



Drugs Are Nice: A Post-Punk Memoir

By Lisa Crystal Carver

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In this eye-opening memoir, Lisa Crystal Carver recalls her extraordinary youth and charts the late-80s, early-90s punk subculture that she helped shape. She recounts how her band Suckdog was born in 1987 and the wild events that followed: leaving small-town New Hampshire to tour Europe at 18, becoming a teen publisher of fanzines, a teen bride, and a teen prostitute. *Spin* has called Suckdog's album *Drugs Are Nice* one of the best of the '90s, and the book includes photos of infamous European shows. Yet the book also tells of how Lisa saw the need for change in 1994, when her baby was born with a chromosomal deletion and his father became violent. With lasting lightness and surprising gravity, *Drugs Are Nice* is a definitive account of the generation that wanted to break every rule, but also a story of an artist and a mother becoming an adult on her own terms.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Shock-performance artist Carver (*Dancing Queen*) offers a spunky, well-fashioned memoir devoid of self-pity but heavy on moral-of-the-story hindsight. Carver grew up in Dover, N.H., with a sickly mother, but spent her 15th year with her father in California, when he got out of prison for murder. His hard-knock lessons "shame and shock [her] out of everything [she] knew to be and think," so that when she returned to Dover, she was transformed and fearless. Meeting "scum-rocker" GG Allin inspired her and a friend to start a "band," Suckdog, and join the wave of atonal, angry prankster gigs then in vogue (it was the late 1980s). Connected to the DIY underground, a cassette-trading society that eliminates the need for producers, seed money, even talent, Carver met and married French music rebel Jean Louis Costes; together they achieved notoriety with their outlandish performances (one act involved her peeing in a litter box). Other jobs include publishing the early zine *Rollerderby*, which segues into an infatuation with the troubled neo-Nazi Boyd Rice. Carver had Rice's child, born genetically disabled, and the family collapsed when Rice revealed himself to be an abusive alcoholic. Carver slides into a chirpy concluding regeneration, while the overall ride of this iconoclast is surprisingly tame.

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Review

"Carver's observations are dead-on and she tackles everything with a sharp, clean honesty." -- *Chicago Reader*

"The 31-year-old married mother from Dover may well be the country's supreme cultural anthropologist: part literary provocateur, part social analyst. She's been called everything from this decade's ultimate underground Renaissance woman to America's horniest optimist. Hunter S. Thompson in a miniskirt." -- *Boston Magazine*

"When Newt Gingrich wakes up sweating in the middle of the night with a hard-on and a sense of nameless dread, the face that he sees might be Lisa Carver's." -- *Time Out New York*

"With her tart writing and unswerving devotion to lowbrow culture, Carver sound like Camille Paglia channeling both Tonya Harding and Liz Phair." -- *Dwight Garner, Details*

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