



# Capture

*Roger Smith*

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**Capture** Roger Smith

**The truth is just the lie you believe the most**

As four-year-old Sunny Exley drowns in the icy waters off a luxury beach house, her father, Nick, smokes weed on the shore and her mother, Caroline, is lost in the arms of a lover. Hidden on nearby boulders, rent-a-cop Vernon Saul watches the child die and chooses to act only when it is too late.

In the days following Sunny's death, gutted by grief and guilt, Nick falls under the spell of Vernon who presents himself as a friend in time of need. When the sinister Vernon's true motives are revealed, Nick is drawn into a spiral of manipulation and murder that leaves him fighting for his sanity and his life.

## Praise for Capture

"A harrowing psychological page-turner. Gripping." *The Times*

"A stark reflection on the insidious nature of guilt and grief. One of the most deeply satisfying books I've read this year." *Florida Times-Union*

"The plot is operatic in its violence and tragedy and the characters are heartbreakingly real and immensely flawed. Smith's impeccable prose hits you on a physical level." *Spinetingler Magazine*

"Violent, chilling and as black as sin. Smith is a master of suspense." *The Witness*

"One of the most powerful reads you will find this year. Unmissable." *Crimesquad*

"A chilling read written with great power." *Shotsmag*

"An explosive, diabolical thriller." *Paris-Match (France)*

"Plunges us into a sea of suffering and brutality. Terrifying." *Le Figaro (France)*

"Venomous and haunting." *Liberation (France)*

"A wild ride. Fasten your seat belts." *Marianne Magazine (France)*

"Excellent. Nobody can peel back the layers of damaged people and, indeed, a broken society, so poetically." *crimefictionlover.com* Top 5 Crime Novels of 2012

"Painfully realistic. Read it if you dare." *The Big Issue*

"Terrifying." *Business Day*

"Sends chills down your spine." *The Citizen*

"A brutal, bloody portrait of a broken society." Die Welt (Germany)

"A novel of existential force. Smith's best book to date." Title Magazine

"Roger Smith writes like the bastard child of Patricia Highsmith." Krimicouch(Germany)

"Murder, drugs, blood and horror are described in a style reminiscent of Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness."  
Göttinger Tageblatt (Germany)

"A masterful thriller." Sonntagszeitung (Switzerland)

"A tough,captivating thriller. Not for the fainthearted." DRS3 (Swiss Radio)

"Magnificently written. High voltage!" Oön (Austria)

"The Best Crime Novel of 2012." Dead End Follies

"The best thriller I've read this year." The Gamblers Blog Top 5 Books of 2012

## **Capture Details**

Date : Published (first published June 18th 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Roger Smith

Format : Kindle Edition 321 pages

Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Mystery, Crime, Suspense

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## From Reader Review Capture for online ebook

### Janine L. Klabe says

#### Dark and gritty..

Interesting setting. Characters are unsympathetic, but compelling and psychologically damaged in their motivations. Bleak tale with dubiously positive ending. Not recommended for a depressive.

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### Charlene A. Lester says

#### Interesting Story

Complicated but interesting story. Murder and mayhem are the words for the day. Daughter drowns despite a witness to her falling into the water. Why did he let her drown?

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### Lnbén says

Never have I read a book where there were no redeeming qualities to the main characters! Few works make the antagonist's point of view the story telling style.

Roger Smith's CAPTURE was a breath of fresh air, albeit angst filled air.

We meet Vernon Saul in the first chapter as he calmly watches a little girl die. His motive becomes clearer as the story progresses; but one thing is certain...Vernon Saul is a Whirling Dervish of meanness, mayhem, and murder. A perfect sociopath.

Nick Exley and Dawn Cupido are the "good guys". Yet they are so flawed and self-contained that you don't recognize them as the protagonists. Neither are the standard stalwart or warm-and-fuzzy heroes we come to expect. All the characters have their own justifications for their criminal behavior...not by our logic, but by theirs.

This was perhaps the most refreshing and engrossing thriller I have read in quite a while. I applaud Smith for his ingenious POV and plot.

I encourage a quick download of this great read to all who want to experience a new type of thriller. And I happily give it a full 5\*.

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### Marvin says

*Capture*, along with *Dust Devils*, have been released on February 20th, 2014 by the exceptional publishing

company New Pulp Press. As both books will attest, South African author Roger Smith is an exciting writer of literary suspense and one that is well deserving of a larger audience. *Dust Devils* is a action-packed thriller with strong socio-political overtones while *Capture* is a slower paced but equally riveting descent into psychopathology and dysfunctional relationships. Both are highly recommended yet I found *Capture* to be slightly better due to its tight grasp of human nature and the high quality of psychological suspense.

Vernon Saul is a ex-police officer now rent-a-cop who sees a small child drowning on a private beach. For reasons that will slowly unravel, he does nothing until he knows it is too late then acts like a rescuing hero. While the child was drowning, the child's father, Nick Exley was smoking a joint with a friend while her mother Caroline Exley was having an affair with her lover in the house. Vernon becomes friends with Nick and reveals a talent for manipulating the father's grief and guilt over the death. As Vernon's hold on Nick grows, the consequences become more severe and deadly.

I love the way the novel develops. Vernon is the most interesting if also most revolting character in the book. We know little about him at first but, between his "friendship" with Nick and his more direct control of a young mother and her child, we are both fascinated and repulsed by him. Vernon carried an unhealthy need for power and control with more than a tinge of sadism involved. Nick and the young mother Dawn easily fall into his web and the results are harrowing in the edge-of-your-seat way a suspense novel should be.

The other characters are no less full dimensional. Nick seems to be a good person but weak and dependent. Caroline has a history of mental illness and a strong selfish streak. Dawn is an ex-junkie who works in a strip joint while trying to care for her child that she just received by from Child Welfare. In some ways, she seems to be the most understandable; a woman who childhood and mistakes have dug her deep in a hole yet having a love for her child that makes her want to redeem herself even if she is not sure how. None of the characters are truly likable but their weaknesses and problems are the kind that keeps a story believable and alive. There is a great supporting cast of corrupt cops, low-lifes and good intentioned acquaintances. The author knows how to bring alive even the most minor characters.

Roger Smith reminds me a lot of Patricia Highsmith. He can take not-so-likable people and place them in situations that causes them to struggle with the part of them that isn't too nice to look at. But unlike Highsmith, I think Roger Smith has a better grasp on the more noble corners of the mind that helps a person fight through their fears and temptations. Yes, Smith is cynical and dark but his novels are not hopeless. He has a good sense of the human dilemma that we all struggle through in more mundane ways. Even though we may not be dealing with infidelity, corruption and murder, Smith's themes will still feel uncomfortably familiar. This book gets my highest recommendation.

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### **Bernie Charbonneau says**

This was good, really really good! I will begin by stating that if you are put off by harsh language and brutal murder scenes, then this novel and writer is not for you. If you believe in the baby Jesus and all it's glory, this book is not for you. This novel is harsh, nasty and probably one of the best noir novels that I have ever read. There is no character in this novel that you feel sorry for, they are all venomous and that is what makes this tale so good! This is a tale that takes you to the more seedier parts of Cape Town, where this author is from, and pounds your senses numb but you keep turning the pages for more. This has it all, a young, rich family with big problems, a former dirty cop with his own dark secrets and a stripper just trying to keep her young daughter from becoming a statistic in the poverty strewn neighbor that envelopes them both. If you like a good, gritty, dark story, then I strongly recommend this author.

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### **Leslie says**

The plot here was not awful just very farfetched, it feels almost like a very twisted fairytale. I might have given it three stars if not for the graphic language. I am not a prude but reading large portions of the book felt like falling into a seedy porno magazine. If these situations had been used for a specific impact it would have been fine but the instances far exceeded useful descriptions and just became over the top ridiculousness. It just felt like a very weird little story that wasn't all together awful but just felt unbelievable and a bit gross. Definitely don't read if you're the easily offended type or don't want to read in depth descriptions of sexual abuse and violence.

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### **Jamey Knight says**

I got this book as a freebie and wasn't at all sure what to expect. Firstly, it is an extremely well-written novel; well-organized, impeccably edited (I am a huge grammar nazi, and so many freebies are so poorly edited, or possibly not edited at all, and some have been nearly impossible for me to muddle my way through).

I am definitely far from a prude, but some parts of this novel were a bit crass even for me. Other than that, I was beyond intrigued. I love the way seemingly multiple plots and characters were interwoven and ultimately tied together, and I must say that it takes a unique talent to leave the reader desperately longing to see the bad guys, although probably not the worst guys, prevail.

I also found the descriptions of South Africa fascinating. Overall, a sick, twisted, disturbing and oddly entertaining read.

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### **June says**

This is a book where almost every single character in it is deviant and/or violent. When you first start reading it you feel like you have taken a step down a very long and dark hole. And as you continue to read on the hole becomes darker and danker where violence is king and gory bloody acts seem to be the norm rather than exception. Don't get me wrong the book was very well written; it just depressed me to 'like' it.

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### **Benoit Lelièvre says**

It's difficult for me to use restraint when reviewing Roger Smith, because his work always hits home hard. CAPTURE equals DUST DEVILS in its attempt to grasp contemporary South Africa, but the fact that CAPTURE isn't a political novel plays in its favor. The scope is more intimate and therefore its objects clearer and its reach longer. The psychological accuracy is startling. To me, a novel that crafts meaning and transcendence from cold, hard reality achieves the highest possible goal of fiction and that's what CAPTURE is doing. DUST DEVILS entertained me and but CAPTURE wrapped me up in its darkness. The author's finest work to date.

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## **Dwight Burgess says**

### **Foreign mystery.**

Writer dragged the beginning story telling out far too much. I was bored at least the first half. The entire book is depressing even though the descriptions of the area may be accurate. Good ending.

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## **Rory Costello says**

Roger Smith confronts the seamiest aspects of South Africa and mines extremely compelling stories from these horrors. He excels in depicting the divide between rich and poor, and the emotional casualties on both sides. His characters are so well-drawn that it's like you're seeing them on screen. His plots bristle with tension. He is simply a superb author.

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## **Kelly J says**

### **Summary:**

Nick Exley finds himself in a nightmare he just can't seem to wake up from. On his daughter's fourth birthday his nightmare begins. Nick thinks he has found a friend in Vernon Saul that he can speak freely with about his guilt and grief. Boy was he wrong and within few days Nick finds himself being dragged deeper into the nightmare. His so called friend has motives that will not help Nick but harm him and drag him into a world of death, loss of sanity and maybe loss of his life.

### **What I thought of the book:**

This book starts off slow and very confusing. However after a few chapters the book grabs your attention and doesn't let go. Every once in a while you might get confused but within a few minutes your confusion turns into "Oh My, What, You have to be kidding, and will Nick finally see Vernon for who he really is?" This book will have you clutching your seat, screaming at the pages and grabbing a tissue to wipe away your tears. This book is by far one of the best psychological mysteries I have read this year.

### **Ending:**

Has Nick found answers to his questions, has he made a pact with the devil, and can he truly be happy once again? Please borrow the book, purchase the book or get it on your kindle if you have kindle unlimited. Read it!

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## **Rob Kitchin says**

Capture is thriller crime tale set in Cape Town. The tale revolves around three main protagonists: Nick Exley, a rich, white software developer visiting the country with his wife and young daughter; Vernon Saul, a coloured former cop, who is always looking for an angle to leverage power and opportunities; and Dawn

Cupido, an erotic dancer and former meth-head and hooker who owes Vernon for retrieving her daughter from social services. Each character is flawed, but while Exley has lived a so-far charmed life, Vernon and Dawn have been living nightmares from a young age. Smith's hook is for Exley to join them, his daughter drowning in the sea and his troubled relationship with his wife disintegrating. Vernon, a psychopathic chancer whose go-to solution for every problem is to kill whoever is in the way, inveigles his way into Exley's life, which rapidly descents into hell – a blur of drink, drugs, lies, coercion and murder. And in Vernon's wake is Dawn. Smith sets a dark, nasty tone in the first few pages and rarely lets any light into the tale, keeping the pace and tension high throughout. And he brings into sharp contrast the rich enclaves and the grinding poverty and violence of The Flats, and the inability of overstretched services to keep a lid on all the crime. While some of it seems far-fetched – it's really not clear why the police don't bring Exley or Vernon in for questioning or take a more active interest in their shenanigans, and there is a plot reliance on Exley's work – it doesn't really matter too much. This is like an action-thriller film, with a cartwheeling plot, rather than the considered realism of a police procedural drama. It's bold, lurid and dark, with vivid characters, and not at all subtle. My main issue was that the denouement was signalled from quite a long way out, and after the noir running throughout felt a little bit of a cop-out. As I've said before, the South African tourism board is probably praying for Roger Smith to find his inner Enid Blyton; hardboiled crime readers will happy to take his work as it is.

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### **Camilla says**

[happy fucking ending (hide s

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### **Marietta says**

The players: Vernon Saul, ex cop, opportunist, psycho path. Dawn Cupido, stripper, ex meth head & hooker with a child. Looking for a better life. Nick Exely, white, rich software developer with wife and daughter. The story starts with Vernon sitting on a rock watching a opportunity unfold from someone else's misery. Nick is on the beach getting high while his wife is in the house getting her jollies with another man. Sunny, his daughter, is drowning in the water.

Dawn was helped by Vernon to kick the meth habit and get her child back from social services. It wasn't out of the goodness of Vernon's heart because there isn't any goodness in him. He has plans for Dawn, he just doesn't know what they are yet. She now owes him. Nick owes him. You don't want to owe Vernon Saul anything, ever. Vernon likes to hurt people. Vernon likes the feeling of being in control of people. Vernon likes to play God.

The reality part? This story takes place in Capetown, but it could be any place in the world. The bad choices people make in their lives. Whether they're a victim of circumstance or their surroundings, there will always be vultures circling to swoop down and gain something from the misery of others. As other reviewers have said, this a psychological thriller. It has the blood & gore of Roger Smith's previous novels, but this one gets under your skin in a different way. Two people from completely different walks of life being controlled by the same heartless vulture. If you haven't read any of Mr. Smith's other books, this is a good place to start. I'm pretty confidant that you will go back and read his others.

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