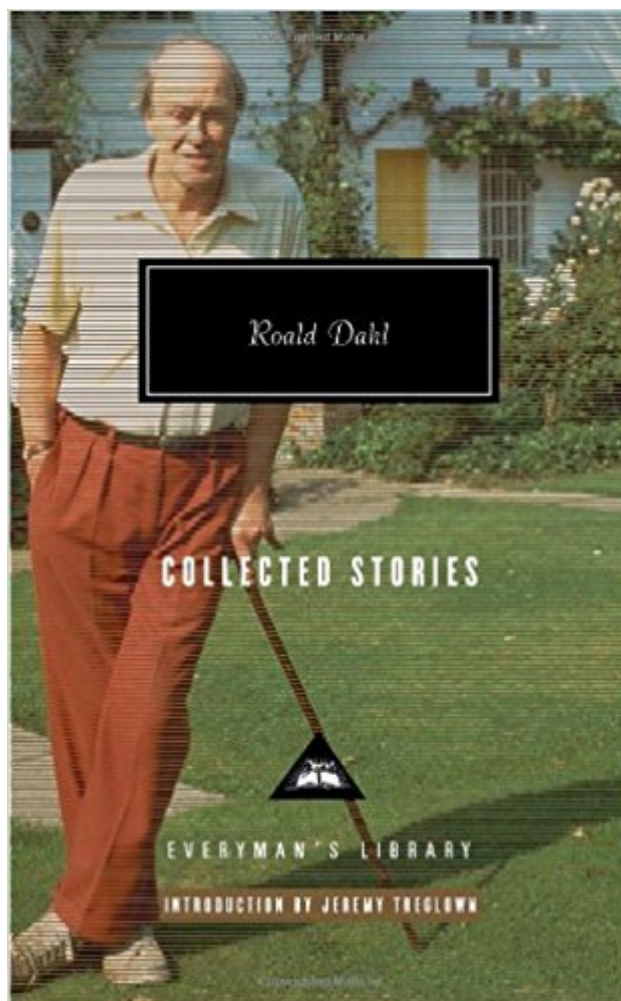


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# Collected Stories (Everyman's Library)



## Synopsis

(Book Jacket Status: Jacketed) The only hardcover edition of Roald Dahl's stories for adults, the *Collected Stories* amply showcases his singular gifts as a fabulist and a born storyteller. Later known for his immortal children's books, including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach*, and *The BFG*, Dahl also had a genius for adult short fiction, which he wrote throughout his life. Whether fictionalizing his dramatic exploits as a Royal Air Force pilot during World War II or concocting the ingeniously plotted fables that were dramatized on television as *Tales of the Unexpected*, Dahl was brilliant at provoking in his readers the overwhelming desire to know what happens next—and at satisfying that desire in ways that feel both surprising and inevitable. Filled with devilish plot twists, his tales display a tantalizing blend of macabre humor and the absurdly grotesque. From "The Landlady," about an unusual boardinghouse that features a small but very permanent clientele, to "Pig," a brutally funny look at vegetarianism, to "Man from the South," in which a fanatical gambler does his betting with hammer, nails, and a butcher's knife, Dahl's creations amuse and shock us in equal measure, gleefully reminding us of what might lurk beneath the surface of the ordinary.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"With the inventive power of a Thomas Edison and the imagination of a Lewis Carroll . . . Roald Dahl is a wizard of comedy and the grotesque, an artist with a marvelously topsy-turvy sense of the ridiculous in life."  
—CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER  
"Dahl has the

mastery of plot and characters possessed by great writers of the past, along with a wildness and wryness of his own. One of his trademarks is writing beautifully about the ugly, even the horrible.

- LOS ANGELES TIMES "A collection of Roald Dahl stories is always occasion for applause."
- CHICAGO DAILY NEWS "An ingenious imagination, a fascination with odd and ordinary detail . . . are the first strengths of Dahl's storytelling."
- NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW "[Dahl's] stare is unblinking, and most of his tales are irritants, provocations. Fantastic as Grimm, neat as O. Henry, heartless as Saki, they stick in the mind long after subtler ones have faded: incredible (literally), unforgettable, and vengefully funny."

• from the Introduction by Jeremy Treglown

Roald Dahl (1916-1990) was born in Llandaff, South Wales, and went to Repton School in England. His parents were Norwegian, so holidays were spent in Norway. As he explains in *Boy*, he turned down the idea of university in favor of a job that would take him to 'a wonderful faraway place'. In 1933 he joined the Shell Company, which sent him to Mombasa in East Africa. When World War II began in 1939 he became a fighter pilot and in 1942 was made assistant air attaché in Washington, where he started to write short stories. His first major success as a writer for children was in 1964. Thereafter his children's books brought him increasing popularity, and when he died children mourned the world over, particularly in Britain where he had lived for many years.

I grew up with Roald Dahl in my house, and one of my High School teachers absolutely loved Dahl short stories. In my mind at least, a Roald Dahl short story is everything a short story should be. I was very surprised to find that most Americans only seem to know about Dahl because of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Matilda*, and they are quite unaware of his spectacular short stories. I got this collection for my boyfriend at the time, husband now, for his birthday because he absolutely loves short stories (mostly science fiction like Bradbury, Asimov, Sturgeon, Le Guin, Clarke) and is a huge Lovecraft fan as well. Dahl short stories are strange, humorous (sometimes in a slightly twisted kind of way), tinged with varying degrees of creepy, and ends with the epitome of "the plot twist". I was sure that Roald Dahl would be right up his alley. I was right. He absolutely loved it! He read the whole collection back-to-back in less than a month and has re-read it since at least once or twice that I know of. I feel like many Americans miss out on these spectacular short stories, which is a pity. I would highly recommend them to anyone who enjoys a good short story, and some black humour.

These stories are fine but I much prefer the selection in the other Roald Dahl collection: *Skin*. Here it is a greater amount of stories that don't have the same kind of kick that made *Skin* so memorable, only due to the fact that *Skin* had a specific selection, weeding out the lesser stories.

His short stories should be read by everybody. The stories made an enormous impression on me. I tell some of his stories on evenings with friends around the table. I will give this book to my sons, so that they will never forget Roald Dahl.

Dahl's adult short stories are simply to die for. So funny and dark. Fun for bed time stories with your best friend, roomies, or partner!

Roald Dahl was a master of short fiction. If you read anything in this gorgeous collection, read "Vengeance Is Mine, Inc.," "Genesis and Catastrophe," and "They Shall Not Grow Old." Ronald Dahl: the king of letting his characters get away with the most delightful schemes! A gem of fiction.

I grew up on Roald Dahl stories, not just his classic children's stories, but dark tales like "The Skin" and "The Taste" and "Lamb to the Slaughter." Dahl was a master storyteller, able to get under the skin in the most unconventional ways. It is real treat to have all his "adult stories" gathered here in one volume. Dahl's stories always had a sinister element, exposing the anxiety and frustration that lied beneath mundane middle class life. While ostensibly these stories qualify as "British humor," they have long transcended the bounds of Great Britain and become part of the world's collective imagination, inspiring everyone from Alfred Hitchcock to Tim Burton with his tales of the macabre and the fantastical.

Having extensively read Roald Dahl's books for children in my childhood, imagine my excitement when I received the *Collected Short Stories* (all 762 glorious pages) from my husband for my 30th birthday! I've read many of the collected stories in smaller published collections, in books which, when lent to friends, would mysteriously disappear...most likely into the annals of their own favorite book collections! Well, EVERY story is right here, in this delightfully thick and wonderfully wicked compendium. Highly recommended.

From hilarious to heartbreaking, Roald Dahl is a master writer. I wasn't familiar with his stories from his time as an ace pilot in WWII and so glad to "meet" this side of RD, in my opinion the best stories

in the whole collection.

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