

BOOKS

Finally. Gay Erotica By Fag Hags For Fag Hags

Transgressions, by Erastes; 384 pages, Running Press; \$12.95 paperback

False Colors, by Alex Beecroft; 336 pages, Running Press; \$12.95 paperback

by Theresa "Darklady" Reed

An important part of any healthy sexual revolution is the process of taking the tools of power into one's own hands and working to build a new paradigm. Among these tools are those employed in mass communication – and the act of writing.

If independent trade publisher Running Press' *Transgressions* and *False Colors* are any indications, the time for fag hags to lend their voices to the ever-growing erotic parchment has arrived.

Running Press is savvy to the power of words, aware that certain ones will sell books to polite people who live in polite locations better than others. The publisher prefers to say its new line of gay male historical romances is "written primarily by straight women for straight women."

However it's spun, fan-fiction demographics, especially those associated with gay-loving fiction, have long consisted predominantly of females of the straight or bi persuasion. Alas for writers within the genre, a messy little thing called trademark protection has kept those with genuine talent from releasing their erotic male pop culture icon work to the public at large.

Fortunately, there are ways to write about male/male love and sex without using other people's characters. In the cases of *False Colors* and *Transgressions*, those options include reaching back into the socially conservative and decidedly not gay-pride friendly British 17th and 18th centuries.

Given that each of these genre pioneers hails from the UK, a pleasant suggestion of authenticity accompanies the setting, even if the tunic-ripping romance associated with it may be fanciful at times. Those familiar with conventional romance novels will immediately recognize the literary landscape, replete with big emotions, big trials and tribulations and a big, "they-live-happily-ever-after" ending.

For the scribe known only as Erastes, that means returning to 1642 and shaking up the dull-as-dishwater life of David Caverly, who is sick of milking cows and cleaning barns for his blacksmith father. Initially pissy instead of appreciative, Caverly sulks when


dad, who has more of a work ethic than his son has ever considered having, brings home a hot hunk of Puritan beefcake to serve as motivation. There's a war a-brewin' and metal work is all the rage, so there's plenty of time for newly arrived Jonathan Graie to sweat deliciously – whether he's industrious at the forge or being broken while put to the Trial.

Alex Beecroft, who appears to be Erastes' biggest fan, flashes forward to the more modern world of 1762, her words aimed at girls who love boys who love boys in uniform. Beecroft's homo hero is the dashing true believer John Cavendish, a lieutenant in the British Royal Navy who just happens

to be love-struck by his captain, Alfie Donwell. What could be hotter than officers and non-gentlemen spending endless hours together aboard a run-down member of her majesty's fleet on a suicide mission to Algiers?

Even with potent storylines like these, it's a good thing that the writers opt mostly for frank words when referring to the genital region and its various functions and fluids. Each book's more formal sentence structure, with its "thee"s and "thou"s, manages to drag slightly, even in those scenes featuring not merely genitals but torture – usually an attention-getting subject.

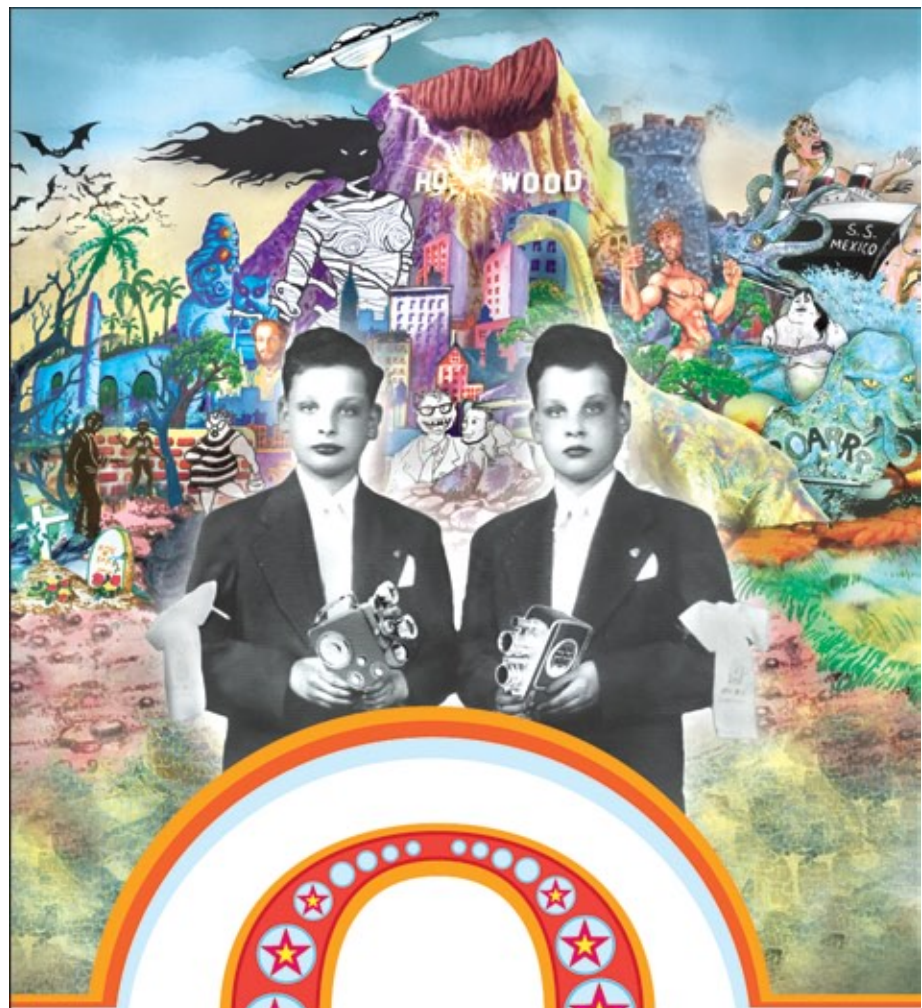
While there are no pole-in-the-hole narratives in either book, the sensuality of acts both pleasurable and agonizing is never in doubt, which should appeal to those who like a little sex with their male/male romance – but not too much.

Audiences used to a more active sentence structure may find the tales slow-going, but those comfortable with a luxurious read will find much to enjoy in these nearly all-male stories, each of which emits the curiously strong scent of literary estrogen. 

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 - 7pm U PEOPLE
 - 9pm IT CAME FROM KUCHAR
- Saturday May 30
 - 1:30pm GEORGIE GIRL
 - 3:30pm WORD IS OUT
 - 6:30pm TRAINING RULES
 - 9pm PANSY DIVISION
- Sunday May 31
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