



Jack Frusciante Has Left the Band: A Love Story--With Rock 'N' Roll

By Enrico Brizzi, Stash Luczkiw

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Alex is failing in high school. He is obsessed by music, cutting class, getting off his head and he despises the other kids at school. Until Aidi, with whom he falls in love. But their time together is cut short when Aidi goes to the States for a year. Can their relationship survive?

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The setting: Bologna, Italy, under a sky "as eloquent as a block of cast iron." The hero: Alex, a bright and bored 18-year-old. The genre: coming of age. Alex, anticipating a future of bun-numbing, bourgeoisie-induced boredom and hopelessly in love, takes up with the briskly degenerate--albeit empathic--Martino. Drinking, drugging, and rock-and-roll fill the void left, or *created*, by Alex's realization of the banality of existence. Enrico Brizzi writes with an insider's view of life in the band--he himself played in a rock band before he was thrown out for bad conduct. What lifts *Jack Frusciante Has Left the Band* above the more predictable aspects of the coming-of-age story is its tone: energetic and crackling with irony. The author, already a sensation at 22, has become one of Italy's biggest sellers. With the easy, slangy conversational style of *The Catcher in the Rye*, Brizzi's second novel paints an endearing picture of contemporary youth outrageously scrambling for meaning.

From Library Journal

When reviewers use the adjective sweet to describe a novel, it unfortunately conveys the impression that the book is soppy, insipid, or both. Yet this first novel by a 22-year-old hotshot Italian author is wonderfully sweet in the purest, most nonpejorative sense. Alex D., the 16-year-old hero, is torn between his old self as top student and obedient son and his restless new persona as friend to druggies and musicians. When Alex meets Aidi, he discovers a girl who understands his hopes and dreams, delights in his company, and becomes irreplaceable in his life. The only hitch to this perfect (and remarkably unsexual) relationship is that she's leaving for the United States in five months for a year as an exchange student. Although some readers (including this reviewer) will be unfamiliar with many of the names and references, particularly to either Italy or contemporary music, this well-translated portrayal of first love is a treat to read. Nancy Pearl, Washington Ctr. for the Book, Seattle
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From Kirkus Reviews

Haphazardly punctuated first novel of middle-class European angst that's less about rock 'n' roll, or pubescent love, than about Anglo-American slacker culture and a bunch of dead-end kids who talk the talk and walk the walk because they have nothing better to do. The story, set in Bologna, veers between impressionistic accounts of 16-year-old Alex's search for love, thrills, and a purpose in life, and transcripts of his annoyingly affected tape-recorded diary. Alex is, of course, alienated from his family, who apparently do nothing but watch television, eat, and drive Alex wherever he can't take himself on his bicycle--this last a relic of his childhood that comes to symbolize his quest for enduring values. When not flying through Bolognese streets on the bike and thinking of himself in rock bands, or as Holden Caulfield, Alex plays the rebel without a clue: sleeping late, scowling menacingly at girls, drinking too much, and nearly failing what few high school classes he doesn't cut. He suffers a brief friendship with Martino--an upper-middle-class teenage nihilist who has all the right clothes and rock 'n' roll posters, and enough money from his divorced parents to spend most of his life intoxicated--that ends when Martino is arrested and commits suicide. The tale's only variation from earlier interpretations of the coming-of-age formula is revealed in Alex's inability to have sexual feelings for Adelaide, who raises him from his gloom like a Beatrice to Dante. Alas, Aidi departs for a year of foreign study in America. Alex tenderly gives her his security blanket as a keepsake and zooms tearfully away on his bike. Numerous '90s pop-culture references (the title refers to a guitarist who abruptly quit the Red Hot Chili Peppers) and insouciance that begins to grate. A big seller in Italy, we're told.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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