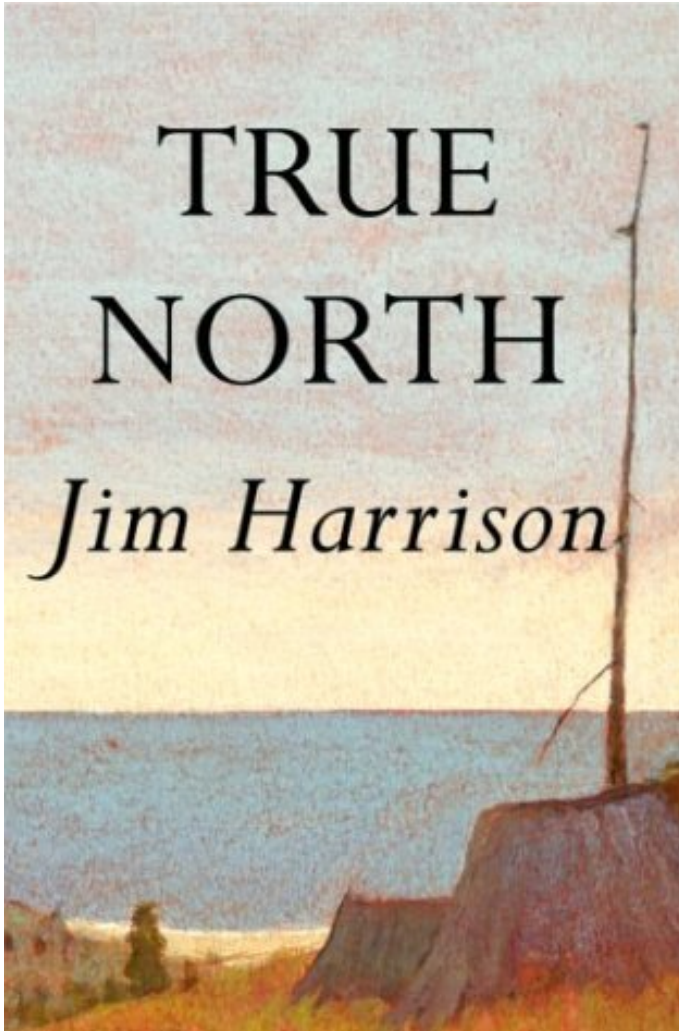

Jim Harrison

True North (True North #1)



Title: True North (True North #1)

Author: Jim Harrison

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Description

True North is the story of a family torn apart and a man engaged in profound reckoning with the damage scarred into the American soil. The scion of a family of wealthy timber barons, David Burkett has grown up with a father who is a malevolent force more than a father, and a mother made vague and numb by alcohol and pills. He and his sister, Cynthia, a firecracker who scandalizes the family at fourteen by taking up with the son of their Finnish-Native American gardener, are mostly left to make their own way, and often to play parent to their dissolute elders. As David comes to adulthood - often guided and enlightened by the unforgettable, intractable, courageous women he loves - he realizes he must come to terms with his forefathers' rapacious destruction of the woods of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, as well as the working people who made their wealth possible. In the course of thirty years of searching for the truth of what his family has done and trying to make amends, David looks closely at the root of his father's evil - and threatens to destroy himself.

Insightful reviews

Jake: I suspect this book contains more and a few errors that will prevent it from ever being considered a classic. Yet, for the first 150 some pages, it is an engaging and insightful meditation on life as a young man. One who happens to be wracked with doubt and pursued by the urge to follow the questions that this doubt births to their conclusion. As other reviewers will note, perhaps this book is not for everyone: it is not a story in the traditional sense, and the flaws mentioned above may be found within the structure of the book, as it composes more of a description, or a series of descriptions, of the life of the narrator. It tells the story of David Burkett as he comes of age. Sex, alcohol, wealth and his own life weigh upon him, confuse him, and maintain him in various turns. He serves as our narrator, both depressing and detailing, an anti-hero of the modern age. In his father he finds the embodiment of everything he wishes not to be. But in himself he finds the difficulty with avoiding all that one discovers to be evil provides. While I found this and the sense of self within the prose fresh and compelling, others have found it wandering and cumbersome. The writing is, to be sure, reflective. At times, it borders on - and then fully assumes - the philosophical. For a twenty-two year old recent college graduate, the mental and emotional intersections that the young Burkett reaches are fresh and, at the same time, familiar. I loved the book, even as the second half faded into rumination and repetition. Others will certainly disagree but as a work that is essentially filled with the thoughts of one character, it proves to be as equally thought provoking for the reader.

Gregg Sapp: In his Wikipedia entry, the renowned Jim Harrison is referred to as a poet, first, and a novelist by second choice. Based upon this book, I would have thought it was the other way around. There is little of the kinds of economy and resonance of language that characterizes good poetry in "True North." Instead, it tracks a desultory, first person narrative that might well represent the mental processes of the main character, but doesn't seem to lead him anywhere. The protagonist, David Burkett, is a kind of high-minded ne'er do well. As the son of a bombastic, alcoholic, pedophile father, who also happens to be wealthy enough to get away with almost anything, David can be excused if he needs some therapy. He is prone to self pity and navel gazing, and he struggles to adhere to any consistent morality. His master plan is

to write a scandalous history in which he will expose the true depth of his father's corruptions, but as the years go by and David bounces around from a series of irresolute relationships and false starts and stops, his ambitions begin to seem hopeless. I wanted to slap him and scream: "snap out of it!" In its best moments, "True North" gets into David's head and allows the readers to experience how he reacts to the nuances of his daily life. The problem is, the readers can likewise come to the conclusion, as I did, that this character is about nothing but fleeting, superficial convictions, and his best intentions are not much more than vague rationalizations. Far from bringing resolution, the dramatic ending seemed contrived and out of everybody's character.

Carl Brush: I've done it again, I think. I've probably missed out and misjudged. Jim Harrison seems to be an author of some note and some longevity. His books have been responsible for a couple of movies, one of which (Legends of the Fall) I've heard of, though not seen. However, I'd never heard of either True North, nor of Jim Harrison till my neighbor dropped the novel on my porch. What's more, judging by this book, I'm not inclined to explore his work further. We join our protagonist, David Burkett ("...fourth in a line of David Burketts beginning in the 1860s when my great-grandfather emigrated from Cornwall, England, to the upper Peninsula of Michigan which forms the southern border of Lake Superior, that vast inland sea of freshwater ."), or rather he joins himself, at age 18 to begin telling us the story of his years from then till "now" at approximately age thirty-five. After a rather baffling, and to my mind unnecessary, prologue, we wend our way through Burkett's life in the 1960s, 70s, and 80s. That life is filled with enormous angst and guilt over his timber-baron ancestors' exploitation and desecration of the north woods, its natives, and its working folk. That exploitation has left him with means to live independently, and he can't stand it.

He embarks on a project to write a grand expose of and apology for his family's misdeeds. It's obvious the grand design will never come to pass. Burkett is so mentally and emotionally unstable, wanders so aimlessly through life and loves, that anything he accomplishes will be purely by accident. He somehow becomes intensely involved with five females, one of whom is a dog (how pathetic is that?), and casually involved with a number of others. What the women (except the dog) find attractive about him is hard to fathom. Maybe he stimulates the maternal instinct or something. Whatever the case, I found little or nothing to admire about this sad sack except his moral idealism, which is whiny, flaccid, badly in need of viagra.

The narrative of True North wanders as much as the thoughts, emotions, and actions of its narrator, so I never got truly caught up in the tale. There was a great deal of polemic (always a bad sign), even more tell-not-show, and enough incomprehensible two-bit philosophy to drown a duck:

I thought that the natural world wasn't meant to be soothing which was only an abstraction. People were nature too and it was schizophrenic to try to separate them from what we ordinarily thought of as nature. When you allowed your view of the world to vastly expand the questions expanded with it.

and so on.

Nevertheless, the guy's been a long-time commercial and literary success, so I'm sure I'm missing something. That happens a lot.

Ember DeBoer: i do not even know the way to start writing a assessment for this book. i assume

i'm going to supply it a whirl, anyway...I desired to learn it, first and foremost, due to the top Peninsula atmosphere and storyline. and that i imagine that's what saved me analyzing within the early chapters, while I struggled via Harrison's prose. interpreting his writing certainly takes a few being used to. there's a sure loss of punctuation, which results in long, run-on sentences that may be not easy to digest all at once. on the beginning, i discovered myself regularly re-reading sentences and paragraphs. But, after i might built a kind of rhythm in my reading, i really fairly started to take pleasure in his writing style. (That stunned me.) probably it shouldn't, though, as this writer is without doubt one of the such a lot celebrated writers of our time. Others have in comparison this book's major character, David Burkett, with Holden Caulfield. there's certainly a Catcher within the Rye similarity to the narrative. towards the tip of the book, i noticed i did not wish the e-book to end. This recognition additionally shocked me, contemplating my preliminary feelings. the writer certainly grows/evolves during the process the book, and a few of his ponderings towards the top quite rang precise with me. one of many issues that turned a bit tiring within the e-book have been the entire references to girls he desired to have intercourse with, or did have intercourse with. It turned a bit over the top to me, yet then again, i am not a man...so who understands if those strategies are fairly beautiful exact so far as average frequency for many men?

Andy Miller: a unique whose narrator was once born into an outdated funds kin and spends his lifestyles coming to grips together with his trust that the family members funds used to be in keeping with exploitation of either the surroundings and the folk who labored for the company. One equipment i admire used to be that every part begun with a bankruptcy that defined the place he used to be in his existence and the rest chapters in that part informed of the way he obtained there. I loved different characters and the complexities of every except for the father, who's portrayed as evil with out redeeming value. the ladies in his existence have been important to his tale and that i used to be depressed with the demise of 1 and intrigued if i used to be speculated to dislike one up to I did. I hated the finishing which undercut the differently multidimensional view of narrator's life. however the remainder of the booklet used to be so stable that i like to recommend it hugely

itpdx: the tale is informed from the viewpoint of a tender "trust fund" man. he's the fourth new release of a relatives that made a fortune logging and mining the higher Peninsula of Michigan. His father is unapologetically generationally privileged. This David is pushed to struggle his approach away from the perspective and cocoon that his father lives and acts in. the daddy acts badly and will get off with gentle or little punishment as a result of his identify and money. The protagonist unearths a direction gaining knowledge of the historical past of his family, experiencing nature and difficult actual work. i didn't see the finishing coming. this can be the place this e-book was once heading all along? this can be the 1st publication i've got learn through Jim Harrison and that i will learn one other but when the realization is that this jarring, that may be it. I could have beloved to have learn the various background he found.

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