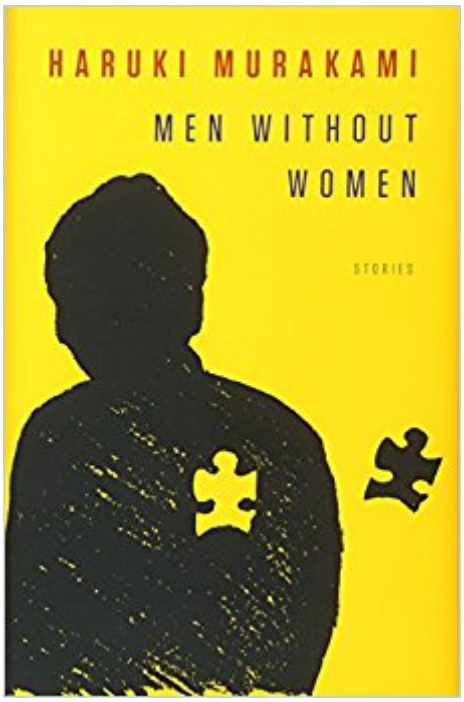
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Men Without Women: Stories



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Synopsis

A dazzling new collection of short stories--the first major new work of fiction from the beloved, internationally acclaimed, Haruki Murakami since his #1 best-selling Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage. Across seven tales, Haruki Murakami brings his powers of observation to bear on the lives of men who, in their own ways, find themselves alone. Here are vanishing cats and smoky bars, lonely hearts and mysterious women, baseball and the Beatles, woven together to tell stories that speak to us all. Marked by the same wry humor that has defined his entire body of work, in this collection Murakami has crafted another contemporary classic.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ã¢â ¬Å“[A] beguilingly irresistible book. Like a lost lover, it holds on tight long after the affair is over. . . . Part allegory, part myth, part magic realism, part Philip Marlowe, private eye. . . . Murakami puts the performance in performance art.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The New York Times Book ReviewÃ¢â ¬Å“Time and again in these seven stories, Murakami displays his singular genius. . . . The stories in this collection find their power within the confines of common but momentous disturbances that linger on in memory.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Los Angeles Times Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Mesmerizing tales of profound alienation. . . . Murakami is a master of the open-ended mystery.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Washington Post Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Beautifully rendered. . . . Murakami at his whimsical, romantic best. . . . [He] writes of complex things with his usual beguiling simplicityÃ¢â ¬â •the same seeming naivety found in the Beatles songs that are so often his reference points. The stories read like dirges for Ã¢â ¬Ëœall the lonely peopleÃ¢â ¬â„¢ but they

are strangely invigorating to read.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Financial Times Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Classic Murakami. . . . [His] voiceÃ¢â ¬â •cool, poised, witty, characterized by a peculiar blend of whimsy and poignancy, wit and profundityÃ¢â ¬â •hasnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t lost its power to unsettle even as it amuses.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Boston Globe Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A whimsical delight. . . . The seven stories in his fourth story collection present another captivating treasure hunt of familiar Murakami motifsÃ¢â ¬â •including cats, jazz, whiskey, certain cigarettes, the moon, baseball, never-named characters, andÃ¢â ¬â •of courseÃ¢â ¬â •the many men without women. . . . Murakami always manages to entertain, surprise, and satisfy. . . . Sanity might be overrated, but Murakami is surely not.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •The Christian Science Monitor Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Wise stories. . . . Moody and melancholic as [they] can be, some of them offer comparable hope that these men without women might emerge from their long and isolating loneliness, acknowledging the hurt, pain and even rage they feel rather than folding in on themselves and ceasing to fully live.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Men Without Women has the familiar signposts and well-worn barstools that will reconnect with longtime readers of Murakami: magical realism, Beatles tracks and glasses of whiskey. Yet, except for a few tales, the magic is watered down and itÃ¢â ¬â„¢s reality that is now poured stiff. . . . This collection is a sober, clear-eyed attempt to observe the evasion and confrontation of suffering and loss, and to hope for something better.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •New York Daily News Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“ItÃ¢â ¬â„¢s been a few years since weÃ¢â ¬â„¢ve gotten something new from JapanÃ¢â ¬â„¢s master of magical realism, but this new seven-story collection draws us right back into his signature realmÃ¢â ¬â •one of lonely men with wandering imaginations, mysterious cats, and subtle-yet-surreal narratives that reveal the supernatural layer operating beneath our everyday lives.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •W Magazine Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Vintage Murakami. . . .Ã Â Compellingly odd. . . . A glimpse into the strange worlds people invent by the always inventive [author]. . . . Elegant.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Kirkus Reviews Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Thought-provoking.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Superb.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •SF Weekly Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A new Haruki Murakami book is always cause for celebration. . . . These stories are filled with all of the luminous, magical elements that make Murakami's writing so fascinating.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •Bustle Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“Funny and surreal.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •io9 Ã Â Ã¢â ¬Å“A funny, lovely, unmistakably Murakami collection.Ã¢â ¬Â• Ã¢â ¬â •BuzzFeed

Haruki Murakami was born in Kyoto in 1949 and now lives near Tokyo. His work has been translated into more than fifty languages, and the most recent of his many international honors is the Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award, whose previous recipients include J. K. Rowling, Isabel

Allende, and Salman Rushdie.

As Murakami’s career continues, I find myself looking for his growth, that hope that there is a deeper well (yes, pun intended) the author himself has to plumb as the work continues. And that this progress can be something less than obvious. Murakami’s seemed to want to go into Big Book Authorship with 1Q84, which I found to be almost wholly unreadable.So while having a short story collection feels like a refreshing change from the Big Book, it is hard with a good half of them to get away from Murakami once describing some of his stories as failed novels. Murakami is a master of the unresolved ending, but not all of these stories show that mastery and instead leave a little too much in the air. This felt most pointed in the story "Scheherazade," of a shut-in and his relationship with his maybe nurse.Murakami’s writing remains as competent as ever, so there was much to enjoy in reading these stories, even though I wasn’t always satisfied by their completion. He can handle a 30-pager about as well as anyone writing today. And while the binding element, of men struggling to understand the women in their lives, seems to be a development, relationships and mysterious women have probably always been a near-central (if not central) aspect of Murakami stories.So I find myself torn about this collection. While it didn’t feel as repetitive as reading some Murakami can be, there also seems to be a level of challenge lost here. For example, Murakami never risks a story from a woman’s perspective in this collection, though he has done just such a thing in the past. But the last two stories show a comic level of experimentation, one an homage to Kafka and the other flirting with a style reminiscent of Padgett Powell. A good read, but more and more I feel the guy is going to have to knock my socks off soon.

I’ve been a huge Murakami fan for years. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed his short stories, especially those from "Blind willow, sleeping woman". This is a short to medium length collecting of stories that are decidedly uneven.’Drive my car’ begins the collection in a good way. It’s simple, easy Murakami, a great way to get into the groove. This eases the reader into ’Yesterday’, arguably the second best story of the collection. But of course this story was published in the New Yorker, so I’ve read it a couple of times. It’s still available free online.Next we have a couple of rather ordinary stories (by Murakami standards): ’sheherazade’ and ’an independent organ ’. Both are written in the Murakami style, but neither really serves to grab the reader’s attention.Following these is ’Kino’, which is certainly the best story in this collection and arguably rates among the author’s best short stories, in my humble opinion. This story alone pushes my rating to four stars instead of three. I pondered this story for days. It really sticks with you.Finishing the collecting are two stories that are good, but

really pale after reading 'Kino'. 'Gregor Samsa in love' is a fun twist on the old Kafka story. It's a nice tribute to one of Murakami's biggest influences. And finishing the collection is the title story, little more than a few pages of musings by a vague protagonist.All in all average compared to previous collections by Murakami. I'd say read this if you're a fan, otherwise start out with earlier collections. But as a Murakami fan, it's worth the purchase just for Kino.

LOVED this collection. I am a HUGE Murakami fan and have read all his fiction. Wasn't expecting much from these short stories so was pleasantly surprised. Murakami's wisdom and understanding of human nature is so profound that these stories are memorable.Fans and non-fans of Murakami will enjoy.

As expected, Murakami's stories are the best. This collection in particular struck me as touching, nothing left unsaid. I know I will read and reread it.

This is truly Murakami at his best. However you should be warned not to attempt reading these without first fastening your seatbelt. Very moving stuff indeed.

Many of these have appeared elsewhere, and the editorial reviewers say it best. This is a fine collection of Murakami's stories.

One of his most easily accessible set of essays. A worthy follow on to its namesake which was written by Hemingway.

I love everything Murakami writes except for that long novel. Happy to find this collection of short stories.

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