

Nothing Sacred: Outspoken Voices in Contemporary Fiction

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Bernard Schweitzer, Editor

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Nothing Sacred is an anthology of short stories dedicated to the audacious and profane.

This incendiary, daring book is filled with a diverse roster of stories that probe the boundaries of social and political conventions. In Alex Perez's "Independence Day," Cuban immigrants living in Miami plot the most explosive way to welcome a new brother to their family. Malcolm X fights narcotics-riddled zombies with only the power of the human voice in Tia Ja'nae's "Night of the Living Baseheads." In Joshua Wilson's unforgettable "Appalachian Gothic," a hillbilly moonshiner is mythologized, applauded, and scorned by the inhabitants of his small Southern hometown. And in Jonathan Stone's uproarious "Eulogy," a man exposes private details about his wife's erotic life to her family—at her funeral.

The stories in *Nothing Sacred* range in subject matter, style, and tone, but they are unified by their fresh approach to narrative—and by what the editors call a "ravenous appetite for audacity." Whether they focus on an AI humanoid sending messages back to Earth from outer space or on a housewife struggling to come to terms with the allegations of sexual assault leveled at her husband, they maintain a vested interest in questions of ethical and social responsibility without caving in to prescribed protocols of "correctness."

Nothing Sacred is a bold book whose entries worry less about causing offense and more about trusting audiences to come to texts willing to be surprised and transformed. Indeed, each writer included herein imbues their story with a unique understanding of what it means to be uncompromising in today's literary landscape. Many stories tap into the humor of taboo and obscenity, but even the most absurd of the anthologized tales take seriously the fruits of discomfort and contradiction.

BELLA MOSES (January / February 2024)

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