



New Novel Set in Aruba Uncovers Paradise Not for Amateurs

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Entrepreneur turned novelist sweeps us to the Dutch Caribbean in a vivid and absorbing tale of personal endurance, bartered souls, and stifled ambition

PR9.NET April 07, 2008 - PHILADELPHIA, PA / ARUBA, DWI - In his debut novel, AN ISLAND AWAY (Hawser Press; May 12, 2008: \$16), Daniel Putkowski takes us far from the sparkling beaches and glamorous hotels of his small Caribbean isle, to a waning refinery boomtown of barroom brothels, flexible morality, and one tourist trap known as Charlie's Bar. In a place that's more Wild West than tropical paradise, we meet Luz, a young Colombian woman working as a prostitute to pay off her family's debt, and Sam, an aging American expatriate looking to perpetuate his flamboyant youth. Together they find Captain Nathan Beck, washed ashore and barely alive after his tugboat sinks in a storm. For each of them, the town of San Nicolaas provides hope amid desperation as they live dangerously and grapple with reality in pursuit of their dreams. It all unfolds under Charlie's watchful eye. He knows that on his desert island you have to improvise.

Drawing on more than a decade of visiting and eventually living on the island of Aruba, Putkowski has captured a moment in time that is quickly fading throughout the Caribbean. "I wanted to honor my friends and acquaintances who welcomed me to a part of the Caribbean that is still authentic. They showed me a world apart from the franchise hotels, cruise ships, and gift shops. Not all of it is beautiful, but every bit is real. Here I was exposed to the genuine drama of close-quarters living in a one-industry town on the flip side of paradise. Survival is easy, prosperity something else entirely, and progress in either case is measured on a constantly changing scale. Living here, within the same environment as An Island Away, is like smashing the piñata, you never know what's going to fall out."

In his honest and often heartbreaking story, Putkowski has crafted an unforgettable young heroine searching for her identity in a place where the best and worst of human nature is laid bare. The haunting choices she must make along the way resonate long after the final page is turned.

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About Hawser Press

About the Author: Daniel Putkowski, captivated by Aruba's cultural diversity, divides his time between the island, Spain, and a suburb of Philadelphia. He is a graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts. A sequel to An Island Away titled Under a Blue Flag will follow Putkowski's next release, Bonk's Bar, due early 2009.

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