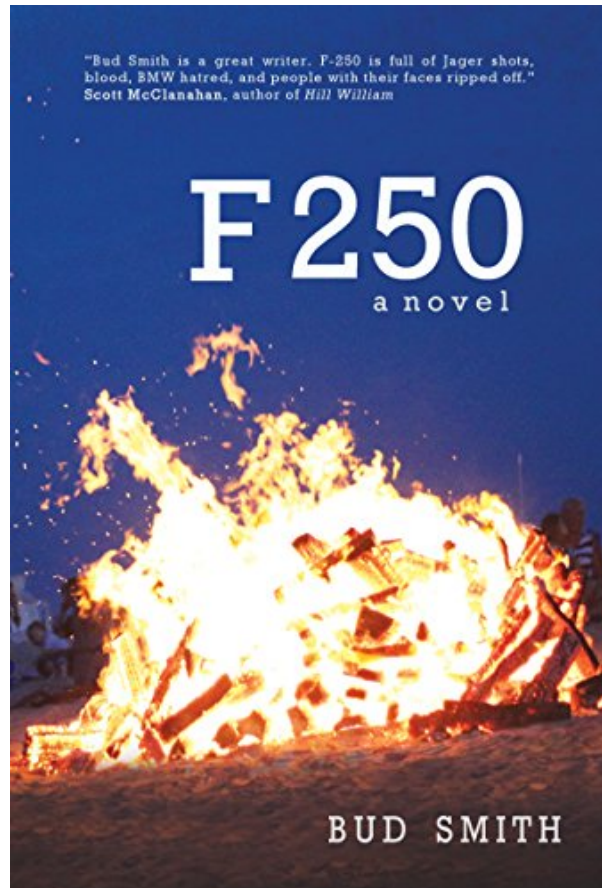


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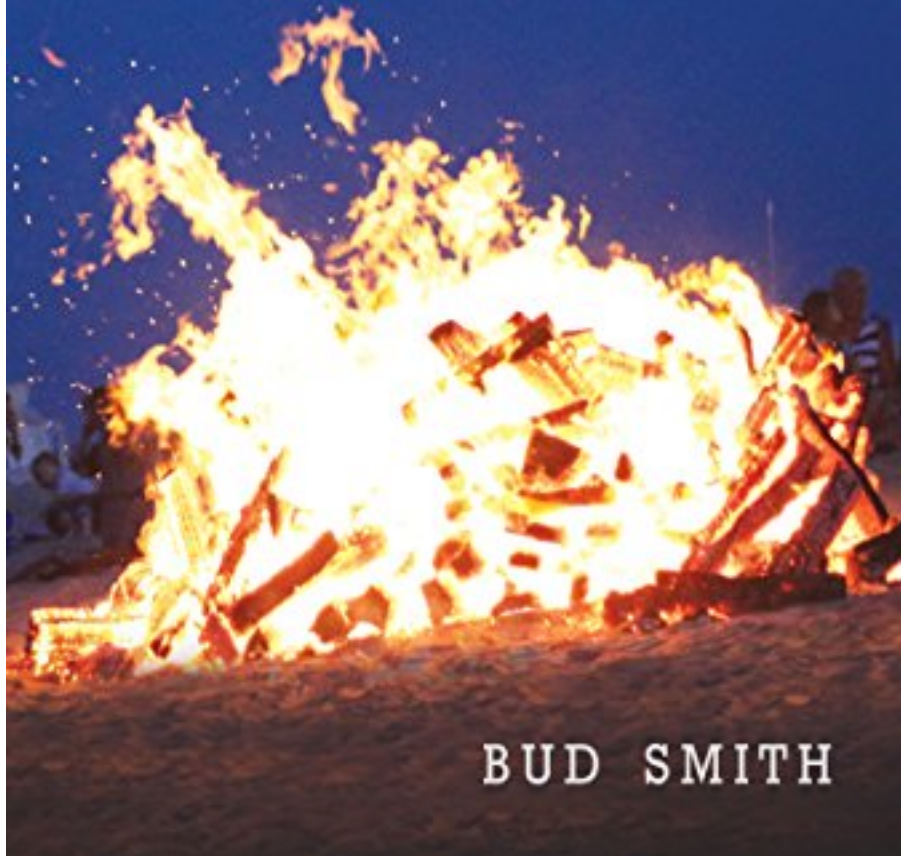
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"Bud Smith is a great writer. F-250 is full of Jager shots, blood, BMW hatred, and people with their faces ripped off."
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F 250

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Review

"Refreshing. Bud is a good one." Otherpppl

From the Author

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Lee Casey plays guitar in a noise band called Ottermeat, about to leave NJ, to try and make it in Los Angeles. For now, he's squatting in a collapsing house, working as a stone mason, driving a jacked up pickup truck that he crashes into everything. As a close friend Ods in his sleep, Lee falls into a three-way relationship with two college girls, June Doom and K Neon. F250 is a novel equal parts about growing up, and being torn apart.

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Oddly beautiful

By Benoit Lelievre

This novel sneaked up on me. There aren't any standout moments of gut-wrenching emotions, but the raw journal-like approach, the rock n' roll romanticism and the effervescent visual poetry of Bud Smith make him

unique in his melancholy. F250 is an unreal journey of a man whose life is coming unhinged. It's a tragedy you're not allowed to cry about, something you read with an inexplicable solemnity.

It wouldn't be an understatement to say I enjoyed the s*** out of F250, but I'm not entirely sure I could explain you why or sell it to you in a way that would make it justice. It's just something I thoroughly liked because I knew exactly what Bud Smith was trying to say. The novel worked my sense of empathy to death, like I think any great novel should do. If you're ever had your life not together, you're going see a part of yourself in F250, a part that you sometimes curiously miss.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

F 250 by Bud Smith

By Ray N.

I was privileged to receive an advanced review copy of Bud Smith's new novel, F 250. Here are some thoughts.

The protagonist of F 250 is Lee Casey. He works in construction and plays guitar in two bands. One band, called Ottermeat, plays adventurous music that Lee respects. The other band, Bedspin, plays bland songs penned by the rich kid in the band who pays for everything. Compared to his friends, band mates, and string of girl friends, Lee is relatively worldly. He's been on his own for a while. His mother, while living, is nowhere to be found, her presence in his life limited to a note in his pocket. Sure, like the others, Lee has dreams. One goes along the lines of, Go West, Young Man, and cut thee a record. But he's already taken an exploratory trip out west. He knows "that there weren't any answers in California that you couldn't find in New Jersey." He likes working with his hands, making things. So he pays the bills by working in construction. He took a pass on college. Not so much because the cost of college was out of reach, but that it simply didn't suit him. He loves the shore. The mountains? Not so much.

That is, in Smith's able hands, Lee is a well-drawn, wholly realistic character, even from the get go. As the story unfolds, Lee's character is developed yet more. Story-wise, F 250 is episodic in structure, yet realistic. What is life, after all but a set of episodes? Some are what might be called "little scenes"—quiet, poignant ones that you're pretty sure you've never seen, no matter how many "indie" books and films you have under your belt. In one such scene, Lee is eating dinner. It's the first time in his life, as far as he can recall, that he's ever sat down at a table and had a meal with a family. And it isn't even his family. It's the lady he got in a traffic accident with. (His fault.) When he comes to her house to pay for the damage, she invites him inside.

In another such scene, Lee recalls the time long ago when his friend, Trish, then nine, gave him a woolly caterpillar. The last three lines of the scene are:

"Thank you," I said.

"It's just a bug," she said, "world's full of 'em."

"Still, I appreciate it."

In the course of this novel, Lee and the other characters endure a string of setbacks. Broken romances. A band member quits. The house everyone lives in is torn down. An overdose death. A near-drowning. And three times, the F250 rear-ends another car, Lee never quite wrapping his head around the perhaps too-boring concept of keeping a safe distance. But that's just as well. Who wants perfect characters? Nobody! What we do want though, are well-rounded, believable characters who react to what life throws at them, and take control, to the extent that they can. We also like—I like, anyway—stories that end not tied up in a bow, but with subtle hints of better things to come. And on this, and all aspects of F 250, Bud Smith delivers.

F 250 is scheduled to be released in April. Grab a copy, be it virtual or physical, and enjoy.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

An Accomplished and Honest Novel about a Man Living the Only Life He Knows

By B. Sides

Some lives are tougher to live than other ones. In *F 250*, Bud Smith sets out to show how hard work and perseverance have benefits even if they can't necessarily save us from our fate.

Smith structures his novel around the life of Lee Casey. Lee is a relatable, authentic young man who thrives inside his masculinity. Lee plays in two bands. He builds things with his hands. He works in construction. Lee is a man's man.

Lee's life is trying because, at the core of his being, he is a dreamer living on the outskirts of his fantasies. He admits, "If I'd been given an opportunity, just one opportunity, you better believe I would have jumped on it." Although he struggles in pinpointing exactly what will give him his peace—money, women, music, he still craves that hope for something new, something wonderful.

He is a restless guy, and his dreams appear to be the only thing that can soothe him.

F 250 is a quiet, episodic novel, but you might be surprised to find that out.

Smith puts us into a world that is raw, gritty, and dark. There are scenes oozing with jealousy, romance, and death. There are multiple traffic accidents. People overdose. Someone nearly drowns.

It sounds like an action extravaganza, but it's not. And that's Smith's greatest accomplishment. Instead of getting lost in all of the happenings of *F 250*, Smith focuses in on his protagonist. This isn't the story of a place or of a group. It's the story of a man.

The way Smith builds Lee is quite remarkable. Lee is humble. Speaking of his possessions, Lee admits, "But what did I have anyway? No money in the bank, of course. Material possessions adding up to just a guitar, an amp, effect pedal stomp boxes, a drawer full of t-shirts, a wheelbarrow, some shovels, a couple boxes of random cassette tapes, stacks of paperback books. Nothing anyone would want." He's also kind. He cares about people and wants to do what is right.

While Lee is incredibly likeable, he's also not perfect. At times, he can be a little daft. But, really, can't we all be that way?

Bud Smith's *F 250* is an accomplished and honest novel about a man living the only life that he knows.

*B. Sides' original review appeared at Novel Enthusiasts

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