



Pen & Ink: Tattoos and the Stories Behind Them

Wendy MacNaughton, Isaac Fitzgerald

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Every tattoo tells a story, whether the ink is meaningful or the result of a misguided decision made at the age of fourteen, representative of the wearer's true self or the accidental consequence of a bender. These most permanent and intimate of body adornments are hidden by pants legs and shirttails, emblazoned on knuckles, or tucked inside mouths. They are battle scars and beauty marks, totems and mementos.

Pen & Ink grants us access to the tattoos-and the stories behind them-of writers Cheryl Strayed and Roxane Gay; rockers in the bands Korn, Otep, and Five Finger Death Punch; and even a porn star. But it also illuminates the tattoos of the ordinary people living in our midst-from professors to thrift store salespeople, cafe owners to librarians, union organizers to administrators-and their extraordinary lives.

Curated and edited by Isaac Fitzgerald, who sports twelve tattoos himself, each story "is like being let in on . . . secrets by . . . strangers who passed you on the street or sat across from you on the train" (Strayed) and features Wendy MacNaughton's gorgeously rendered full-color illustrations of the tattoos on black-and-white drawings of the bearer's body. At its heart, beneath its colorful skin, *Pen & Ink* is an exploration of the decision to scar one's self with a symbol and a story.

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