



Inside the Outside

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By the time Timber Marlow is fifteen years old, she has already killed three men. Despite the bloody and violent nature of their deaths, Timber is hardly a murderer, at least not in the traditional sense. She has lived her entire life as a cannibal within a cult tucked away in the San Bernardino Mountains called the Divinity of Feminine Reproach. The Divinity keeps itself isolated from the Outside, which is the mainstream society beyond its invisible borders. When the opportunity presents itself, Timber escapes into the Outside, bearing witness to some dark and unsettling truths about the world around her and the integral role she plays in it. But no matter how long she stays away, Timber finds out the past isn't as far away as she thinks it is. In this debut novel, laced with scenes of horrific violence and uplifting humanity, Martin Lastrapes has written a one-of-a-kind story about love, friendship, sacrifice and cannibalism.

Inside the Outside Details

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Author : Martin Lastrapes

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From Reader Review Inside the Outside for online ebook

Selena Kitt says

Cults and cannibals - I'm in!

This book blew me away. Thoroughly enjoyed it, from plot to characters. This is an author to watch!

Char says

This is a book very unlike anything else I've ever read.

The protagonist, Timber Marlowe, was born and raised in a cult called "The Divinity of Feminine Reproach". She knows no other life.

The rules of the cult are many and breaking the rules is not allowed. The punishment for breaking them? You will be sent to the Sustenance House where your body will be prepared as food for the rest of the cult. This story follows Timber as she tries to escape.

The first section of the book is mostly involved in filling in information about the Divinity. It's detailed but engaging. The second and third sections delve more deeply into Timber's life and her escape from the Divinity.

Timber is not your every day protagonist. She has done some terrible, terrible things. The trick of this book is that you care about her anyway. All of the characters in the book are well drawn and defined. I cared about all of them, both good and bad.

Two last things. First: this book is definitely not for the squeamish or those with weak stomachs. Second: This book was incredibly well edited and well written. I spotted only two typos and I can't even remember the last time I saw a book with that few errors.

I would highly recommend this to any horror fan, even though it is not really a scary story in the traditional sense.

Cassandra says

★★★★★ 5 STARS AMAZING! I absolutely LOVE *Inside the Outside* by Martin Lastrapes. I strongly recommend everybody read this book. What first drew me in was the cover: A shaved person with missing limbs, holding a cleaver...looked alien. Then, I read the blurb mentioning CANNIBALS and I was SOLD! After reading the first few pages, I already knew I'd be HOOKED.

Timber has my heart. Even though she's a cannibal, you feel her and you love her. She was born into the Divinity (cult) and so it's not a big deal to her that she eats human flesh, which is called a "Sustenance Sacrifice". These sacrifices just sometimes happen to be the people that displease Daddy Marlow, the leader of the Divinity. Children belong to everyone. Divinity members grow up not knowing who their true mother, father, brother, or sister really are. *Brother and Sister? No one knows* Daddy Marlow is father to all.

Members of the Divinity also shave all their body hair because hair is evil. Only Daddy Marlow has hair because he shoulders all of that burden. No one is allowed inside the compound without Daddy Marlow giving his permission. No one is allowed to leave without his permission. Everywhere else is referred to as the "Outside". We follow Timber as she lives her daily life in this cult and we fall in love with her immediately. I love everything about Timber...even her dark seed that sprouts every now and then. Whoever she takes her anger out on deserves it. As the story goes on, we delve deeper and deeper... YOU MUST READ THIS! Happy, Sad, Intense, Creepy...YES, YES, YES!

Jason Ward says

First of all, I enjoyed this book. The premise was intriguing and the tone conveyed the air of creepiness out of normalcy that I imagine the author intended.

Having said that, I was frustrated by a lot of this book. Though I'm sure it was intended, the spoiler-laden chapter titles were a real turn-off. I did not enjoy going into all the best scenes knowing how they would turn out. It took the best part of the suspense out of the actual action scenes that took a long time to build up to. Which is the other huge problem I had with this story. The characters were built up and the setting of the first part was very thoroughly explored, which was essential in the first part of the story, but the fleshing out took up the majority of the text. This book conveys the drudgery of everyday life a little too well in some parts. While that was necessary and a lot of fun while still in the Divinity, once we reach the Outside, it becomes less necessary.

I love Timber very much. She was so believable and sympathetic, and I felt bad for everything that happened to her at every step of her journey. I never judged her decisions, and in fact I think I would have done a lot of the same things in her situation. And a huge thumbs-up to Mr. Lastrapes for conveying so many different sexualities and lifestyles with such an understanding grace. I did enjoy getting to know the people of the story even in spite of my wish for more action to take place.

I would recommend this book for the imaginative setting of the Divinity, which is a chilling cautionary tale in its own right, and for the wonderfully likable protagonists that you'll be glad you got to know. I look forward to Mr. Lastrapes next book.

Bethica says

The premise of a cult of people completely raised away from any type of today's society was bound to be a hit. Add rampant cannibalism with no off-putting ideas of wrong doing and great descriptive tones throughout and this one was an awesome adventure.

What happens when you throw such a person back into modern day society? And what happens when that person has no history and no documented background? All around captivating read.

Warning: Very graphic and gore ridden

Kate says

4.5*

Emma says

One of the best books I've read all year. Creepy, original, with a tight story and enviable prose. Classified as horror, but in a genre all its own: "creepy Hitchcockian lit", or "lit that fills you with an ever-increasing sense of dread, but you love every moment of it". I plan to read it again, which in today's media clutter, is the biggest compliment I can bestow upon it. It's just that good.

Stacy Renee (LazyDayLit) says

-My first 'First-Read' novel- I received this book for free courtesy of Goodreads 'First-reads' giveaway program.

They say you shouldn't judge a book by its cover but when the amazing cover art actually reflects the story within, it is definitely worth breaking the rules. As a lover of all things art, this cover (not to mention the synopsis of the novel) definitely had me sold before I even knew I was a First-Reads winner.

I was drawn into Martin Lastrapes praiseworthy debut novel, Inside the Outside from the very beginning. The endearing characters enthralled me throughout; especially Timber, whose trials and tribulations within the 'Divinity' captivated me and kept me reading into the early morning hours. It is well written and thoroughly enjoyable. I definitely recommend it to anyone who enjoys a bit of suspense and horror.

Andy says

I have a secret: this book literally changed my life. For some years I had harboured the suspicion that eating animals was morally suspect and a practice I should curb, but goddamn it those critters were just too delicious and the prospect of vegetarianism too inconvenient to compel me to action. Upon finishing 'Inside The Outside', a remarkable tale of a young woman raised within a cannibalistic cult, I instantly stopped eating meat. And fish. That was 7 months ago.

In that time countless friends, relatives and colleagues have asked me "Why?". "Why vegetarianism?" "Why now?" To all of these questions and to all of these people, without exception, I have lied; cobbled together some vague response about having suddenly and inexplicably reached that decision when all along the truth is that MARTIN LASTRAPES MADE ME DO IT.

Why the secrecy? I'm embarrassed. In the end it wasn't the PETA campaigns, the health or environmental arguments that ultimately occasioned this decision. I was simply moved to it by a work of fiction. The detached, unquestioning way in which the book's main characters equate people with meat, coupled with the

isolation of the setting and the quality of Lastrapes' prose is tantamount to indoctrination. When I learned, through the book's protagonist, Timber, that people on the outside survive by eating animals, it was as though I was hearing this information for the first time. By that point meat was meat; it was all or nothing, cannibalism or vegetarianism. For the time being at least, I have plumped for the latter.

While this is far from the first time I've been moved by great literature, it is certainly the most impact a book has ever had on my diet and probably on the way I choose to live my life.

'Inside The Outside' is often categorised as horror. This is the expectation I had of it and yet what actually unfolded on the page was not genre fiction at all but an accomplished work approaching literary fiction, albeit one that has moments of high terror, gruesome dismemberment and cannibalism. For people who find it hard to reconcile those two positions I have two words: "American Psycho".

If you want a grisly page-turner, this book will more than deliver. Get beneath the skin and subcutaneous fat though and, as with the human body, what you'll find with 'Inside The Outside' is a complex and impressive structure, not of veins and capillaries but themes, ideas and commentary. Lastrapes deals with them deftly, almost playfully, often allowing only a short glimpse for the idea to form before moving the narrative on, then returning to it pages or sometimes chapters later. Some of the gruesome set-pieces excepted, it is a very accessible read, particularly so when you consider that it touches some big ideas like belief, power, corruption, objectification and consumerism, as well as offering considered insights into intimacy, sexuality and the loss of innocence.

Or it could just be a clever ruse to make you give up eating meat.

Don't waste any more time reading reviews, get this book NOW, you won't regret your decision. Before you start reading it though, take my advice and make time to enjoy a BLT, a rare steak or your favourite burger. If you don't, you may come to regret THAT decision for some considerable time...

BiblioBabes.ca says

So, as I was saying, wow, what a book. Timber, bloody hell, the crazy shit that this girl goes through. Just when you think you have her and the story pegged a curveball comes at you outta nowhere and knocks you on your ass. I read a few parts of this book with my mouth open, hands in the air, looking around going, "What. The. Fuck" to my empty book room. I thought the shock would end after Part 1, not knowing how the story could possibly develop any further, but Part 2 didn't let me breathe for a second.

Here's what I love - the writing style is so calm that even the most gruesome of events seem to flow right off the page. I don't know how to explain this actually... it's not that it's devoid of emotion, you empathize with Timber and her struggles, but I think it's that the language reflects Timber's perception of the events. Since she was raised in such a fucked up environment her reaction to, say, decapitation, would vary greatly to, say, mine (!). I could be way off base here, but did anyone else find that? Very well written, gripping really, but left me feeling a little creeped out at how easily it was to read some pretty gnarly parts. And really, didn't Timber make it though some extraordinarily cruel and insane shit to come outta it fairing well but her character still a bit creepy? As bad as I feel for her I'm still not thinking I'll make the trip into Bookland to say hello to her and shake her hand.*shudder*

read the rest of the review here: <http://www.bibliobabes.ca/3/post/2011...>

and another review here: <http://www.bibliobabes.ca/2/post/2011...>

Angela says

Absolutely fascinating read about a cannibal cult. I loved all the characters, they all had little quirks that I could recognise in people I know (with the exception of eating flesh and cutting people up with a cleaver, obviously) and all had quite a sad background; Luscious was by far my favourite character in this novel because he seemed so, well, *human and real*. At times when the book was written from his point-of-view I just wanted to reach in and give him a hug.

Despite Timber, the protagonist, being brought up a cannibal (view spoiler) I was still able to emphasize and sympathise with her throughout. Lastrapes writes eloquently about her, and other characters, throughout and although some scenes are rather graphic and certainly not for the faint of heart, I would strongly recommend this book to anyone.

Initially I gave this book four stars. Then I totally forgot to write a review, hence why this is rather short, but as I was thinking about what to actually say here I realised there is not a single thing about this book I did not like so it is a getting another star. For a debut novel, this is outstanding and I look forward to reading more from Lastrapes in the future.

J.F. Penn says

I rarely give a 5 star review but this book is original and compelling. I read it in 2 sittings as I found it hard to get out of my head. Timber Marlow is born and raised within a cult of cannibals in the wilds of America. It is normal to butcher and eat the human flesh and the descriptions of the Sustenance rituals are gruesome, but you just can't tear your eyes away. Timber escapes to the Outside and the story continues there as she is hunted down. Lastrapes keeps you reading by giving hints of the horrors to come. His writing is skillful and incredibly convincing.

Definitely don't read it before bed if you're alone.

Rachel Fisher says

Ok, I really struggled in terms of 'stars' on this one and finally decided to leave it without stars because I didn't feel qualified to pick. The reason I felt under-qualified is because this story is WAY outside my usual comfort zone (or genre, take your pick). I have read a little horror, mostly classics like King and Koontz, but I have mostly avoided this genre because I have a tendency toward developing truly mind-melting nightmares. This was particularly true when I was a child. They were so bad in fact, that I actually did learn a little dream control (yes, it is sometimes possible to realize one is dreaming and alter a dream). It didn't always work but it worked enough when I managed to change the endings to some repetitive nightmares (usually ending in my being flayed) that they abated...somewhat.

As an adult I guess my sensitivities have dulled because my nightmares are much more rare. When I began Inside the Outside, however, I worried about their return. But I digress. What did I think?

Firstly, the author is incredibly brave, in my opinion, to tackle this subject at all. If you read the synopsis then you know that this is a book about a cannibalistic cult living in the mountains above San Bernadino. If the words 'cannibalistic cult' frighten you in a bad way, I have to say this one is probably not for you. If they scare you in a good way, then this one is right in your wheelhouse. Let's just say in my case that I was intrigued as an author. How does one carry this off?

Well, Lestrapes does it amazingly well. He plunges you right into the heart of this sick society through the eyes of Timber Marlow, a child who has never known anything else. Even so, when she is called upon to take on some of the more disgusting duties in the group (preparing the 'sustenance'...if you know what I mean), even she finds herself questioning their ways. Her questions only grow as she notices the disparities in the way some members of the society are treated by 'Daddy Marlow', the man at the top. She is also disturbed by the rape of the women in the society. In some cases the women are willing, but not in all cases and Daddy even brings in Outsider men to take their women for money. Yuk. Without giving away any spoilers I can say that the details of the cult are really pretty interesting and well thought out, but they are very, very, very, very, very disturbing.

The book is divided into two parts. In the first it is all about the cult. In the second, it is all about the outside world and how those two paths collide through Timber's actions. I have to say that I enjoyed the first part a lot more myself...which does leave one to wonder what the heck is wrong with you. Maybe I need a head shrinker because i was more compelled by the disgusting, horrifying, creepy, shudder-worthy cult part than the outside world part. Interestingly this may be because although there are some disgusting, horrifying, creepy, shudder-worthy people and actions on the outside, they seem more 'normal' and don't provoke the same reaction? Hmm, that is a thinker too.

I have to say that I found the tone of the second half (outside world) very different. It almost reminded me of Carl Hiassen (sorry, spelling? the guy that writes the funny murder mysteries set in Florida). I say that as a compliment because one thing Hiassen does that I love is really capture the soul of scumbags, petty thieves, sleazes, and their toadies. And there are plenty of these types in the 'outside' that Lastrapes manages to bring to life with vivid accuracy. Still, the feeling of the two sections was very different.

POV - I was fascinated that Lastrapes chose to use a narrator (whose identity is later revealed in a pretty good twist). I have been thinking about POVs a lot as I've done my own writing and this was also a brave choice. Narrators are rarely used anymore, for whatever reason, and I found the choice to be successful. It allows for a 3rd person omniscient sort of 'knowledge' of everyone without actually head-jumping. Very interesting approach.

The Details - Lastrapes really does give you the details in all his descriptions and I felt like I could picture (even when I didn't want to) everything that was happening and all the characters and environments very clearly.

Final Thought - If I could give it stars I would probably go '3' because I am not super into horror and a lot of this was beyond my grossness threshold. But I know that horror buffs probably LOVE that Lastrapes goes for the yuck-factor gusto so they would probably give it a '4' or '5'. Hence my choice not to use stars. Hopefully someone will read the full review and take it for what it is worth.

If you really like horror then I think you will love this book. It is truly horrifying in the best way. :)

But if cannibalism (and the associated food prep scenes) is something you can't stomach reading about...OR if you cannot handle VIVID sex scenes including sexual assaults, then this one may be a little much for you.

Jen (Book Den) says

Fantastic book. I was completely captivated; I'm still thinking about it days later.

Chanel says

This book had me on the verge of tears, laughter, and terror, sometimes at the same time. Martin Lastrapes writes with such vivid imagery, that there were times where I had to put the book down to avoid being overly spooked. His imagery is lush and visceral. His characters are multi-layered, from the most seemingly minor character, to the novel's heroine, Timber; I found myself caring for each character and caring what happened to them. Though many scenes are very dark, which I love, there is also a lightness and sort of hope that surrounds the book's darker corners. I do not want to give any of the story away, but with its many twists and turns, and Martin's fine understanding of the craft of writing, I am confident in saying you will enjoy this book as much as I did!
