

## Where the Book Reviews Are

One night, My Manuscript put on great airs, and went on a great rampage of narcissism and stubbornness. Its author called it Akjsdjasd and threw it into his desk drawer, without even reading what he had written.

That very night, in that drawer, an imaginary periodical grew and grew, until rubber bands and postcards turned to sentences and walls turned to the white between them. A Table of Contents drifted by, with a section marked 'Bernard' and My Manuscript climbed in and sailed across imaginary articles, for paragraphs and columns and pages, until it came to the place where the Book Reviews are.

They slammed their terrible slams, scathed their terrible scathes, blasted their terrible blasts, and vitrioled their terrible vitriol until My Manuscript said "be still!" and tamed them by being perfect, brilliant and utterly profound. And the Book Reviews were scared, and called it the greatest manuscript of all, and made it king of all contemporary literature. And now, cried My Manuscript, let the praise begin! :

*"Supreme and timeless, and fantastical bolt of lightning born in haste that shall, never the less, live with us for ever. Bernard's commentary on time, his anthropomorphic campus, the way he manages to convey light, speed, Chronos's mind, the desert inside the hourglass... any serious collector of fiction should make this piece a must." New York Times Book Review*

*"Perhaps the greatest philosophical inquiry into time and expediency in our age, ingeniously disguised as a homework assignment. There are few men that could come up with such profound thoughts under such a limit, but Bernard does, and indeed he turns this limit itself into a weapon, a towering monolith, a goddess. Bravo for Three Hours for Cole." Newsweek*

*"All writers, cramped up in their studies, laboriously assembling sentences over hours, pitiful taxonomists, etc. must now bound down to Bernard's mastery. He has wrot in three hours of haste what they could not have created in a lifetime." Publisher's Weekly*

Stop, said My Manuscript, and he threw them all in the draw without having read half of them. And then My Manuscript, the King of All Contemporary Literature, was tired of being unfinished, and wanted to be real, if only for the one person who truly mattered, who needed it, and loved it. All the way back, in that tiny room, it sensed great possibilities at hand, and it decided to give up being King of All Contemporary Literature.

But the Book Reviews cried "Oh please don't go, we'll all denounce you, we love you so."

And the My Manuscript said "No."

And the Book Reviews slammed their terrible slams, scathed their terrible scathes, blasted their terrible blasts, and vitrioled their terrible vitriol, and My Manuscript stepped back onto the section marked 'Bernard', and waved goodbye, and sailed across imaginary articles, for paragraphs and columns and pages, back into the desk drawer, where it found the sentence it had left off on. And its writer was still there.