

Gideon's Confession

Joseph G. Peterson

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In his fourth novel Peterson tells the story of Gideon Anderson, a young man alienated from his father and two brothers who have gone into the family business. Unlike them, he receives checks from his rich uncle every month. In exchange for the checks, the uncle asks Gideon to come up with a plan for his life, essentially a blueprint about how he intends to enter the job market. Gideon, who went to a prestigious university, puts his uncle off and spends the money on alcohol, the horses, and a miscellany of useless purchases partly because he doesn't know what to do, partly because he doesn't want to do anything.

Gideon then meets a lovely, ambitious woman, Claire, who encourages him to do better with his life and talent. She asks him to come to New York with her where her father can set him up in his firm or bankroll a business venture. Despite his good fortune in love and access to the steady cash-flow provided by his uncle, Gideon, like Melville's character Bartleby the Scrivener "prefers not to" commit either to a career or to Claire. For ten years he just drifts. And then suddenly his uncle dies and Gideon has to make a decision.

The novels of Joseph G. Peterson have run a literary gauntlet from searing prose to lyrical poetry; from noir style to full character-driven plots, and his work has drawn comparisons to Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway. An incredible eye for detail and taut, lean prose are what readers have come to expect from a Peterson effort, and in this new book they will not be disappointed. Peterson delivers an emotionally engaging parable that will appeal not only to twenty-somethings unwilling or unable to commit and fit in, but also to adult readers who appreciate modern literary fiction and carefully crafted characters.



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