is such a review-cliché by now that I can only use him in an apologetic and roundabout way, i.e. dissing the practice as a means of participating in it.

Oh, hold up, did I say story? More like three stories, and all three have a fantastic premise. Stephen King's "On Writing" states that a story should start from a situation, and boy, has Howe got some situations for you:

An amateur porn movie is rudely interrupted by what appears to be a skunk ape kidnapping the male star.

A girl gets caught in a triangle that has as its points: meticulously deranged, sexually deranged, wildly deranged and a hellhound named Roscoe. (Geometriez, lool)

An almost fingerless pianist decides to sleep with the wife of a jealous innkeeper who's got a short temper, a paranoid mind and a pet alligator.

Yikes!

And you know what they say about the devil, right? The greatest trick he's ever pulled is making people laugh. Funny bloke, that. So is Adam Howe. I'm not saying he's the devil though. Every story features an animal and some of them end up on top, which is Adam's ticket to heaven right there. I'm not saying whether the dog ate that hatchet or to what extent that strangely saved his life, that's for you to find out.

Last word for the prose! It's fast! What I'd like to highlight in particular is that Adam Howe writes the best fights. Fists fly, guns blaze, explosions and havoc and destruction!!! Bones crunch, guts splatter, skin gets shred in strips of agony.

But then, there is also sweet poetry, such as this:

"You play piano as good as me, the dames can't wait to find out if your magic fingers can tickle the ovaries like they tinkle the ivories."

Beautiful.

Definitely read the story notes. It's got this great bit about the "endorsement" written by the president of the Society for the Preservation of the Skunk Ape for the first story. I don't know if this actually happened for real because I can't find anything about this society on the Internet, other than references to this book, but even if it didn't happen it makes for a hilarious anecdote.

So yeah, get this!

I guess that's it for this review. I hope that despite the meagre 4-star rating it's... wait, did I hear mooing?

Jeffrey Keeten says

**"His name was Jameson T. Salisbury: Skunk Ape Hunter.
And hell followed with him."**

Now, Salisbury is going to show up, but first, we need to rewind a bit. Reggie Levine is holding down his

favorite place at the bar in the strip club The Henhouse when he hears the rumble of HOGS rolling up to the bar. Anytime a gang of bikers shows up anywhere, the scrotums of every male in the vicinity will tighten up, making their balls grasp each other like lovers going down with the Titanic. Women's nipples will harden and start vibrating in time to the throb of the Harley Davidson exhaust pipes. Anybody with any sense will just ease out the back door of the bar and flee.

Levine can't leave, which is what he should have done; nor can he be invisible by lowering his head deeper into his beer mug. He is the bouncer. He is the man who is expected to throw stone fists that knock out teeth and make men go cross-eyed as they find the floor with their face. Reggie is a washed-up prizefighter, and in a straight up fight, none of these morons would stand a chance, but since there is 4 or 5 or maybe 6 of them, he has to be ready to absorb some punish while giving out three times the pain he is receiving.

Things go great. **DAMN DIRTY APES** are bouncing on the floor, crashing through tables, and skulls are making that oh so beautiful **TOINK** sound as they bang against whatever is handy.

And then things go wrong.

They get Levine down, and then they start putting their crusty leather boots to him.

Let's give Levine a moment to tend to himself.

Now The Henhouse is about as far from a classy joint as you can get, made slightly more glamorous by the dancing of one Eliza who has assets that place hasn't seen in a long time. She was just too enticing for the Damn Dirty Apes and when they start pawing her...well...Levine has to intervene. Unfortunately, the bikers missed the return of one Marlene.

"Marlene was giving Lou her matinee performance. Clutching the dance pole like a Sumo who's thrown her back, Marlene gyrated her chunky caboose above Lou's leering face. He wagged a buck beneath her butt like a corner man rousing his boxer with smelling salts. Marlene squatted over the buck, her butt cheeks snatching at the bill in Lou's hand like a flabby arcade claw groping for a plush toy."

Now I might be in the bar for a quick cold beer (not to leer at the titties) before returning to my soul crushing job, but there ain't no way I can pull my eyes away from that.

Levine hasn't even pulled himself together from the embarrassing ass kicking he received from the Damn Dirty Apes, when Eliza and her pathetic, loser, boyfriend Lester drag him into their supernatural encounter with the mythical Bigelow Skunk Ape.

Within hours of that beast sighting, Jameson T. Salisbury arrives, and things get wiggy.

This tale is just pure fun. If you are a fan of the movie *Jaws*, there are all kinds of laugh out loud references to the best lines from that movie. There is Boogaloo Baboon porn that can't be explained but must be read and inhaled, along with the musky tang of sweat, semen, and slobber.

Now the second story, *Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet*, is a whole 'nother barrel of skunky piss beer. I would suggest reading this on an empty stomach, buzzed from a shot of vodka, and with the teddy bear that makes you feel safest clutched in your arms.

Tilly Mulvehill is resting her tired dogs, watching some bad TV, when she gets the call from the greasy diner

she works at, asking her to come in for the second header of a double shift. She's a bit past her prime, but the vestiges of pretty still cling to her like the fuzz on a peach.

If she'd known how the rest of her day was going to go, she'd have muted her phone, laid down on the couch, pulled her favorite comforter over her head, and whimpered the rest of the night away. She most certainly would not have left the house.

She is carjacked by a maniac by the name of Terence Hingle. Not only is her car jacked, but she is jacked along with the car. Hingle is not your run of the mill deadbeat stealing a car and kidnapping a woman for kicks. He is an escaped serial killer, and the one thing he has been dreaming about above all things is watching his knife sink into the tender flesh of a pretty woman...again.

Tilly thinks she's already experienced the worse few hours of her life, but little does she know that the next few hours are about to get worse, a lot worse. Hingle is a badass, but the thing about being a sick son-of-a-bitch is there is always a sicker, meaner son-of-a-bitch out there. In this case times two. The Ritter twins, Dwayne and Dwight, have their own perverted games they like to play. Bondage, torture, and what the fuck is that hanging up in the bathroom?

Tilly finds that her nightmare has grown spikes, fangs, and putrid breath. To survive, she will have to summon the primordial lizard that has been slumbering in her brain since her caveman ancestor first crushed the skull of her husband over the last bloody piece of reindeer brain.

Needless to say, Adam Howe ratchets up the disgusting, dips it in bloody intestines, and uses it to slap you across the face until you are cowering like a whipped chihuahua, waiting for the final blow that will send you gurgling into the next world. Highest warning possible for upchuck worthy violence.

The third story, *Gator Bait*, is actually my favorite story of the three. Damn Dirty Apes is a black-comedy; Die Dog or Eat the Hatchet is a gruesome Southern Gothic style tale. Gator Bait is Southern noir with an alligator twist. This is the first story I read of Adam Howe's. Ahh, those halcyon days before the synapses containing the last of my guileless innocence were filled with hydrogen and lit on fire to burn to a crisp like falling Hindenburgs. I wrote a separate review of this novella that can be found here: My Gator Bait Review

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