



The November Criminals

By Sam Munson

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Addison Schacht and his best friend Digger become obsessed with investigating the murder of a classmate as they travel through Washington DC's underworld in this "thoughtful coming-of-age story and engaging teenage noir" (*The New York Times*).

High school senior Addison Schacht is taking the prompt for his college entry essay to the University of Chicago to heart: What are your best and worst qualities? He begins to look back on his life so far and considers what getting into college, selling some pot to his classmates, his relationship with his best friend—not girlfriend—Digger, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and his growing obsession with the murder of a classmate, Kevin Broadus, all mean. The more he digs into his own past, the farther he stumbles into the middle of the murder investigation.

Filled with classic adolescent reflection and an intriguing mystery, *The November Criminals* is "one of the funniest, most heartfelt novels in recent memory—a book every bit as worthy of Mark Twain and J.D. Salinger" (*The Chicago Tribune*).

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The November Criminals By Sam Munson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Munson's funny, stoner-friendly debut follows high school senior Addison Schacht as he stumbles through the Washington, D.C., teenage underworld to investigate a classmate's unsolved murder. Schacht—a small-time pot dealer, consummate anti-social, and Jewish collector of Holocaust jokes—makes for a poor but entertaining detective, and when he places a stoned phone call to his prime suspect, Addison and his friends become caught up in the mystery he set out to solve. As Addison's sleuthing begins to unravel and his life crumbles along with it, his ramblings offer an interesting counter to, and often context for, his misguided attempt to discover the truth. Munson keeps things lightly dark, though his weakness for wandering asides—Addison is just as likely to riff on the *Aeneid*, Latin syntax, or his favorite movies as he is to discuss his investigation and efforts to outsmart the police—trips up the pace, even if they are what one would expect from a self-absorbed adolescent. The plotting could use some work, but Munson nails the voice. (Apr.)

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From [Booklist](#)

In response to a college-application question, high-school senior Addison produces this scathing mea culpa, which takes the form of a rambling, first-person rant. He's a pot dealer who prefers to keep acquaintances at an arm's length—his suppliers, customers, father, and even Digger, a girl who would be his girlfriend if only that had been part of their agreement. After a classmate falls victim to an apparently random homicide, Addison begins an obsessive investigation. His outer blankness of character (I have no personality to speak of, he insists) conceals a hyperintelligence that recklessly leads to a (rather hilarious) midnovel assault on the apparent killer. The book has every earmark of a debut—bratty, precocious, tangential, and in love with its own voice—yet Munson ably reminds us why such qualities are irresistible in the first place. Even his overreliance on italics reflects the fanaticism of a high-school brainiac. The plot's second half meanders, but if you buy into the voice, the retarded story (as Addison puts it) will be of secondary concern. --Daniel Kraus

Review

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"Munson keeps things lightly dark."--"Publishers Weekly"

"A compelling character. . . . In the tradition of Huck and Holden."--"Bookforum"

"Rather hilarious. . . . Irresistible."--"Booklist"

"Combines a classic sense of adolescent alienation and a keen comedic voice."--"Kirkus"

"Has the inventive, expansive flare of Michael Chabon's best writing and the highbrow-crime intrigue of a Donna Tartt book."--"Vanity Fair"

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"A thoughtful coming-of-age story and an engaging teenage noir. . . . [Sam Munson is an] audacious new writer."--"The New York Times Book Review"

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

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