



My Most Secret Desire

Julie Doucet

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“One of the most promising of the younger graphic novelists.” —Charles McGrath, *The New York Times Magazine*

Considered by many to be the most influential female cartoonist ever, Julie Doucet created an iconic body of work in the ten short years she solely devoted herself to her trailblazing comic-book series *Dirty Plotte*. Her comics are densely inked and detailed with a pulsating neurosis from a decidedly female point of view that set the comic-book world on its head when the series debuted. Doucet returns to comics after a five-year hiatus with a reworked edition of her dream journal *My Most Secret Desire*, complete with never-before-published material.

My Most Secret Desire is considered to be Doucet’s most innovative work, exploring the longings, pressures, and exploits of the feminine subconscious. Nightmarish tales of pregnancy, menstruation, sex changes, and boyfriends haunt Doucet’s nocturnal psyche with a feverish and surreal pitch.

My Most Secret Desire Details

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Author : Julie Doucet

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From Reader Review My Most Secret Desire for online ebook

Shazia says

I heard of Julie Doucet in one of Chester Brown's books. I don't exactly remember which book or the context in which she was mentioned but I made a mental note to check out her work. Unfortunately a lot of her work isn't available through the library systems I have access to but I'll see what I can do to get my hands on her stuff.

I went into My Most Secret Desire not really knowing what to expect. And after taking some time to process her comics I decided that I loved it. Personally I hate remembering any of my dreams so reading comic after comic of her crazy subconscious fears and anxieties is kind of my own version of a nightmare, but they're very real and very different from my own, which is why I did end up liking it.

However I do need to mention that there is a lot of crude imagery within this book and the artwork is a bit overwhelming. I wouldn't recommend this to someone who may have a lot going on at the moment since there was a lot to take in. I had to take a break halfway through just to step away for a bit before I finished reading it but it's been a week since I finished this book and I'm ready for more Doucet.

Eszter Szép says

Maaaaaaaan Julie Doucet has the weirdest dreams on the planet... and makes the most surreal comics out of them!

Melle says

This just wasn't the right book for the right reader at the right time. I think it was interesting, but the illustration style was too much for me -- too crowded, too crude, too crazy -- and the subject matter just didn't gel with me. This might be a great, liberating, hilarious book for someone who is cooler, funnier, and more open to abstract, wild concepts.

StrictlySequential says

Insightful Review Coming Soon!

Quick side-note: THANK GOD for the female drawn Penis! The last bunch of books with said appendages have been drawn by European men whose mothers didn't want to hurt their man's feelings so they didn't mention that the boy would be better off without the skin bag. **Who the hell likes loose skin in general!** Is there any part of human anatomy which in its normal, clean and diseased-free state is grosser than an uncircumcised penis?

Her penises (*sometimes literally*) are drawn as either handsome or hilarious. Yes- you're gonna get some great laughs seeing her as a man!

Alexis says

Julie Doucet has been named as a big influence and maybe favorite fellow graphic novelist/cartoonist (the jury seems to be out on what this genre wants to be called, for me it is graphic novel but as I don't produce them I will defer to authorities) by both Adrian Tomine and Gabrielle Belle who, like Doucet, are part of the Drawn and Quarterly family. I cannot say that I love her work the way I love theirs but I certainly appreciate her talent and humor. It is interesting and also downright fun to see inside others' dreams. I have loads of crazy dreams myself and I admit to being jealous she is adept at not only remember her dreams but also transcribing them in a compelling, artful way. My preference is for cleaner lines and simpler, perhaps more quotidian, content. I think she should get five stars but as I am not ranking her work as I think she should be seen and rather how she fits into my own value system, she gets three stars. Maybe four. Probably four. I did love it but the aesthetic was just not mine. I especially recommend the sequences in which she finds herself to be a man and keeps giving birth to cats. Both are familiar to me (not precisely, but enough) and I loved them much.

Ciara says

Julie Doucet is kind of an exception to my weird mental block against remembering anything about graphic novels & visual art books. I like her stuff. It is sometimes a little bit on the crass side for me (despite the fact that I talk pretty openly about sex & lady parts & all that good stuff, I am actually not such a fan of drawings of genitalia or anything--& Julie draws a fair number of penises & self-portraits of herself in all manner of dress & undress), but I can overlook it. I tell myself that she is just portraying the dark side of real life & not being a gross-out queen like a lot of other (dude) graphic novelists. This book is super-heavy on the underwear drawings & stuff because it's mostly dream sequences & neurotic fantasy sequences. I think Julie does this stuff really well, mostly because she doesn't shy away from reporting on the really embarrassing parts. Trust me, I keep a journal, & sometimes I write down especially weird dreams I had, but I edit them down for dignity's sake even though hopefully no one but myself will ever read my journals (& even I don't re-read them). So the fact that she illustrates this stuff & sends it off to Drawn & Quarterly to be published is pretty impressive. Supposedly this book explores "the feminine psyche". Okay. I guess the feminine psyche has a lot of pregnancy dreams. I know I do! (really.)

Christa says

If Julie Doucet was a man, she would have a girlfriend with huge breasts. She would throw her down on the hood of a car and have her way with her. She would look similar to the woman version of herself, but with more of a V-shaped torso. She would zip up her pants and chuckle.

This is the sort of thing that crops up when longtime cartoonist is asleep. The "If I was a man" premise creeps into her subconscious along with other super whacky dreamscapes in her collection "My Most Secret Desire."

There is also the teeth-falling-out-of-the-mouth dream, the I'm-still-in-school dream, the I'm-an-astronaut-dream. And each is told in this heavy-handed, darkly etched, highly detailed way that is dark and grisly and delicious. You wish you had dreams like this -- meeting Mickey Dolenz, for instance.

In another gender bender, she discovers that she has a penis and considers the usefulness of it. She can pop the top off of it and carry things inside of it. Magazines, a toothbrush, condoms. She can stick a flower through the hole at the top or use it as a third leg. She can harness it and pretend it's a mustang.

One dream-within-a-dream finds her pregnant, sitting in the bathtub with her boyfriend. The child escapes through her stomach. She wakes, thinks that was weird, then proceeds to give birth to a cat that she breastfeeds in her bed.

This is some wicked stuff. Hilarious and detailed. Layered and interesting. Julie Doucet seems to be the girl doodling dicks on her notebook. And that is exactly who you want to be friends with.

Kim says

why do people waste their time & energy & earth's resources reading & publishing dude underground alternative comics when we have Julie Doucet?

Morgan says

Whoa

Chelsea Martinez says

I recently read "The Night of Your Life" -- a compilation of comic strips detailing other people's dreams, drawn by a single artist. I think they had appeared in alt-weeklies and the like, and I said that because the dreamers seemed like friends of the artist, the stories may have been more amusing to him than to me as a reader... nothing held them together.

This compilation of Julie Doucet's comics about dreams has some of that disappointing quality, but because they are her own, you can piece together themes and running jokes that her mind seems to be playing on her, and that makes the difference. It's also nice that the comics range over many years so you can see how her style has changed. I love how she tries to accurately capture her own diction in English.

Thea says

Here's my official review:

Julie Doucet's illustrated dream journal is full of goofy drawings of herself that at first lull her reader. And then the story of almost every strip tumbles into ghoulish urban horror, which is exacerbated by frenzied lines and panels packed with shades of grey and black: there are guillotines everywhere in Doucet's bohemian apartment; she goes shopping and not only does the bra she wants sell out, when she goes outside everyone has died in a nuclear holocaust; she eats her friend's penis before realizing that he can't grow a new one...

Often Doucet's dreams are nightmarish manifestations of things women fear. Boyfriends and doctors assure her that nothing's wrong when her teeth are falling out and worms are wiggling out of her skin, sexual

violence is ever present, peculiar things happen to all kinds of genitalia and Doucet can't stop giving birth to cats. And yet oddly, the book hardly ever loses its tone of humour. Whether you find My Most Secret Desire cathartic or traumatising, Doucet's book is a stunningly bizarre and one-of-a-kind way to exorcise demons.

Emilia P says

Sweet. Hey, lady mentioned in Le Tigre's "Hot Topic". I do want to read your dream journal about what life would be like if you were a man, and pregnancy anxiety, and travel anxiety and general life weirdness. Best, most daring representations of dreams I've seen -- weird, dirty, dark, busy, and super-fun. One of a kind, and worth it.

J says

These dream-comics are completely whacked out and I loved them all. Doucet's subconscious is one worth reading about because the kinds of dreams she has (a dude she's walking with takes his cock out of his pants, cuts it off and offers it to her, so she munches on it like a ballpark frank is one such account) are unlike most dream journals turned into fiction or literature or whatever you want to call it. All of these nightmarish scenarios are presented with a great deal of humor and Doucet's drawn stand-in always sort of gives the reader a shrug at the end of each episode like "what the fuck ya gonna do?"

Jason says

I really like Julie Doucet. I said before when talking about the audacity of David B. in *Epileptic*, that there is something more confident, albeit depraved, in French writers. Most comics' central characters are pathetic, looming, neurotic, and they play victim to the world. Doucet, like David B., *victimizes* the world. Though they are plagued by an irrepressible demon that haunts their dream, they are still violent, warrior, and mean. There is a lot of insecurity in these pages delivered with a fetching humor. Her imaginary scenarios of being a man and her dreams characterized by humiliation, denigration, or torture; how much disease does she have pilfering about in her imagination? There is a heartwarming sense, that she experiences catharsis in detailing these designs of her inner nature and her fear, so that they do indeed become entertaining, because they are shared. But they are disturbing still. It is an unleashing of Pandora's box: As a man, she rapes a woman with big tits. She has a syringe shot into her eye and a jack-knife folded on her hand. Three quarters of the images of her face are in anguish, the other quarter is in joy.

What i like about her, is that she embraces her weirdness, her femininity, her fetishes without hang-ups. She is brazen. Like Robert Crumb, she could just as easily draw a comic about masturbation as one about surfing. They are both sports to be satirized. I bet she's quiet but has a lot going on in her head. I really like the comic where the man cuts off his penis for her and she eats the whole thing before realizing penises don't grow back.

Stef says

I understand that Doucet's work is considered important and influential (so says the Goodreads description for this book), which makes me feel like I ought to "get it." But I don't. I didn't get very far in this messily drawn, heavy-on-the-black collection of aggressive, nightmarish drawings about bad dreams that end so abruptly I'm not even sure if I'm on the next comic. Not for me.
