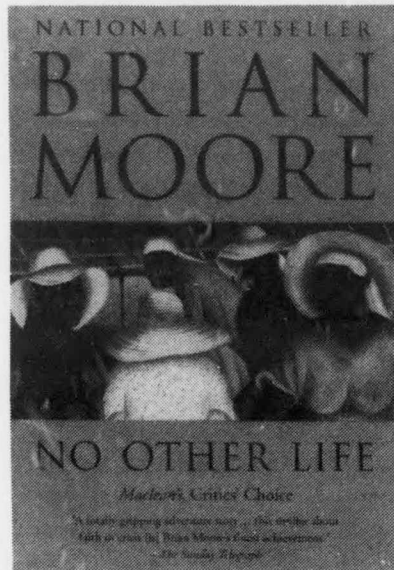


# DISTRACTIONS

## Books, books and more books



No Other Life - Brian Moore

by Maria Paisley

Brian Moore's novel *No Other Life* begins with Father Paul Michel, a Canadian missionary, reviewing his retirement ceremony from Collège St. Jean. It is at this time, when he sees the video of the ceremony, that he realizes how the people of Ganea see him.

Father Paul states that he has a secret, a story that has never been told. Although he doesn't know where to begin, how to tell it or if it is the right time to tell the story.

He begins by telling the reader how he came to join the Order and how he comes to teach in a private school run by the Order in Ganea, a small Caribbean nation. He questions himself, as he does throughout the novel, if he made the right choice or whether he should have followed in the footsteps of his father and brother.

Father Paul rescues a black boy, Jeannot, from abject poverty and at this time he had little idea of the perilous events that the future holds. Jeannot becomes a revolutionary Catholic priest, and a presi-

dent in a land of dictators. The question that is frequently asked is he a saint or a rabblouser? At the heart of this novel is the power of love, faith and corruption that is set in one of the darkest places on earth.

This political novel is gripping, moving and fast paced. It is one that is about a place that is and isn't Haiti and a visionary that is and isn't Jean-Bertrande Aristide.

It is a novel which is filled with adventure that keeps you on your seat. Yet Brian Moore shows the hardships that the poor of Ganea must suffer and their faith in their "Messiah". Moore speaks of Jeannot's trials and tribulations, friends and enemies, but most importantly his faith in God.

No Other Life is well worth reading, it is a novel that if you enjoy reading Graham Greene then you will enjoy Brian Moore.

Brian Moore was in Belfast in 1921 and was educated there at St. Malachy's College. He served with the British Ministry of War Transport during the later half of World War II in North Africa, Italy and France. After the War he worked for the UN in Europe before emigrating to Canada in 1948. Among his previous novels are *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*, *Catholics*, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearn*, and *Black Robe* which were all made into films. Moore's many prizes include two Governor-General's Awards, The WH Smith Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Award.

### Lasher - Anne Rice

By Joel Calabrese

I just finished reading Anne Rice's novel, *Lasher*, and... well, found it to be mediocre. Probably because it was my first Rice novel

and I am not familiar with her world. It felt like missing the first introductory minutes of a movie. This feeling stayed with me throughout the book. I wasn't lost, but there always seemed to be something missing.

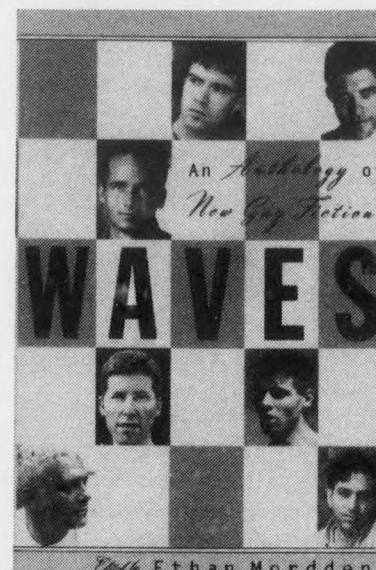
This story concerns a family and its patron demon (Lasher) who becomes flesh, no longer spirit. The family is not nuclear, it includes all sorts of aunts, uncles and cousins, all dedicated to family. In each generation a witch is born and several other family members have psychic abilities. Lasher has always been the witch's slave because he knows that it is through this witch line that he will become flesh.

The novel can almost be likened to a supernatural family saga. Much of the family's history is recounted in the story and their bloodties, as demonstrated, are very strong. Lasher is the skeleton in their closet.

*Lasher* is also the story of a spirit assumed to be a demon. Though, personally, I considered the idea that he is an elf in the realm of humans, because he never seemed to subjugate himself to Satan or suggest worshipping anything other than himself, and his physical description reminded me of a Tolkien elf.

As for the action of the novel itself, the beginning was quite slow and uninteresting. It did not grip me, then or at any time throughout the story. It was not wholly uninteresting but not a personal favourite — it is going to go on the bottom shelf. If you are an Anne Rice fan though, you will probably enjoy *Lasher* and have a better feel for it than I.

I would call this a library book, borrow it.



### Waves: An Anthology of New Gay Fiction

Edited by Ethan Mordden

By J.

The rise in gay (in this case men and women who are homosexual/bisexual) fiction is a relatively recent trend in literature (roughly a quarter century), mostly due to the Stonewall movement in 1969, the upsurge in the homosexual/bisexual visibility movements, and all of the latest developments concerning gay, lesbian and bisexual visibility. Gay literature is an expression of life experiences through our perspectives, helping us tell our stories in our own way. It is a reflection of the varieties in the lives of gay men and lesbians, apart from what many people in society believe consists only of sex. Edited by Ethan Mordden, *Waves, An Anthology of New Gay Fiction*, are the latest stories told from the perspective of some of the leading gay authors of this century. These stories bring to mind our own hardships and triumphs, our hopes, fears, joys and sorrows; in fact many of the tales spun throughout this

book would run parallel with the reader's own life.

Ethan Mordden introduces the anthology by commenting on the history of gay fiction, the writings and literature of past authors and writers, such as Charles Nelson, Gore Vidal and David Leavitt, and the evolution of gay fiction. Then it's off to the stories, as each one presents itself in its own innovative style. *Waves*, runs through the gamut of life experiences, reminiscent of looking at a diary. The stories themselves plunge the reader into the diverse lifestyles found in the homosexual/bisexual sub-culture. We find the tongue-in-cheek wit of a gay man caught up in the life of his heterosexual relatives, in John Weir's *Homo in Heteroland*. Jim Provenzano's *Forty Wild Crusbies*; or *Whenever I See a Dachshund I Think of G.I. Joe*, relives the coming out of a young boy in a small city, while Abraham Verghese's *Lilacs*, conjures the rage and helplessness felt by a man with AIDS. Throughout the book, are the sensations of life as it exists, can exist and may exist, in the lives of gay men. Campy themes run high in many of the stories, but a few leave one thinking, touching the reader in poignant and/or thought provoking ways (Michael Cunningham's *White Angel* and Rex Knight's *The Number You have Reached*).

Whatever your tastes in literature, *Waves* is an honest, often dramatic look at gay men's lives; overall a good read.

