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Short Stories





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1998-06-25

short stories by 62 20th century authors

## The World of the Short Story

1986

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2023-08-02

from the introduction i propose in the following pages to discuss the practice of the short story in english the vagueness of the term short story is apparent no less apparent is the existence in every literature and period of groups of narratives which we can call by no other name the literatures of ancient greece of buddhistic india of medieval france and arabia for each of them readers will bring to mind a well marked well recognized genre which to day we should put under the short story classification the fable the milesian story the birth story of the jatakas the fabliau and conte each name suggests a type of literary expression employed for very definite purposes as writers or readers named the sonnet the ballade the chanson so they named these varieties of short narrative and felt with more or less reason that in each case man was endeavoring to express his idea of life in a particular and chosen fashion if we feel the vagueness of short story as used in a historical review of our narrative literature it is not because there are no short stories which in the age of their birth were employed in literary work of a special nature we would scarcely think the words vague if nothing definite were to be named by them nor is it because of the impossibility of marking off from long narrative the short narrative which is to be given a name that difficulty is serious only for the rhetorician the fault is rather in the loose meaning of the phrase where short seems to qualify without defining we cannot escape this inconvenience except by creating a new terminology a task far less profitable than the study of a considerable and much neglected literature indeed just what has constituted the short story in english is a question better answered at the end than at the beginning of such an investigation nevertheless it is evident without further discussion that the writers who in many tongues and times have used a short narrative to convey their ideas are in one respect very often alike no matter what their subject matter may be morality indecency high imagination or human nature they have wished to procure a certain effect which could best be gained by a short story they have wished to turn a moral as in a fable or to bring home in a fabliau an amusing reflection upon life or to depict a situation as in the typical short story of to day and in every case a brief narrative with its one unified impression best served them it is the short narrative used for life units where only brevity and the consequent unified impression would serve that becomes the short story is this definition sufficient only a study of a given literature will show if it will work as the pragmatists say it is sufficient but in so working it is neither requisite nor

possible that hard and fast lines of division should result where to place many whitish yellow and yellowish white peoples is a problem for anthropologists yet we call the very black man negro without hesitation certain limitations however must be imposed at the outset plots circulating through every tongue are often independent of strictly literary or cultural movements we however must concern ourselves primarily with written literature it is the history and development of an art which we follow an art by means of which all manner of familiar experiences can be put into form and made marketable plots circulate in all ways their history is matter for folk lore and psychology it is the short story as it appears in recorded english literature and the growth of its usefulness therein which is the subject of this volume

## The Short Story in English

2015-12-19

it was at a luncheon party that the idea of life s short story contest was first suggested by mr lincoln steffens he propounded this interesting query how short can a short story be and still be a short story it was thereupon determined to discover if possible a practical answer to this interesting question the columns of life were thrown open to contributors for many months prizes aggregating 1 750 were offered and eighty one short stories were published this book contains these stories including the four prize winners the contest cost in round numbers a little less than 12 000 over thirty thousand manuscripts were received they came from all over the world from sufferers on hospital cots from literary toilers in the philippines from europe asia and africa and from every state in the union one manuscript was sent from a trench at the french battle front where the story had been written between hand grenades every kind of story was represented the war story and the love story being the leaders every kind of writing was represented from the short compound of trite banalities to the terse dramatic carefully wrought out climax back of many of these efforts the spectral forms of guy de maupassant and o henry hovered in sardonic triumph tragedy predominated the light touch was few and far between but it was still there as the stories published show here let me pay a just tribute to the readers who with almost superhuman courage struggled through these thirty thousand manuscripts in the beginning they were a noble band of highly intelligent and cultivated men and women with strong constitutions ready and willing to face literature in any form i understand that many of them survived the contest this speaks well for the virility of our american stock theirs was a noble and enduring toil and theirs will be a noble and enduring fame without them this book now might contain twenty nine thousand nine hundred and eleven poor stories instead of eighty one good ones to those among them who still live a long life and let us hope an ultimate recovery naturally in the method of securing the stories there had to be some way of getting the contributors to make them as short as possible mr steffens ingenious suggestion admirably attained this end first a limit of fifteen hundred words was placed upon all stories submitted no story longer than this being admitted to the contest for each story accepted the contributor was paid not for what he wrote but for what he did not write that is to say he was paid at the rate of ten cents a word for the difference between what he wrote and fifteen hundred words if his story for example happened to be 1 500 words in length he got nothing if it was 1 490 words he got one dollar if there had been a story only ten words long the author would have received 149 to be accurate the longest story actually accepted for the contest was 1 495 words for which the

author received fifty cents and the shortest was 76 words for which the author received 142 40 the interested reader will be able to discover the identity of these two stories by examining the stories in the book at the original luncheon party a large part of the warm discussion that took place turned on how short a story could be made and still come within the definition of a short story it was really a question as to when is a story not a story but only an anecdote when a story is a story is it a combination of plot character and setting or is it determined by only one of these three elements must it end when you have ended it or must it suggest something beyond the reading i shall not attempt to answer these questions the definition of the short story should be relegated to the realm of what is humor who is the mother of the chickens and how old is ann if you really wish to vary the monotony of your intellectual life and get it away from who wrote shakespeare or who killed jack robinson start a discussion as to what a short story is it has long been my private opinion that the best short story in the world is the story of ali baba and the forty thieves but i have no doubt that should i venture this assertion in the company of others there would be one to ask what has that to do with the price of oil now but in order that the reader may have some idea of the method adopted in judging the stories which were finally selected it may be well to give what i may term a composite definition of what a short story is gathered from the various opinions offered when the contest was originally under discussion by the judges this definition is not intended to be complete or final it is not the cohesive opinion of one individual but only a number of rather off hand opinions which are of undoubted psychological interest as bearing upon the final decisions a short story must contain at least two characters for otherwise there would be no contrast or struggle a situation must be depicted in which there are two opposing forces a short story must be a picture out of real life which gives the reader a definite sensation such as he gets upon looking at a masterpiece of painting while it must be complete in itself the art of it lies in what it suggests to the reader beyond its own limits that is to say it must convey an idea much larger than itself this is the open sesame to the golden principle this is well illustrated in the story that took the first prize every short story must of necessity deal with human beings either directly or indirectly it must reveal in the briefest manner possible as it were like a lightning flash a situation that carries the reader beyond it it is therefore inevitable that the supreme test of the short story lies in its climax the climax must gather up everything that has gone before and perhaps by only one word epitomize the whole situation in such a way as to produce in the reader a sense of revelation just as if he were the sole spectator of a supremely interesting human mystery now suddenly made plain the technique of the short story should be such that no word in its vocabulary will suggest triteness or the fatal thought that the author is dependent upon others for his phrasing when for example we read with a glad cry she threw her arms about him a hoarse shout went up from the vast throng he flicked the ashes we know at once that the author is only dealing in echoes these were some of the general considerations which governed the readers and judges but it would be unfair to say that there were not other considerations which came up later on in a number of instances manuscripts which were interesting and well written and even longer than others that were accepted for the contest were rejected because it was felt that they were not really stories but more in the nature of descriptive sketches so far as the practical method pursued was concerned it will not be amiss to state briefly how the work was carried on it was deemed best on general principles to let the authors of the stories have a hand in the matter the editors feeling frankly that they preferred a disinterested method which would relieve them in a measure from the fullest responsibility the conditions were therefore made to read that the editors of life will first select out of all the stories published

the twelve which are in their judgment the best the authors of these twelve stories will then be asked to become judges of the whole contest which will then include all the stories published these twelve authors will decide which are the best three stories in the order of their merit to be awarded the prizes in case for any reason any one or more of these twelve authors should be unable to act as a judge then the contest will be decided by the rest each of these twelve judges will of course if he so wishes vote for his own story first so that the final result may probably be determined by the combined second third and fourth choices of all the judges this however will not affect the result in case of a division among the judges the editors of life will cast the deciding vote this method worked well and was fully justified by the final result as the manuscripts were received they were registered according to a careful clerical system and turned over to the readers who were from five to seven in number including three women the rule was that each story should be read independently by at least two readers their verdicts separately recorded if they were unanimous in rejecting a story it was returned if they were agreed upon its merits or if they were at all doubtful it was then passed up to the five members of life s editorial staff it was read and reread by them and the individual comments of each editor recorded independently by this sifting process each story was subjected to a final process of discussion and elimination the stories as accepted were paid for on the basis of ten cents a word for all the words under 1 500 which the story did not contain and were published in life from the authors of the eighty one stories published the editors selected the following twelve judges each one of whom consented to serve herbert heron carmel cal j h ranxom houston texas ralph henry barbour manchester mass clarence herbert new brooklyn n y william johnston new york city graham clark new york city mrs elsie d knisely everett wash mrs jane dahl san francisco cal selwyn grattan new york city e l smith ft worth texas herbert riley howe sioux falls s dak miss ruth sterry los angeles cal these judges independently of each other sent in their opinions several of them not voting for their own stories as the first prize although this was allowable under the rules there was no difficulty on their part in awarding the first prize of one thousand dollars and the second prize of five hundred dollars in the case of the third prize there was such a division of opinion that the editors under the rule of the competition that gave them the final decision determined that it would be fair to divide the third prize between two competitors who had received the same number of the judges votes the prize winners were as follows first prize ralph henry barbour of manchester mass and george randolph osborne of cambridge mass joint authors of thicker than water second prize harry stillwell edwards of macon georgia author of the answer third prize dwight m wiley of princeton ill author of her memory and redfield ingalls of new york city author of business and ethics this prize was divided this book is now offered to the public in the confident hope and the firm belief that it will be found a valuable contribution to the literature of short fiction in addition to the interest it also merits because of the stories themselves one final point should be emphasized this book is not in the very nature of the case a book of uniform literary style it is not the polished expression of the highest literary art it is the best of thirty thousand attempts to write a short story by all sorts and conditions of minds a fair proportion of them amateurs a fair proportion writers of considerable experience and a small proportion excellently skilled craftsmen in their final selection of these stories the readers and judges were governed not so much by the question is this superfine literary art as they were by the question is this interesting by this touchstone the book certainly justifies its existence from the books

# Short Stories From Life The 81 Prize Stories In Life's Shortest Story Contest

2023-07-24

contains thirty six stories by world famous authors

## Short Story Masterpieces

1954-03-15

examines the elements of short stories including features structure and vocabulary looking at why characters are important and what makes a great short story

## What Is a Short Story?

2015

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2020-08

many of the earliest books particularly those dating back to the 1900s and before are now extremely scarce and increasingly expensive we are republishing these classic works in affordable high quality modern editions using the original text and artwork

## How to Write a Short Story - An Exposition of the Technique of Short Fiction

2010-03

though it takes much concentration and will for her to accomplish each task a little girl with down s syndrome is happy to have many loving helpers along the way

## The Short Story in America, 1900-1950

1952





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2019-07-10

here twenty one interviews eighteen with contemporary writers and three with scholars of the short story reveal the demanding and exhilarating requirements the short story imposes upon its practitioners although amateurs delight in writing stories form proves to demand a master touch like that of the interviewees

## **Speaking of the short story**

1997

this collection of short stories is the craig family s bold step towards becoming writers all five of us hopefully anyway we will look back on this and say ah this is when it all started for the past two years our family has been entering the writersweekly com 24 hour short story writing contest the contest occurs four times a year in the spring summer fall and winter and consists of a provided thematic prompt a 24 hour deadline and a maximum word count this book is divided into two or three stories from each contest from fall 2016 to summer 2018 while the story lengths are short and tend to fall between 750 and 1 000 words they still need to convey engaging storylines believable characters and relatable themes whitman our family artist has illustrated each chapter based on the prompt these are not all the stories we have written for the contest just the ones we liked the best

## **Splitting Narratives**

2018-12-22

these 30 short stories comprising somerset maugham s first collection are set in locations ranging from england france and spain to the silver sands of the south pacific they include rain the three fat women of antibes the voice of the turtle and before the party for more than seventy years penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the english speaking world with more than 1 700 titles penguin classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors as well as up to date translations by award winning translators

## **Collected Short Stories: Volume 1**

1992-09-01

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## **Pillow Book”and Other Stories**

2020-07

one long story and five pieces of micro fiction or if you prefer six stories that will make you think

## **The Long of It and the Short of It**

2019-09-09

36 stories are presented to represent consequential story writing from the apst 30 years included among others are stories by malamud beattie updike paley o connor and baldwin

## **American Short Story Masterpieces**

1987

wise advice on plot character and style from a legendary esquire editor every aspiring fiction writer ought to read this writer s digest over the course of his long and colorful career as fiction editor for esquire magazine I rust hills championed the early work of literary luminaries such as norman mailer john cheever don delillo raymond carver and e annie proulx his skill at identifying talent and understanding story made him a legend within the industry as an unparalleled editor of short fiction writing in general and the short story in particular is a master class in writing especially short story writing from the master himself drawing on a lifetime of experience and success this practical guide explains essential techniques of writing fiction from developing character to crafting plots to effectively employing literary techniques clear and concise enough for any beginner but wise and powerful enough for any pro writing in general is a classic to be savored by both aspiring and seasoned writers

## **Writing in General and the Short Story in Particular**

2000-09-06

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2006

short stories can be enjoyable entertaining as well as stimulating for the mind when short stories are read and discussed in a group session or a classroom they generate discussion open communication and various opinions amongst the group each story has its own moral lesson but each reader may discover that their ideas may differ vastly from what the writer intended short stories can be read in less than 10 minutes but the moral of the story can





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