

BOOKS

ingenious look at the whole top/bottom, slave/master thing I've ever read. And if you know acting, it'll double your pleasure.

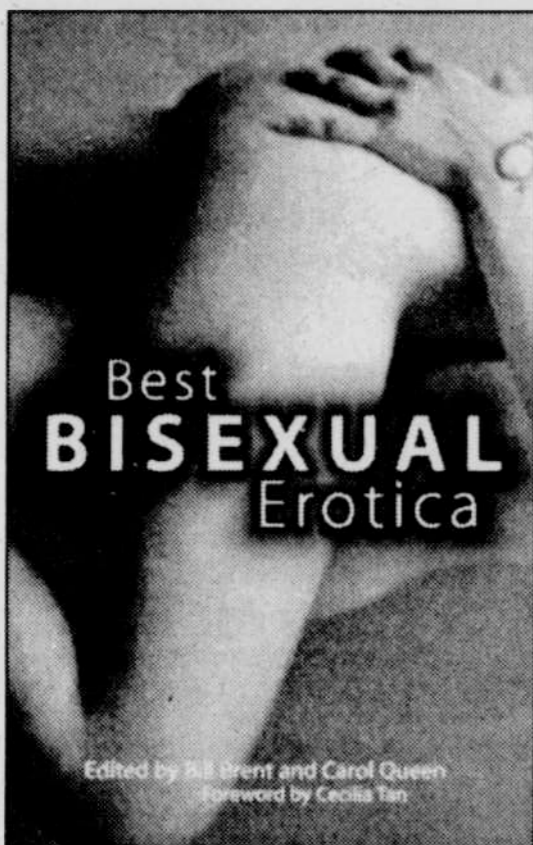
By far, the funniest story in the group is "Hunters and Gatherers," in which a Mormon couple invite all the gay men and women they know to a party at their home, so the husband may satisfy certain new curiosities.

Two stories, "Bit-o-Honey" and "Old Birds," are superb, no-holds-barred visions of the complex relationship between a gay man and his aging father.

Cooper's writing style is easy and colloquial, and his plots have little problem pulling you into them. *Guess Again* should be on your bookshelf. Even if I weren't queer, I'd say so.

—Glenn Williams

BEST BISEXUAL EROTICA
edited by Bill Brent
and Carol Queen.
Black Books and Circlet
Press, 2000; \$16 softcover.



Those of us who find sexuality more interesting when it's multigendered will be thrilled with the new compilation *Best Bisexual Erotica*. And it's about bloody time!

This book contains stories of bisexual and polyamorous passion in all its glorious, complicated forms. Here you will read of gay men having sex with straight women, lesbians with straight men, lesbians with gay men, transgendered people with straight and gay men and women—twosomes, threesomes and oh-so-many-moresomes.

One of the best aspects of this collection is a complete lack of guilt or trauma about being attracted to more than one gender. Of course, there are moments of awakening to fresh desires and moments of closed minds opening up to new possibilities, but this is not the book for a discussion about the social and political ramifications of fluid sexuality. This is a book for getting an erection, getting moist and getting it on.

Readers with dreams of Fleet Week will enjoy Robert Vickery's "Hunting for Sailors," in which a couple seduce a sailor who does things he never knew he would. Many stories deal with fetish, particularly domination. Two in particular—"Boy Bashing" by Raven Gildea and "Cruising the Conference" by Dominic Santi—are twisted enough to keep you dreaming for months. There are sweet romantic tales as well; check out the warmhearted and erotic "First, Hello" by Madeleine Schulman.

Raven Kaldera's "Triple Dance" explores the passions between a man and two transgendered people. Here categories of sexuality become as meaningless and sex becomes the enjoyment of bodies regardless of their specific parts:

"Ian sat up, grinning at me. 'You want to pitch or catch?' he asked. I thought about it, visions of Shelly bent over her desk at work while I rammed her from behind dancing in my head. I wondered if she'd had a vagioplasty, or still had a cock. I wondered what she'd

think about my ball-less, almost dickless crotch; wondered if she'd been a gay man before and was still in love with dick on her lovers. 'Catch, I guess,' I said. 'Then I'll pitch afterwards, if you're still up to it.'"

Diverse, perverse, delicious and extraordinarily ballsy, this collection is for all of us who think sex is a wonderful, blessed act and particularly for those who think sex doesn't need to be defined, just acted upon. —GW

ROUGH MUSIC
by Patrick Gale.
Ballantine Books, 2001;
\$25 hardcover.

Patrick Gale's *Rough Music* is a reminder that our families often wreak more havoc on us than the rest of the world in total. The novel easily proves the adage that the sins of the father—or, in this case, both parents—often are visited upon their children.

Rough Music gives an unsettling glimpse of the Pagett family as it revisits

the English resort town of Cornwall. Our semisingle hero, Julian, invites both parents along on holiday to Blue House for a well-deserved break. His father, John, has his hands full caring for his increasingly unfocused wife, Frances, in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease.

This is the very rental house where the Pagetts had something of a meltdown 30 years before. This is not immediately apparent to the family, which stretches credulity, but the tragedy that unfolds, both in the past and in the present, is engulfing regardless.

Expertly shifting between what occurred in those fateful weeks 30 years ago and the present, Gale weaves the story of Frances' past affair with her recently widowed brother-in-law with the unfolding drama of the current holiday. Julian also is carrying on a clandestine relationship with his brother-in-law Sandy, who loves his wife and kids but enjoys their obligation-free sex.

In what seem like parallel universes, we watch, wincing, as Frances is caught with Bill and Julian is caught, by Frances, having a bit too much of a holiday with Sandy. This all might sound like tiresome soap opera, but Gale pulls off the onion-skin layers of family secrets with acute observation.

Never trite, *Rough Music* is an expertly written, occasionally heart-breaking story of one family's walk-in closet, where there is more than enough room for everyone. And he reminds us that no matter what size that closet might be, room always should be

made for forgiveness. —Rich Bray

ELS DEBBAUT is a free-lance reviewer on staff at *In Other Words*.

GLENN WILLIAMS writes poetry, prose, plays, periodica and porn in Portland.

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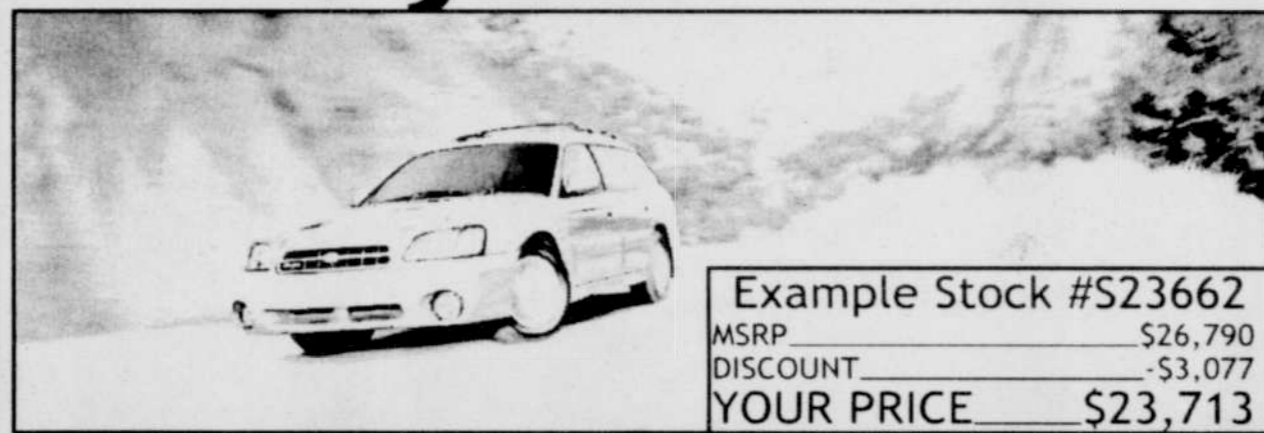
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