

Human Punk

John King

For fifteen-year-old Joe Martin, growing up on the outskirts of West London, the summer of 1977 means punk rock, busy pubs, disco girls, stolen cars, social-club lager, cutthroat Teddy Boys and a job picking cherries with the gypsies. Life is sweet—until he is attacked by a gang of youths and thrown into the Grand Union Canal with his best friend Smiles.

Fast forward to 1988, and Joe is travelling home on the Trans-Siberian Express after three years away, remembering the highs and lows of the intervening years as he comes to terms with tragedy. Fast forward to 2000, and life is sweet once more. Joe is earning a living selling records and fight tickets, playing his favourite 45s as a punk DJ, but when a face from the past steps out of the mist he is forced to relive that night in 1977 and deal with the fallout.

Human Punk is the story of punk, a story of friendship, a story of common bonds and a shared culture—sticking the boot in, sticking together.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John King is the author of seven novels to date. His first book, *The Football Factory*, was an instant word-of-mouth success and was later turned into a high-profile film. Sales in the UK now top a quarter of a million copies. The novels *Headhunters*, *England Away*, *Human Punk*, *White Trash*, *The Prison House*, and *Skinheads* followed. King's writing reflects his interests—social history, music, literature, drinking, travel, soccer, and non-party politics. Before becoming an author King worked at a variety of jobs and spent two years travelling around the world in the late-1980s. He has long been associated with fanzines, writing for various titles over the years and running *Two Sevens* in the early 1990s. He currently publishes and edits *Verbal*, a fiction-based publication. Other interests include a regular Human Punk night at London's legendary 100 Club. He lives in London.

ACCOLADES

"In its ambition and exuberance, *Human Punk* is a league ahead of much contemporary English fiction."

—*New Statesman*

"The long sentences and paragraphs build up cumulatively, with the sequences describing an end-of-term punch-up and the final canal visit just two virtuoso examples. These passages come close to matching the coiled energy of Hubert Selby's prose, one of King's keynote influences... In the resolution of the novel's central, devastating act, there is an almost Shakespearean sense of a brief restoration of balance after the necessary bloodletting."

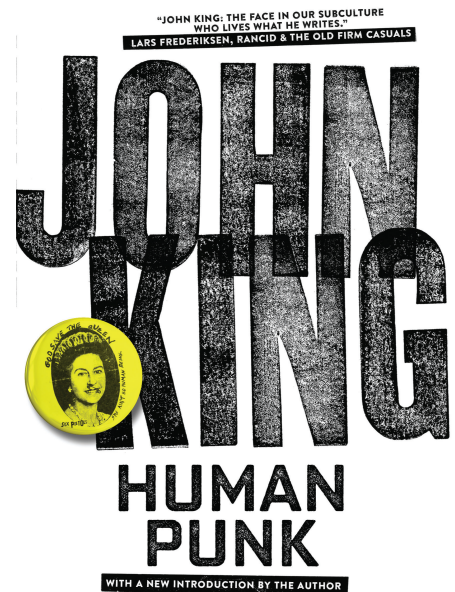
—Gareth Evans, *The Independent*

"King's eye for detail is as sharp as his characters' tongues, and his creations are eminently three-dimensional: insightful and funny one minute, bigoted and fucked up the next. Like real people, then."

—*The Face*

"Unique and brutal fiction. King is a master of idiom and street slang. He appears with a voice that appears to be the true expression of disaffected white British youth."

—*The Times*



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