

Rock of Love III: Motion Sickness



Sophocles penned three Oedipus plays exploring themes of destiny, Cormac McCarthy's trio of border books immortalized the lost cowboy, and this month, the Futile Fashionista presents the final opus in the Bret Michaels Rock of Love trilogy. Like the contemplative American Western, we have a cowboy protagonist. Like the ancient Greek masterpiece we search for destiny (if you'll recall, hot trollop Destiny was a reject from Rock of Love II even though she invoked the cyclical nature of fate by turning topless cartwheels).

Having lost at love twice, Bret Michaels promises this is his last attempt to find an enduring spiritual union within the reality television format. I also promise this is my final column dedicated to the fashion and folly of his journey. I hope we are both lying.

Cowboy hat cocked, self-aggrandizing T-shirt bellowing his brand, and womanly jeans wedged into the "V" of a scrotal scream, I find my former Poison front man worse for wear. He addresses the camera bloated and bedraggled. His is a rock star life. To find a female on terra firma is impossible. He only knows the winding curves of a two lane blacktop, the yellow lines slipping beneath the wheels, and any other conceivable road cliché. Rather than stocking a static house full of groupies, he will stuff fragile whores into busses and take them on a tour of the American heartland and the sprawling, dry, barren landscape of his own lonely heart.

"I swear to you, if I don't find the right woman this time, I'm giving up." Michaels casually compliments himself on his fame, fortune, and "great personality", but mourns a

hollow existence of endless free blowjobs and tragic trysts in hot tubs. He looks into the camera, eyes rimmed with guyliner, and dramatic silence echoes the seriousness of his quest. The only sound is the chirping of crotch crickets.

This season, the contestants conform to an unparalleled uniform of trampdom. I thought two-toned hair (bright platinum on top and dark beneath) was falling out of favor, but sense this look will have a Twinkie's shelf-life due to its sleazy duality ("Ya like blonds? I'm blond! Ya like brunettes? Flip me over!").

Waxed within an inch of their lives, the ladies display cheek piercings, silicone injected duck lips, raccoon eyes, bursting lace bra-tops, fingerless leather gloves, and chin acne. The era of the teardrop naturalistic implant is over. Never before have fake breast wrestled against sternums with such gusto. Butterfly, flame, and Hello Kitty tattoos respectfully halo the names and portraits of dead relatives. Each contestant is an essay in trying too hard, but there is something sad and slightly sweet about the effort.

It is in her hourly drunken breakdown that we see through the maquillage mask. With the first shot of Cuervo she giggles, with the second she becomes brazen, with the third she is confessional, with the fourth she is violent, and finally the tears begin to flow. Eyebrows shaven and redrawn are smudged away and mascara marks black tear tracks. Tequila seems to unearth the blind frightened little worm within each viper.

A sequined porn star continuously cries, a cagey aspiring madam wears a bikini top of newsprint (an homage to America's dying newspapers?), and a Penthouse Pet in Daisy Duke cut-offs claims to be the "classy one." Several romantic hopefuls openly brag about being stupid. The women struggle and arch to achieve something approximating a personality.

Early on I identified my heroine, an exotic beauty named Constandina who made her way from Appalachia to India via an aggressive fake tan and third-eye jewel. With a professed Masters Degree in storytelling, vow of chastity, and regressive dance moves archived by Prince and the Revolution, I felt she was the one to elevate Bret's world-weary spirit. She was voted off the second show. Evidently Bret Michaels considers the search for Nirvana to be a method by which he corrals the 90's grunge audiences to express interest in hair metal through an ironic repackaging of his image.

Her only competition was tomboy Beverly, a seemingly normal sporty siren who cracked her façade of sanity by knowing the words to Bret Michael's solo material. She claimed that in a former relationship, BM was her "celebrity pass" (a term that means your significant other will allow you to sleep with one idealized but improbable suitor should the occasion arise). Bret Michaels is also my "celebrity pass" and my fellow will graciously allow me to sleep with him provided he can pass on ever touching me again without a vat of hand sanitizer and a Hazmat suit.

Brazilian bombshell Marcia may be a viewer favorite as she chokes a fellow contestant for likening her to a beaver and offers Bret a long, deep, wet kiss moments after the

television audience witnesses her vomiting booze and Doritos. I love the way she speaks directly to a bottle of Tequila, "You're goin' doooown!" Her accented English alters pronunciation of the name "Bret", giving the show subtle subtextual commentary, "You are zo zexy, Brat."

By the end of the first episode, our sexy brat has lost his voice. I find this significant. His narration is no longer needed. The viewer understands the stakes. This is a show about a man who can not find love and the unlovable women who woo him. Rock of Love III is the most honest installment in the series. There is no Jess or Ambre. There is no "normal girl" with traits the audience recognizes as resembling conventional womanhood. We are left with train wreck v. train wreck. If we have learned nothing else about Bret Michaels, we understand that he requires a constant diet of NEW to feed his soullessness.

I imagine in the end, someone will be chosen. She will be plump of lip and robust of boob. Bret might almost believe in the possibility of love and his dreamy delusion will act as the utopian fantasy that keeps us hanging on. We will invest, however sarcastically, in his decision and wish him well. Still, his struggle towards destiny, or S.T.D., will flare up in times of stress and ambiguity. His rash decision will come back to haunt him and pepper his nether regions with carbuncles of regret.

At the end of Rock of Love III, he will be holding the hand of a lovely lady and pledging monogamy. He has had his orgy, his last spree, his final threesome. I make the same promise. I have finished my third column detailing his exploits. As long as Bret Michaels remains true to his lady love, I shall refuse to speak his name. As long as he eschews the ménage a trois, I will conclude my triptych. I leave you with these earnest proclamations and the sound of Hell's cauldron, the bubbling hot tub.