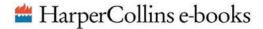


SANTA CLAUS VS. JOHNNY CRAWFORD

SHORT STORY

DENNIS COOPER



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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

"Jerk" previously appeared in the book *Jerk* (Artspace Books, 1993).

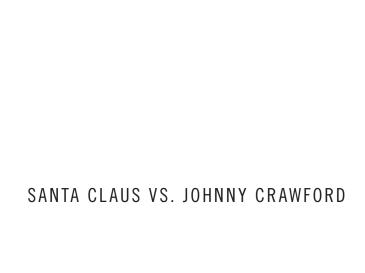
"Ugly Man" and "The Boy on the Far Left" previously appeared in Scott Treleaven's art catalog *Some Boys Wander by Mistake* (Kavi Gupta Gallery, John Connelly Presents, and Marc Selwyn Fine Art, 2007) and in *Dennis Cooper: Writing at the Edge* (Sussex Academic Press, 2008).

"Graduate Seminar," "Santa Claus vs. Johnny Crawford," "The Worst (1960–1971)," and "Three Boys Who Thought

Experimental Fiction Was for Pussies" previously appeared in *Dennis Cooper: Writing at the Edge* (Sussex Academic Press, 2008).

"Knife/Tape/Rope" was originally the text of a performance art work of the same name created and directed by Ishmael Houston-Jones in 1985.

"One Night in 1979..." previously appeared in the anthology *Thrills*, *Pills*, *Chills*, *and Heartache*: *Adventures in the First Person* (Alyson Press, 2004).



Johnny's psychiatrist gives him troubling news: Generous, gift-giving Santa Claus is in fact his sexually abusive father. Wracked with disbelief, Johnny runs outside and has a nervous breakdown. Supported by his psychiatrist, Johnny angrily confronts his lying, two-faced father. Johnny's father tells him to look on the bright side: Santa Claus has the hots for him. Standing outside his father's bedroom door, Johnny thinks, "Just because he's Santa Claus doesn't make sexual abuse okay. But on the other hand . . . "

About the Author

DENNIS COOPER is the author of

the George Miles Cycle, an interconnected sequence of five novels that includes Closer, Frisk, Try, Guide, and Period. His post–George Miles Cycle novels include My Loose Thread, The Sluts, which won France's Prix Sade and the 2005 Lambda Literary Award for Best Men's Fiction, and his most recent work, the highly acclaimed God, Jr. He divides his time between Los Angeles and Paris.

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