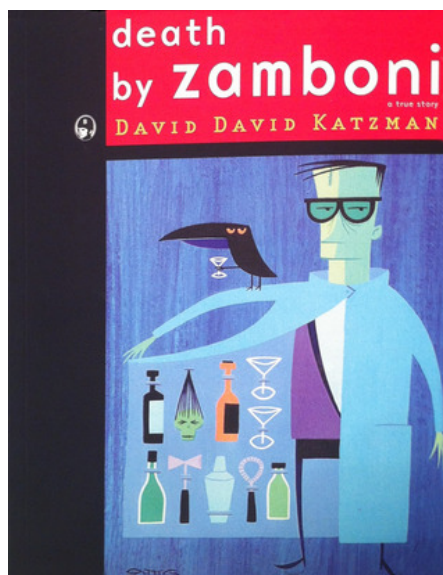




Death by Zamboni

David David Katzman

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A sweeping American romance spanning five American generations in America.

Oh, wait, that's some other crappy novel. In Death by Zamboni, you'll follow our anti-hero Satan Donut through a world of mimes, TV stars, zombies, blockheads, mad scientists, riot girls, and werewolves. This genre-busting satire shish-kabobs the commercial-entertainment state which degrades our lives and makes everyone stupid. But on a happy note, at least you've got your health.

Death by Zamboni Details

Date : Published 2000 by Bedhead Books

ISBN : 9780615113579

Author : David David Katzman

Format : Paperback 176 pages

Genre : Horror, Bizarro Fiction, Fiction, Mystery, Humor

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From Reader Review Death by Zamboni for online ebook

Michelle says

WTF?

Really...that's all I've got. And, I love zombies. And, Etta Donut was awesome.

D2, you're a strange man.

Arthur Graham says

Before the Wall Street bailouts, after women's suffrage, before the world was forever changed by 9/11, after the invention of sliced bread, and before David David "Double D" Katzman became (in)famous for writing *A Greater Monster*, he wrote this farcical slapstick amalgamation of family drama, neo noir, and capitalist satire. It's an impressively masturbatory debut novella, and I would heartily recommend it to readers in the mood for something equal parts smart and stupid. It probably isn't necessary to have that stick up your ass surgically removed in order to enjoy a book like this, but it certainly couldn't hurt, provided such elective procedures are covered by your healthcare provider. But since they probably aren't for most Americans, let's just forget I mentioned it.

I'm paraphrasing here, but a reviewer much smarter than me (and probably you) once remarked that Katzman's extreme brand of absurdism doesn't work because it provides no rational base off which to bounce. Well, I never went to absurdist school or anything, but I would argue that Katzman's absurdism bounces off your face, executes a perfect commando roll, wipes the mayonnaise from its nipples, and shoots you in the cock with a ray gun that turns people into giant cockroaches.

The "plot" is more like a string of emails, ad spots, and random happenings than anything resembling actual narrative, the characters and dialogue are about as believable as your average U.S. politician, and don't even get me started on all the corny jokes (one of them involving an actual corncob). But again — provided that stick isn't causing you too much trouble — let me be the 48th to recommend *Death by Zamboni*, by D.D. Katzman.

More from Double D:

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

David says

I totally lied! Mea maxima culpa! I bare my tender flesh to the lashing of your angry whips.

When I originally reviewed this book however-long-ago, I gave it a fairly glowing review because back then I still cared about other people's feelings. But thankfully I've grown out of that annoying quirk (or, as you prefer, affliction) of my late adolescence. You see, I was 'friends' with David David Katzman, the author, and

even met him in the real-life flesh a couple of times, and therefore I didn't feel comfortable publicly ridiculing this self-published ego trip as the printed-and-bound Scheiße that it truly was. But now I have been liberated from my moralistic inhibitions by the author himself, who -- on another review thread, in response to an abusive Goodreads author -- writes...

I've gotten shitty reviews. I have a really snarky insulting one on my book page right now. I offered to give the guy his money back, but i didn't ask him to take the review down. It's the price of writing a book. It shows guts to roll with the punches.

Admittedly the Mr. Katzman who celebrates expression on that thread isn't exactly the same one who privately grouched to me about some chick having the nerve to give him two stars, but never mind. Maybe he's matured since then, acquired some of those guts of which he speaks.

But on to the book... so that I might finally purge myself of this deception that has haunted my Goodreads past and (quietly) undermined the integrity of any review I've since posted...

One of the major problems with *Death by Zamboni* (and there are *many* major problems) is that there are no rules. The author imagines he can spurn *all* the laws of the universe, physics and logic included, in order to score some absurdist jokes. Well, it doesn't work that way. In order for absurdism to truly work as humor it must have some stable, rational base to 'bounce' off. For example, the Marx Brothers' absurdity works because it's contrasted with a fairly straight-laced world. Kafka's absurdism works because it's filtered through a 'normal' subjectivity (the main character). Early Woody Allen absurdity works because, even though he may be transplanted into the future [*Sleeper*] or the Napoleonic era [*Love and Death*], Woody Allen remains the neurotic everyman through whom and against whom the absurdity is measured.

Or as I said, absurdity needs something to bounce off. If there are absolutely no rules in your universe, then how is anything that happens within it remarkable, interesting, or funny? The Answer: It isn't. *It just isn't*. Humor is usually the result of some sort of stress, contortion, or dissonance in language or action. If everything in the book can be thrown out the window at any moment for the sake of a very, very, very bad pun, it isn't funny because the author is (for lack of a better word) cheating and furthermore, and even worse, exposing his profound weakness as a writer. Humor is hard work! You can't just string together a bunch of half-baked jokes using the framework of a tortured, unengaging plot and call it a novel. Or I guess you can -- but you'll have to self-publish. Like David David Katzman did.

This book reminded me of a fourth-rate, late-period Robin Williams. You know how Robin Williams appears on late night talk shows (or wherever anybody will have him anymore) and does his tired schtick with the rapid-fire dated impressions (John Wayne anyone?), caffeinated tics, pop culture free association, and lame improv -- and you wish you could suddenly emerge from behind the fake plants on the talk show set to hit him with a tranquilizer dart? That's what this book is like. But much, much, much, much, much worse.

There. I feel better now.

Brad says

The Unauthorized Death By Zamboni Reader Qualification quiz designed to determine whether or not you should be allowed to buy a copy of Death By Zamboni or if you must wait for the Death By

Zamboni mini-series on CBC™.

Answer these questions:

0. No?
1. Have you ever clamped clothes pins on your genitals?
2. Do acid flashbacks accompany thoughts of the Gibb brothers?
3. Have you ever uttered "Zoinks" without intentionally referencing Saturday Morning Cartoons?
4. Have you ever fantasized about making love to someone in mouse ears?
5. Do you prefer your comedians tripped out on amphetamines?
6. Is your personal contact with sweatshops a weekend "Rollback" the prices excursion to *Wal-Mart™*?
7. Do you get all angsty when you hear the promo words "Who will be voted out tonight?"
8. Are you a fan of books that are "too-sexy-for-maiden-aunts"?
9. Gouda?
10. Do you see things in a Rorschach test?
11. Have you ever, either in this life or the next, made love to a mime after it mimed its way through a death match with Jewish hitmen?
12. Do you see the connection between "it" and "is"?
13. Pink banana hammocks?
14. Do you hide your reading problem from friends and family?
15. Satan Donuts?
16. Does bowling in and around seminal fluid turn you off?
17. Have you ever ridden a Zamboni (nudge, nudge, wink, wink, say no more, say no more)?
18. Do you have a conscience?
19. Are you a superfreak?

If you answered yes to some of these questions Death By Zamboni is for you. Of course, if you answered *no* to some of these questions Death By Zamboni is for you. If you answered *maybe* to any of these same questions then Death By Zamboni is also for you -- maybe. But if you answered yes to some of these questions Death By Zamboni isn't for you because you're a half wit who probably can't follow anything more challenging than a really challenging thing. And if you answered *no* or *maybe* to some of these questions then you should be ashamed of yourself, but you probably aren't, so maybe you should just give your money to David David anyway because he's earned it by being far cooler than you. Whatever...Death By Zamboni deserves to be read. Can you handle it? Are you man enough to handle it? Do you know what it takes to read Death By Zamboni? It takes brass balls to read Death By Zamboni. Now sway your hips. Do you hear that clickety clack? Death By Zamboni really is for you.

Chris says

This book is a lot like my most memorable poop. It announced itself in grand fashion as it splashed into the toilet like a man doing a belly flop into a pool. But it wasn't just any man doing a belly flop. It was a foot-long, chubby, cylindrical, brown man with pieces of corn and tomato stuck to him. This man smelled like death. His stench made many men and women (who happened to be in the unisex public restroom at the time) vomit and lose consciousness. His smell didn't bother me. In fact, I rather enjoyed it. I didn't want to flush him away. His unsubmerged half was climbing up the toilet bowl like one of the creepy undead guys from Michael Jackson's "Thriller" video clawing his way out of a grave. He said: "You love me. You really, really love me!" He was right. I smiled. I did love him. But if you love something, you must let it go. I said

goodbye, flushed the toilet, and left the bathroom. I couldn't bear to see him go, so I didn't wait to see if he had been successfully flushed. As I made my way back to my front row seats at the Michael Bublé Christmas Concert at the Verizon Center, I heard the water hit the floor.

Rodney says

This one has been on the TBR list for a long time. I am glad I finally picked it up. After experiencing the way out there psychedelic mindfuck of "A Greater Monster," I honestly did not know what I was going to get. Much lighter and playful in tone, Death by Zamboni brings the humor in spades. While not the most accurate description, you could call this a detective novel that doesn't take it self too seriously. The highlight for me is the cleverness that dominates from beginning to end. DbZ is not just silly, but seriously funny and hit me in all of the right places...entertaining and amusing.

Jen says

Sometimes we play this little game around the dinner table. It is called "That's Absurd!" It is a fun game and we all take turns trying out our best lines. "I rode my plastic chicken to school while he laid candy eggs" is an all-time game favorite. So, when I first heard about Satan Donut I knew that good times were ahead, blue skies, candy corn smiles, and monstrous glazed turkey legs, that kind they breed to eat just at carnivals and fairs.

Thanks to this book, I am now going to win "That's Absurd!" every stinking time, although I won't be able to shout out "Wild-dingoes-ate-my-baby-sex" or "Mickey Mouse is a child molester!" among my little humans. I'll save those for those quiet "nibble-on-your-partner's-ear" times. But these will most certainly work, and are sure to be winners:

"We ate nothing but mayonnaise and steam. Sometimes I would cuddle up with a jar of mayonnaise (my only friend) and dream of a better day when I might actually have pants"

"Just the other day, I was drilling around my appendix when I discovered a large gold deposit. Now I'm rich!"

So thank you, thank you, David David, for your absurdist noir escapade with biting social commentary added at no extra charge to the reader. I have mined this work of your fertile and sometimes over ripe imagination and come out on the other side a weary dwarf with writer's cramp.

Let the game begin!

Lavinia Ludlow says

Wow. Experimental. To the max. Hardcore. A bender of a trip. A unique narration, think about Christopher Moore breeding with Tarantino's hyperactive and lacerating dialogue, and an avant-garde artist filled in the punctuation with random bouts of weirdness. Katzman has managed to piece together the chaos in his head and create something well-written, well-rounded (definitely), and surprisingly entertaining for anyone with a taste for edgy experimental fiction. He has introduced less conventional and yet eye-catching formations into his prose using interesting chapter titles and arrangements, and at times, plays with word placement/definitions by using grids or hand written displays.

"Death By Zamboni" is filled with humorous and boundary-breaking descriptions, understandable but ridiculous and oh-so great all at once, example, "Damn hot. The kind of heat that causes the H2 to divorce O, and Hall to break up with Oats."

The "experimental" side in Death By Zamboni definitely came out with things I didn't quite understand but nonetheless adored its charm, like how the capital "Os" were always written with zero (0), or why everybody's name was crack-piped out, such as Satan Donut, Vagina, Deltoid, Spank. You almost expect to see the next person's name to be something along the lines of Lychee or Coitus, and surprisingly, one of the book's biggest surprises is a character named Jenny.

There is definitely no shortage of surprise twists and turns in this book, for me it was like migrating through a corn maze (the horror film type) ridden with nerve gas and land mines, which upon inhalation and detonation sent me to another dimension of wackiness and random happenings.

This is a complex read, it isn't breezy or for the faint at heart or easily offended, and definitely worth checking out.

David Katzman says

I should read this.

Lance says

You can tell that David David had a hell of a good time writing Death by Zamboni. This is one funny book. The word play is hilarious, bringing to mind Groucho Marx on crank. The story is a simple enough detective-trying-to-find-missing-spouse story line. The best thing about Zamboni is not necessarily the story line, but, instead the narrative voice (the singer not the song). Katzman is a very funny man. He gets so twisted up in some of his word play and surreal tangents that you wonder if he is going to be able to loop back into the story without it seeming forced. But he always sticks his landing from his bizarre little sidetrips and the story is all the better for such efforts. I look forward to seeing if he plans on writing any other books.

I hope so.

David says

"**Death by Zamboni**" earns a place on the very exclusive shelf reserved for such works as Don DeLillo's **White Noise** , or Paul Auster's **New York Trilogy** . Here is an example of the kind of biting, mordant wit that you can expect to find therein:

Behind the front desk was a security guard whose nametag identified him as "Jimmy". I took out the corn on the cob I had in my pocket and struck him on the head with it. The cob broke, but he went down like a ton of bricks. Jimmy cracked corn, and I don't care.

Besides being chock-a-block with myriad examples of this kind of hilarity, the book is suffused throughout with the kind of manic exuberance that suggests that the author (possibly intoxicated with his own brilliance) certainly enjoyed writing it, probably far more than anyone could ever hope to enjoy reading it.

Melki says

If you've ever read a book other than the Holy Bible, you've probably heard this one before - *a statuesque blond walks into a private investigator's office*. Yawn. But, Katzman manages to throw a whole new spin on this old chestnut, mainly by having the blond utter aloud the always implied but never overtly stated subtext - **"I need you to find my missing husband. And I'll have sex with you if you succeed."**

What follows is a bizarro tale featuring both nifty one-liners and groan-inducing puns. There are mimes. Hebraic hitmen, and Manute Bol. The best part is the missing man's name - **Bland Entropy**. I enjoyed probably the first third of the book before what little there was of a plot looped off into the stratosphere with a load of celebrity name-dropping, chair punching, and random explosions. (At least I *think* there were random explosions; I had sort of stopped paying attention by then.)

Two stars, plus one more because I was honestly looking forward to those inconveniently timed phone calls from Satan's mom. Can't wait til my kids leave home so I can do that to them.

Nefariousbig says

DDK's books remind me how much I like reading, laughing, thinking, pink sprinkly donuts, and breathing.

I pulled this little guy off my bookshelf and re-read it. I first read Death By Zamboni 10 years ago, when I was a high-spirited wild-child (well...child-ish anyway). Since that first reading I have grown into a cynical and materialistic wild-adult (well...wild-ish anyway). Death by Zamboni reminds me that it's ok to be cynical and materialistic, but it's so much more fun to be a child.

The book reads like an Alexander Calder sculpture. I laughed out loud while turning pages, and I cried when the last pink sprinkly donut page was turned. I LIKE donuts, but I LOVE Satan Donut. Let me just say, if my spouse went missing, Detective Donut would be my first and last call.

Jessica says

this is the zaniest thing I've ever read...?*&%\$#@!

Shit I just added a whole bit to this review and lost it! How did that happen?!

all right...trying again:

my advice: read it in one sitting. or two. Best to not break the rhythm. I didn't do this and found it harder to re-enter Katzman's zany world. I might've been better prepared if my parents hadn't deprived me of television and cartoons when I was a kid (always useful to blame the parents). I had to come up for air quite often...

Katzman is a very funny guy. I'd love to see him do the improv. theatre and comedy I've heard him talk about.

On surer footing, I can tell you that as an objet d'art, this book is 5 stars + . It's exceptionally well-designed, from the cover art to the matte finish, to the book size, the paper quality, the typeface and the variety of typography within. And I love how each chapter has a sponsor. Incredibly inventive & well-done.

Robert Beveridge says

David David Katzman, *Death by Zamboni* (Bedhead Books, 1999)

Death by Zamboni, a little self-published effort (as far as I can tell in my admittedly sloppy research), first came to my attention when someone-- I forget who-- joined a booklist I'm a member of and listed it as one of his favorite books. I have often wondered idly whether it wasn't the author doing a bit of self-promotion under an assumed name in the intervening years, but hey, I'm not going to castigate anyone for stacking the deck (unless said author wanders off and forgets the little guys after he gets big; we also had a visit from Dan Brown at one point). It stayed in the back of my head, so I finally got round to picking up a copy with my Christmas gift certificate. And I have to say that I was pleasantly surprised by it. Not by its humor, which all too often fell flat (your mileage may vary, of course; I have a sense of humor that's sometimes tough to crack), but because of its author's oddly endearing insights into human nature.

The story centers around private detective Satan Donut (whose name should give you an idea of where the humor in this book is going), who is tasked by a sultry blonde to find her missing husband, a scientist. However, relatively little of the book's length is devoted to its storyline, so you might as well forget it. At least half the book is taken up by emails between Satan and his sister, Etta Donut, the lead singer in a punk band (and part-time entertainer-for-hire with a fetish for Minnie Mouse suits).

On the down side, the book is written at about the level you expect from a self-published book; it has very little sense of pace, there's next to no character development, the humor may manage to pull itself out of the mind of an horny thirteen-year-old once or twice. But balancing the book's deficiencies are strengths. For one thing, while Katzman could probably use a few classes on the niceties of writing, he's got raw talent in spades; this is a book that you'll have to force yourself to put down, even when you feel like flinging it across the room. And once Satan gets into a serious conversation, Katzman really takes off; while I won't say I

mistook any of this for Sartre, if you turn your head and squint just right...

A fun little tale, quite enjoyable in its own twisted way. Certainly not for everyone, but buy a copy anyway. If it's not for you, someone you know will enjoy it. ***
