



The Sex Lives of Cannibals: Adrift in the Equatorial Pacific

By J. Maarten Troost

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At the age of twenty-six, Maarten Troost—who had been pushing the snooze button on the alarm clock of life by racking up useless graduate degrees and muddling through a series of temp jobs—decided to pack up his flip-flops and move to Tarawa, a remote South Pacific island in the Republic of Kiribati. He was restless and lacked direction, and the idea of dropping everything and moving to the ends of the earth was irresistibly romantic. He should have known better.

The Sex Lives of Cannibals tells the hilarious story of what happens when Troost discovers that Tarawa is not the island paradise he dreamed of. Falling into one amusing misadventure after another, Troost struggles through relentless, stifling heat, a variety of deadly bacteria, polluted seas, toxic fish—all in a country where the only music to be heard for miles around is “La Macarena.” He and his stalwart girlfriend Sylvia spend the next two years battling incompetent government officials, alarmingly large critters, erratic electricity, and a paucity of food options (including the Great Beer Crisis); and contending with a bizarre cast of local characters, including “Half-Dead Fred” and the self-proclaimed Poet Laureate of Tarawa (a British drunkard who’s never written a poem in his life).

With *The Sex Lives of Cannibals*, Maarten Troost has delivered one of the most original, rip-roaringly funny travelogues in years—one that will leave you thankful for staples of American civilization such as coffee, regular showers, and tabloid news, and that will provide the ultimate vicarious adventure.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

At 26, Troost followed his wife to Kiribati, a tiny island nation in the South Pacific. Virtually ignored by the rest of humanity (its erstwhile colonial owners, the Brits, left in 1979), Kiribati is the kind of place where dolphins frolic in lagoons, days end with glorious sunsets and airplanes might have to circle overhead because pigs occupy the island's sole runway. Troost's wife was working for an international nonprofit; the author himself planned to hang out and maybe write a literary masterpiece. But Kiribati wasn't quite paradise. It was polluted, overpopulated and scorchingly sunny (Troost could almost feel his freckles mutating into something "interesting and tumorous"). The villages overflowed with scavengers and recently introduced, nonbiodegradable trash. And the Kiribati people seemed excessively hedonistic. Yet after two years, Troost and his wife felt so comfortable, they were reluctant to return home. Troost is a sharp, funny writer, richly evoking the strange, day-by-day wonder that became his life in the islands. One night, he's doing his best funky chicken with dancing Kiribati; the next morning, he's on the high seas contemplating a toilet extending off the boat's stern (when the ocean was rough, he learns, it was like using a bidet). Troost's chronicle of his sojourn in a forgotten world is a comic masterwork of travel writing and a revealing look at a culture clash.

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From [Booklist](#)

Although accustomed to globe trotting, Troost and his wife, Sylvia, were truly innocents abroad when they moved to the island of Tarawa in the South Pacific, where Sylvia had accepted a government position. Tarawa is the capital of Kiribati--a republic of tiny atolls located just above the equator--and the place where Troost's dreams of paradise were shattered. Although Tarawa has much to offer, such as stultifying heat, dogged bureaucracy, toxic water, *La Macarena*, and the fantastic rituals of the I-Kiribati people, it lacks running water, television, restaurants, air-conditioning, and, the most crucial amenity, beer. Culture shock ensued for Maarten and Sylvia, and he chronicles their two years on Tarawa in a hilarious, sardonic travelogue. Among the more memorable episodes is the time a simple fishing trip turns into a hunt for a giant thresher shark and when Troost blasts a Miles Davis CD to combat the incessant repetition of *La Macarena*. Troost's mystified admiration for the I-Kiribati people shines through it all, and readers learn how humor itself can be a necessary tool for survival. *Jerry Eberle*

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Review

"A comic masterwork of travel writing." --*Publishers Weekly*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Bobby Phillips:

The book *The Sex Lives of Cannibals: Adrift in the Equatorial Pacific* has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of help. The book was authored by the very famous author. McDougal makes some research ahead of write this book. This kind of book very easy to read you can find the point easily after perusing this book.

Yasmin Parker:

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Whitney Martinez:

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