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Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles

"A hilarious, erudite, obsessive-compulsive rant through black bohemian and black style." – TREY ELLIS, AUTHOR OF *PLATITUDES* AND *RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW*

Twisted My Dreadlock Chronicles

Bert Ashe



Synopsis

In *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles*, professor and author Bert Ashe delivers a witty, fascinating, and unprecedented account of black male identity as seen through our culture's perceptions of hair. It is a deeply personal story that weaves together the cultural and political history of dreadlocks with Ashe's own mid-life journey to lock his hair. Ashe is a fresh, new voice that addresses the importance of black hair in the 20th and 21st centuries through an accessible, humorous, and literary style sure to engage a wide variety of readers. After leading a far-too-conventional life for forty years, Ashe began a long, arduous, uncertain process of locking his own hair in an attempt to step out of American convention. Black hair, after all, matters. Few Americans are subject to snap judgements like those in the African-American community, and fewer communities face such loaded criticism about their appearances, in particular their hair. *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles* makes the argument that the story of dreadlocks in America can't be told except in front of the backdrop of black hair in America. Ask most Americans about dreadlocks and they immediately conjure a picture of Bob Marley: on stage, mid-song, dreads splayed. When most Americans see dreadlocks, a range of assumptions quickly follow: he's Jamaican, he's Rasta, he plays reggae; he stinks, he smokes, he deals; he's bohemian, he's creative, he's counter-cultural. Few styles in America have more symbolism and generate more conflicting views than dreadlocks. To "read" dreadlocks is to take the cultural pulse of America. To read *Twisted: My Dreadlock Chronicles* is to understand a larger story about the truths and biases present in how we perceive ourselves and others. Ashe's riveting and intimate work, a genuine first of its kind, will be a seminal work for years to come.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When you hear the word dreadlocks, what is the first image that comes to mind? Is it the glorious Bob Marley? Is it an easy-going, jokester draped in Rasta garb? Is it a political militant? Is it a counterculture white youth? Whatever image comes to mind, Bertram Ashe's *Twisted* reveals that your initial perceptions are not necessarily wrong nor are they completely right. In this novel, he expertly reveals to his readers the interesting often untold history of dreadlocks. He not only hones in on the world history but the cultural history and how different groups have used this hairstyle in political, social, and spiritual ways. *Twisted* is not merely a history of dreadlocks, it is more importantly the detailed path and personal journey Ashe takes in acquiring the dreadlocks hairstyle. If form follows function then the history of dreadlocks is just as integrated, intertwined, circular, and looping with Ashe's personal history as the style itself. Beyond the great topic and message of his work, Ashe does so in such a charismatic way. His amazing use of syntax adds a rhythm that makes you as a reader no longer feel as if you are lifting words from the page but rather that you are in a comfy, hazy room listening to Ashe delightfully and passionately tell you about the hairstyle he loves deeply. Though you as the reader can feel this love, you also feel the humbleness of a family man, and the wisdom of a professor, as I saw the many sides that make up the identity of Ashe. Amazingly, he goes through a passage of self-discovery, one that is not blind to his family and those around him. He is able to express himself in a way that reveals it is not happening in a vacuum.

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