

The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers

An anthology from 1899 to the present.
Edited and with an introduction by

LANGSTON HUGHES

for
John Cooper
(whose talent
might make any
transition easy)

with love,

Alvin

3-2-67

The Best Short Stories *by Negro Writers*

An Anthology from 1899 to the Present

Edited and with an Introduction by

LANGSTON HUGHES



Little, Brown and Company • Boston • Toronto

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Editor's Note

THE short stories in this volume range from those of the first famous Negro writers in this genre, Charles W. Chesnutt and Paul Laurence Dunbar, widely published at the turn of the century, to the youngest contemporary writers of creative fiction, Ronald Milner, Robert Boles and Alice Walker. Herein are all the noted names in American Negro writing, including Jean Toomer, Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston, Ralph Ellison, Willard Motley, John A. Williams, Frank Yerby and James Baldwin. This is, as far as I know, the most comprehensive anthology of American Negro short stories to be published anywhere.

LANGSTON HUGHES

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The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers

These distinguished authors are represented in this outstanding volume of prose by American Negroes.

Alston Anderson
James Baldwin
Lebert Bethune
Robert Boles
Arna Bontemps
Gwendolyn Brooks
Frank London Brown
Charles W. Chesnutt
Alice Childress
John Henrik Clarke
Cyrus Colter
Pearl Crayton
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John A. Williams
Charles Wright
Richard Wright
Frank Yerby

HUGHES

The Best Short Stories
by Negro Writers

Little, Brown

The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers

An anthology from 1899 to the present.
Edited and with an introduction by
LANGSTON HUGHES

The Best Short Stories by Negro Writers

is the most complete and authoritative collection of its kind in the English language. These stories were written by outstanding, well-known authors like James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Richard Wright and John Williams, and by equally talented though relatively unknown writers such as Alice Walker, Ted Poston, Conrad Kent Rivers, and Mike Thelwell.

In his introduction Mr. Hughes says:

"The stories in this book range geographically from South to North, East to West, from America's Panama Canal Zone to our Chicago Loop and, in point of time, from the Reconstruction to the Harlem Renaissance, the Depression, the Second World War, the period of James Baldwin's blues in De Gaulle's Paris, to the contemporary moment of Charles Wright's *A New Day*. In fiction as in life Negroes get around. They have been covering varied grounds for a considerable time via the written word. Here they reveal their thoughts, their emotions, directions and indirections over three quarters of a century — from Chesnutt and Dunbar, Wright, Ellison, and Williams, to the new young writers of the sixties, Lindsay Patterson, Robert Boles and Alice Walker; from the fright and violence of the Deep South to the tinkle of iced drinks at an interracial party in Boston; from the twisted face of a black sharecropper to the

(Continued on second flap)

(Continued from first flap)

spotlighted smile of a Harlem dancer, from tragedy to comedy, laughter to tears, these stories culled from the best of Negro writing over the years, indicate how varied, complex and exciting is the milieu in which black folk live in America."

The motherly love of an aged woman for a strange young boy is poignantly told by Langston Hughes in *Thank You, M'am*. An expatriate American's fear of returning to his native land, now alien to him, is compellingly recounted by James Baldwin in *This Morning, This Evening, So Soon*. John A. Williams's *Son in the Afternoon* demonstrates the bitter revenge of a Negro whose mother shows more affection to her white charge than to her own son. Richard Wright's *Flying Home* pits frustration and false pride against instinct and wisdom. See *How They Run* by Mary Elizabeth Vroman illustrates the poetically touching love of a teacher for her pupils. Mike Thelwell's *Direct Action* describes perhaps the funniest and quickest integration ever attempted, while Ronald Fair's *Miss Luhester Gives a Party* is a wild brawl which was "the best party we ever had."

Some of these stories are comic, some are savage, some are heartwarming, while others are bitter in their despair. They are not only some of the best work by Negro writers, they also represent a social history of the American Negro, vivid and dramatic.

Jacket design by Harsh/Finegold

THE BEST SHORT
STORIES BY
NEGRO WRITERS

ALICE WALKER

INSCRIBED TO
JANE COOPER

1967