



Screams from the Balcony

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Screams from the Balcony is a collection of letters chronicling Charles Bukowski's life as he tries to get published and work at a postal office, all while drinking and gambling.

Screams from the Balcony Details

Date : Published May 30th 2002 by Ecco (first published June 5th 1993)

ISBN : 9780876859148

Author : Charles Bukowski , Seamus Cooney

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Poetry, Nonfiction, Biography

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Kate says

A compilation of letters from the legendary man himself to others. He speaks of all sorts of things, but the most interesting letters to me were the ones where he talked about what it meant to have a soul and his life philosophies.

Muriel says

Heeft zijn tijd geduurd, maar ben er dan toch doorheen geraakt. Bukowski is een echte 'authentic', en uniek in zijn soort was hij ook (lees: hij was één van de weinige alcoholics/schrijvers die er toch in slaagde werk van hoge kwaliteit af te leveren) maar de brieven zijn te veel van het goede, of veeleer, het slechte. 5% geweldige literatuur, 95% dronkemanspraak (en niet van het amusante noch onderhoudende soort). Enkel voor de die-hard fans, en dan nog: beter iets anders lezen.

Don says

Not a lot of people know about the human side of buk, the letters tell a different side.

Adam Garcia says

"I pick up a poetry magazine, flip the pages, count the stars, moon, and frustrations, yawn, piss out my beer and pick up the want-ads. I am sitting in a cheap Hollywood apartment pretending to be a poet but sick and dull and the clouds are coming over the fake paper mountains and I peck away at these stupid keys, it's 12 degrees in Moscow and it's snowing; a boil is forming between my eyes and somewhere between Pedro and Palo Alto I lost the will to fight: the liquor store man knows me like a cousin: he cracks the paper bag and looks like a photograph of Francis Thompson." "Hank's" Letter to the editor of Hearse magazine, December, 1959

Vinicius Gonçalves says

Recomendado para quem já leu as obras de Bukowski (ao menos alguns livros de poemas). Esta coletânea de cartas, acompanha os últimos e agonizantes anos de trabalho nos correios, além do nascimento de Marina. Destaque para a demonstração de afeto e orgulho que Bukowski tinha de sua filha, o que é tema de várias cartas. Outro ponto interessante é a troca de correspondências com Willian Wantling poeta e amigo que viria a ser citado em outros contos e romances. Para finalizar, os empolgantes anos de 1968 e 1969 quando surge uma luz no fim do túnel e Bukowski finalmente se ve livre de seus 11 anos nos correios e passa a se dedicar exclusivamente à sua máquina de escrever.

Bittermilch says

currently-reading. immer.

Aya says

One of the letters that made me buy this book:

"To William Wantling' nov 29 1965

maybe my last letter offended you? remember being drunk as usual but remember mentioning something about a desire to rape eleven year old girls. I said desire, not actuality. in other words, if you had an eleven year old daughter staying with me you might consider her pretty safe, at least a lot safer than with men who won't admit their desires even to themselves, or if to themselves, then not to the rest of the world. I am not saying that I am anything special but as I say that if you take offense at my naturalism, at that which nature has put into me, then, you are a damn fool.

Gary Daly says

A magnificent collection of Charles Bukowski's letters covering 1960-1970. These are the years when Bukowski worked as a postal officer and wrote, drank and smoked his way into literary history. A fascinating insight into the creative process. Bukowski's letters are poems and stories in themselves and the accumulation of ideas, thoughts, feelings and incidents make for a great read. The care he shows for his daughter is in stark contradiction to the man and writer many of his peers didn't know. This book is a great way for the uninitiated to become familiar with this writer. I enjoy Bukowski so much I had part of him stained onto my arm. I'll leave you with one of my favourite Bukowski quotes, '...there are men that I would want to drink beer with, there are women I would want to fuck, that is as far as my love goes...' How sweet is this man?

Kevin Brady says

Bukowski has become synonymous with cynical poetry. Several movies have been based either on his life or on characters he created.

Generally, I cannot stand poetry that wasn't written by me. Bukowski is an exception to this rule, and this collection contains most of my favorites ("The Slim Killers" and "Get the Nose" immediately come to mind).

If you're looking for HallMark sentiments, look elsewhere. Bukowski wrote mostly about boozing, womanizing and his own writing process. His thoughts are nearly always very dark, raw, and often rude. This is why generations of beats, punks and other outcasts have adopted him as a literary hero, when such people actually read.

Brian Pappas says

Books of letters can sometimes be boring.
Not with this man.

Lucas says

Bukowski's letters are as real and gut wrenching as any of his stories and poems.

Lorena Hernandez says

“I’ve had so many knives stuck into me, when they hand me a flower I can’t quite make out what it is. It takes time.”

I love CB and had never heard of these works until I came across this quote. Intrigued I decided to read it and the collection of letters are an interesting insight into a jaded talent. I enjoyed the reading.

Brent Legault says

I wouldn't read these all at once if I were you. But in mild doses, they aren't fatal.

Sicofonia says

A collection of Bukowski's letters ranging from 1950s to 1970. Reading them you can explore the process that took Bukowski from his early publishing cameos to his decision to take a chance as a full time writer in late 1969.

There's a bit of everything... dull, hilarious, mad, tender or fun letters. A vast majority of them were written when Buks got drunk.

I enjoyed the book, but I would only recommend it to hardcore Bukowski fans. Not all the letters were up to my expectations; but this is still an interesting material to know more about the man himself.

Stephen Lewis says

Great for Bukowski fans but not a not for 1st time readers. This is a good book to read in short bursts. These letters are full of energy and vibrant language but occasionally meander.
