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Donald Ray Pollock

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#221473 in Books Donald Ray Pollock 2009-03-10 2009-03-10 Original language: English PDF # 1 8.00 x .60 x 5.201, .54 #File Name: 076792830X224 pages Knockemstiff | File size: 37.Mb

Donald Ray Pollock : Knockemstiff before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Knockemstiff:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Hard and Fast Like A Claw Hammer Fight in a Bar Parking Lot By D. Scott The 18 gritty short stories here come at you hard and fast like a claw hammer fight in a bar parking lot. "Knockemstiff" is the first book by Donald Ray Pollock and is a terrific collection based in the small dying holler of Knockemstiff Ohio. This outstanding volume won the 2009 PEN/Robert Bingham Fellowship, which goes to

“exceptionally talented fiction writers whose debut work — a first novel or collection of short stories...represent distinguished literary achievement and suggests great promise.” Stories that stand out for me include “Dynamite Hole,” about a young runaway who spends three years hiding in the woods of rural Ohio, “Blessed,” about an injured second story man hooked on pain meds, and “Honolulu,” about a man slowly losing his mind and his caregiver wife slowly losing the dreams of her youth. Many of the characters in “Knockemstiff” appear in more than one story, lending an authentic layering depth of place. They are desperate, clinging to hope amidst their dying town and its disappearing dreams. This read is not for everyone. It will beat you up and leave you bruised and bloody, but always wanting more. If there is a problem with “Knockemstiff” it is that there is very little if any letup. The haunting hopelessness is unrelenting, but maybe that is more a valid reflection of the characters’ circumstances than on any arguments about traditional style and pacing. Traditional it is not, and the pace fairly blisters through each of these dark trips through the side of Middle America that most only whisper about. I spent time growing up in southern West Virginia, and most of these characters and places ring true to me. Pollock is brutally unforgiving, unsentimental, and without judgment. He leaves us with a sense of reality so cold and clear that it blindsides us and slaps us in the face. Pollock is the real deal. His second book and first full length novel “The Devil All the Time” is a must read as well. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. before it became cool and ironic By Courtney This is a collection of loosely related short stories that all take place in the rural holler of Knockemstiff, Ohio. Tales that chronicle bleak lives of rural poverty. You will meet characters plagued by mental illness, obesity, roid rage, oxycotin addiction, alcoholism and much, much more. PBR, Pabst Blue Ribbon is the beer of choice for the denizens of Knockemstiff, but they sure aren't the bearded urban hipsters who have hijacked that brand in recent years. These are the real consumers of PBR, before it became cool and ironic. There is beauty in these stories, albeit harsh and gritty. These are uneducated and poor white people, struggling to survive in a cycle of poverty, addiction, dysfunction and often times violence. There sure isn't any white privilege going on here. What makes this book even more satisfying is that the author was actually from Knockemstiff. Knockemstiff is now not much more than a ghost town, and these tales will linger with you. I have already ordered another Donald Ray Pollock novel and cannot wait to receive his. His writing is that good. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Excellent Book By Second. Amendment If you have a stomach made of leather then you can probably handle this book. In a word...this book is vivid. Oddly, I think this is the first book that I have read that changed the way my senses interpret the world. The air smells a little more musty, the soft bed sheets a little more stiff and cold, colors not quite as bright, ambient noises a little bit more annoying after reading this book. You can have the imagination of a rock and still find yourself smack in the middle of Knockemstiff, Ohio due to how well this is written. To be honest, living in the south and reading about a little town in Ohio wasn't all that exciting to me. I only bought it because Pollock's other novel, Devil All the Time is one of my all time favorites. I put this book in the rear of the read list for quite some time and finally decided to give it a try. By chapter 2 I was totally blown away. Actually, I could not believe what I just read. I cannot say enough about this book, but at the same time I am finding it very difficult to describe it. If you have never read any Donald Ray Pollock, ease into it with Devil All the Time. If you have read Devil All the Time, you'll have an idea of what you are in for but I would suggest buckling up for a wild ride.

"More engaging than any new fiction in years." —Chuck Palahniuk An unforgettable work of fiction that peers into the soul of a tough Midwestern American town to reveal the sad, stunted but resilient lives of its residents. Knockemstiff is a genuine entry into the literature of place. Spanning a period from the mid-sixties to the late nineties, the linked stories that comprise Knockemstiff feature a cast of recurring characters who are irresistibly, undeniably real. A father pumps his son full of steroids so he can vicariously relive his days as a perpetual runner-up body builder. A psychotic rural recluse comes upon two siblings committing incest and feels compelled to take action. Donald Ray Pollock presents his characters and the sordid goings-on with a stern intelligence, a bracing absence of value judgments, and a refreshingly dark sense of bottom-dog humor.