



The Brains of Rats (Valancourt 20th Century Classics)

Michael Blumlein, Michael McDowell

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When Michael Blumlein's debut collection *The Brains of Rats* (1990) first appeared, it marked the arrival of a major new talent, earning widespread acclaim from mainstream critics as well as genre stalwarts Peter Straub, Harlan Ellison, Pat Cadigan and many others.

In the World Fantasy Award-nominated title story, a geneticist conflicted over his own sexuality, and the nature of male and female gender roles in general, proposes a drastic solution. The politically charged "Tissue Ablation and Variant Regeneration: A Case Report" describes in chilling detail a surgeon's evisceration of President Ronald Reagan. In "Bestseller," a struggling novelist unable to sell his books must sell something else unthinkable horrific in order to provide for his family. In these and the nine other startlingly original stories in this collection, Blumlein blurs the boundaries between horror, science fiction and fantasy, creating a strange and nightmarish world not unlike our own, where nothing is what it seems.

This new edition features an introduction by bestselling horror novelist and screenwriter Michael McDowell.

"Michael Blumlein is something new, a real original. I think he will have a great impact on the horror field, but I don't think anybody is going to be able to imitate him." - Peter Straub

"Blumlein has an exceptional vision, and he conveys it with exceptional talent." - *Washington Post*

"Blumlein's first collection signals the appearance of a major talent on the horror scene. Subtle and chilling." - *Publishers Weekly*

"Blumlein is a powerful and highly original voice. He writes like his soul's on ice. Disturbing stuff. More please!" - Joe R. Lansdale

"*The Brains of Rats* is blindingly brilliant. Blumlein is beyond any genre, a genuinely great writer." - Katherine Dunn, author of *Geek Love*

"This is not a book for everyone. Only those who delight in splendid, original thinking and rich, pyrotechnical language need apply.... Mr. Blumlein carves enigmas and fabulous dark surprises from the magic mountain of his imagination." - Harlan Ellison

"I didn't read these stories, I hallucinated them. I dare anyone to read Blumlein's work and come out the other side unchanged." - Pat Cadigan

"Blumlein is an eclectic and daring writer, using experimental techniques and fragmented narrative to achieve spectacular results. The stories here are all disturbing and they all work - no small accomplishment for experimental fiction." - *Locus*

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