

# A CRAFTY CIGARETTE

## TALES OF A TEENAGE MOD

A novel by Matteo Sedazzari - foreword by John Cooper Clarke

A Crafty Cigarette is the powerful story of a teenager coming of age in the 70s, as seen through his eyes, who, on the cusp of adulthood, discovers a band that is new to him, The Jam, which leads him into becoming a Mod. A mischievous youth prone to naughtiness, he is attracted to the Mod ethos like a moth to a flame, which, in turn, gives him a voice, confidence and a fresh new outlook towards life, his family, his school, friends, girls and the world in general. Growing up in Sunbury-on-Thames, where he finds life rather dull and hard to make friends, he moves across the river with his family to Walton-on-Thames in 1979, the year of the Mod revival, where to his delight, he finds many other Mods his age and older and slowly but surely, he starts to become accepted and, furthermore, soon becomes a leading light within the young Mods of his peer group. Their tender years and their appearance, combined with a distinct lack of funds and parental control, conspire to prevent them from attending Mod related events, like gigs and clubs, in London. Thus, our eponymous hero, along with his new band of brothers, Vinnie, Rick and Tom, have many adventures out in the suburbs, ranging from fighting the local pub men and standing up to a local skinhead bully, to nicking Bruce Foxtan's bass. Our hero's adventures are not strictly within the confines of Mod; he finds himself bonding with the rebellious kids at his school, causing chaos at any given opportunity with the teachers. A Crafty Cigarette goes beyond just being a tale of a young Mod's passage into adulthood; it also focuses on the pitfalls of success or, rather, the

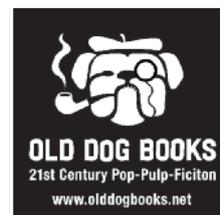
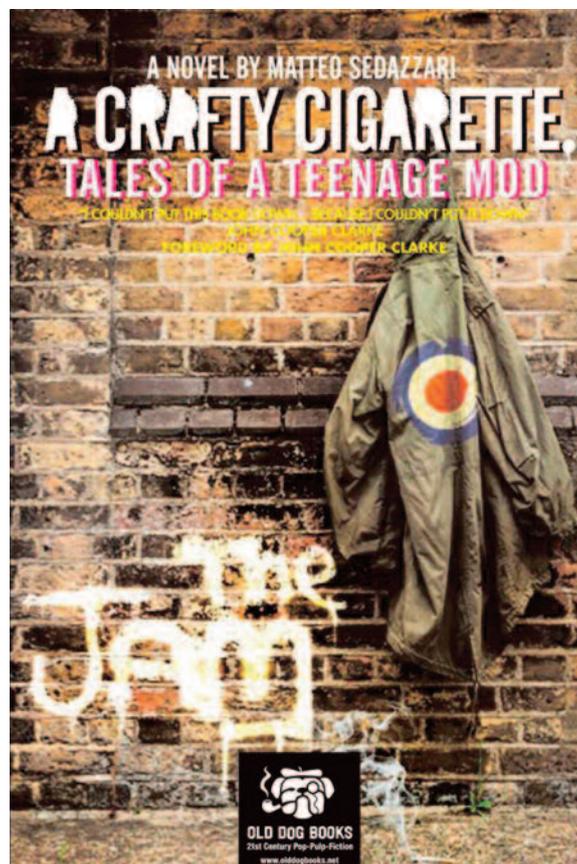
lack of it, highlighting the failure of his father's circus career, who once worked with the famous Italian clown, Charlie Cairoli, only to be sacked by Cairoli whilst on the verge of making it, thereby, making him the Pete Best of the clown world! The ramifications of this blow to his proud father's ego just adds to the confused and crazy skewed outlook of our young hero.

A Crafty Cigarette is a distillation of the metamorphosis of youth, embodied with a rebirth of the key character upon hearing the opening chord of The Jam's song, 'All Mod Cons', and then growing up at a frantic pace, in keeping with Weller's shouted '1,2,3 4' intro. Written in the first person, the story rocks along at a fast clip, on a par with a supercharged Jam single... a compelling narrative with the key character struggling to find his identity against the backdrop of late 70s chaos. Without being nostalgic or sentimental, A Crafty Cigarette is a candid snapshot of English suburban life in the late 70s and early 80s. The book is raw, honest, dark and witty, with the values and culture of Mod being paramount throughout (though not always presented as the 'be all and end all'). A Crafty Cigarette is a powerful story and, arguably, not since The Who's 'Quadrophenia', has there been such an in-depth study into the confused and multi-faceted lifestyle of striving to be a Mod... but this time, set in the very thick of the '79 Mod revival.

*"I couldn't put it down because I couldn't put it down."*  
John Cooper Clarke August 2015

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## Matteo Sedazzari Biography

Matteo Sedazzari, like the hero of *Crafty Cigarette*, became a Jam fan by accident after playing 'All Mods Cons' during the school Easter holidays. A moment of epiphany for him, as it was for many of his generation, when the combined forces of Buckler, Foxtan and Weller changed his life forever. He loved the music so much that he, more or less, became a Mod overnight. Inspired by the philosophy of The Jam, but unable to emulate them in music, he turned to writing; producing a fanzine entitled *Positive Energy of Madness*, during the height of Acid House, which, in fact, did feature the first ever interview with Weller after the disbandment of The Style Council. *Positive Energy of Madness* dissolved as a fanzine in 1994 and resurfaced in 2003 as an online magazine. Don't ask what he was doing during those in-between years - he doesn't know himself. Having built a following, Matteo Sedazzari wanted to say goodbye to the past, think forward just like a true Mod, and *Positive Energy of Madness* was humanely put to sleep and replaced by ZANI, a quirky and more modern site, which has attracted interviews with Bobby Womack, Clem Burke of Blondie, Alan McGee, Chas Smash of Madness, Shaun Ryder of Black Grape/ Happy Mondays and many, many more. His unique modern Gonzo style of writing (he's proud of the fact he is self taught) brought him to the attention of publisher Paul Hallam, who asked him to write a fictional account of being a young Mod in the suburbs in the late '70s and early '80s. Matteo Sedazzari said 'yes' straight away. Inspired by writers such as Hunter S. Thompson, Harlan Ellison, Mark Twain, Iceberg Slim, Patricia Highsmith, Daphne du Maurier and by films like *The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner*, *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning*, *Z*, *Babylon*, *Midnight Cowboy* and many more, he began work on *A Crafty Cigarette*. Outside of writing, Matteo supports Juventus, travels to Italy and Spain, likes to dress well and enjoys being happy.



## John Cooper Clarke Foreword for *Crafty Cigarette*

Anybody who is anybody has worn the three button uniform and that's official. Mod is a train of thought and its destination is the personal refinement and ultimate sophistication of the individual citizen by way of his own aesthetic judgement. The production values of Mod persist even into old age (unless some kind of severe mental breakdown intervenes) because their agility is non restrictive. The Neapolitan or Continental suit, for example, was popularised in America and given to the World in movies. Why? Because it is class, classless and looks good on all shapes. Matteo Sedazzari got the Modinest bug from the sharp silhouettes of his heroes, Rick Buckler, Bruce Foxtan and Paul Weller AKA The Jam and who could deny their monochrome allure? It's almost impossible to write the way you speak (name one) but Signor Sedazzari has that gift, and in his chuckle-heavy account of his teenage escapades, obsessions, senseless capers of one kind or another, and his good humoured keeping of the faith in the face of disappointment, has film treatment written all over it. I even get a name check but, rest assured, no gratuitous ego massage took place in this transaction. From time to time, he is apologetic and accuses himself of boring you with the details, but this is our world today; where the details are in the field and dressed by such a discerning eye. Magical. I couldn't put it down because I couldn't put it down.

**John Cooper Clarke**

**August 2015**

**MARKET Film/Music/Fashion/ Literature**

### KEY SELLING POINTS:

- A unique insight in the late 70s Mod Revival
- An indication of how important the Jam were to youth during their time
- An understanding of England in the late 70's and early 80's
- Foreword by John Cooper Clarke
- Fast paced and easy to read.
- A wonderful tale of youth and Mod culture

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