



Mosby's Memoirs and Other Stories

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In six darkly comic tales, Saul Bellow presents the human experience in all its preposterousness, poignancy, and pathos. The stories, which include "Leaving the Yellow House," "The Old System," "Looking for Mr. Green," "The Gonzaga Manuscripts," and "A Father-to-Be," reflect Bellow's ability to depict men and women confronting, in highly idiosyncratic ways, the enigmas and oddities of existence.

Mosby's Memoirs and Other Stories Details

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Author : Saul Bellow

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Greg says

Despite being "Brilliant", a "Major Work", "Extraordinary", and "Masterpieces" I found the six stories in this collection to be good but not exceptional.

I think this was my fourth, or maybe fifth, book of Saul Bellow's that I've read, and so far none of them have done much for me. *Augie March* I enjoyed better when it was called *Studs Lonigan* (but not by much, I didn't really enjoy that one so much either)*. *Henderson the Rain King* I liked better as the one Graham Greene book I read and didn't enjoy so much (that would be *Heart of the Matter*, I'm ducking out of the way to avoid the wrath of the Graham Greene contingent now). And *Seize the Day*? Well it didn't seize my memory, I can't remember much about that one. Just like I don't really remember much about any of these stories, even though I read them just a few weeks ago.

This may be an unfair comparison, but Saul Bellow reminds me of an edgier literary version of that vapid Christian painter Thomas Kinkadee. Maybe I'm just not getting into well-crafted realistic fiction these days. But then I'm also feeling alienated by edgy / non-realism literary fiction, too, so maybe there is no pleasing me these days.

I did find a couple of these stories to be to my liking though. "Mosby's Memoirs" I found quite funny, although I should have apparently found it to be a story that "circles unerringly toward an inner abyss" (I think I actually really hated all the copy on the front and back cover. "The Old System" I also enjoyed, but I'm a sucker for really Jewey stories. Maybe that is what I don't like about Bellow, for a Jewish writer he's so freaking goyim. There are too many WASPS and not enough Jews in what I've read by him, or too much WASP sensibility or something. Too much Updike blah and not enough Roth goodness.

I'm done making an ass of myself for this review.

*I just noticed I gave *Augie March* four stars and *Studs Lonigan* three stars. I don't know what I was thinking. *March* was a pre-goodreads book, rated in my initial flurry of rating, I should go back and change it but I won't.

Waleed says

This collection of six short stories fits the pattern of Bellow's novels: he is great at writing about Jews and Europe, less so when attempting mid-century gentile Americana. The three outstanding stories are up there with Herzog and Mr. Sammler's Planet:

The Gonzaga Manuscripts (1954), The Old System (1967), Mosby's Memoirs (1968)

The three average stories are at the same sort of level as *Seize the Day* and *Henderson the Rain King*:

Looking for Mr Green (1951), A Father-to-Be (1955), Leaving the Yellow House (1957)

Liam89 says

Six intelligent and amusing stories from Saul Bellow, one of the foremost chroniclers of Jewish-American life. Some were more enjoyable than others, but I wonder if that is because some of the humour does not quite make it all the way across the Atlantic. However when the dialogue and observations work, they dazzle and sparkle as you would expect from the man who translated 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' into Yiddish. My personal favourite was the tale of Dr. Braun, the closing moments of which rank as some of the most gorgeously constructed prose I have ever read.

Katherine says

I hated Mosby's Memoirs and Father to be and rabidly loved everything else. but mosby's memoirs made me want to die from boredom. sometimes, satire just gets so caught up in being satire it's only entertaining for the author as he's writing it. i didn't get it, but hope those that did enjoyed it, which seems to be literally everyone except for me. looking for mr green was excellent

Ade Bailey says

Short stories from over 17 years. A lucky find in a secondhand shop while looking for Roberto Bolano. (I found him behind the sofa later on). Absolutely delightful, and not only that, a tugging to go back to those Americans I gorged on so long ago, Malamud down to Sinclair. Oh, you can never be poor as long as there are libraries and secondhand bookshops.

Andrew says

What real makes these stories so compelling is the skill that Bellow has in combining richly-drawn characters and larger social issues. In Looking for Mr. Green for example, Bellow gives you a portrait of Mr. Grebe and a portrait of the darkest heart of the city. Very interesting stuff.

Greg says

Simply put, Bellow's writing is obviously amazing. His style is unique and he presents unsparing visions of the experience of individuals. In this collection of short stories, he follows Mosby as he contemplates the comedy of his memoirs while drinking, a man searching through Chicago's ghettos, a man worried about the man his son will become, a man searching for old love poems, an alcoholic woman dying in the desert, and a doctor related to a millionaire. These tales are meant to be darkly comic. Unfortunately, they just didn't connect with me. I prefer Bellow's other work.

See my other reviews [here!](#)

Ronald Wise says

Six short stories written between 1951 and 1968, with a larger variety of protagonists than is usual for Bellow. All were enjoyable to read and a couple of them presented some poignant moments. This collection came to my list when all of Bellow's books were added to my reading list following my enjoyment of his *The Dangling Man*.

Margherita13 says

Bellissima antologia di Saul Bellow, sono le prime parole che leggo di questo autore e mi ha stregato soprattutto il primo racconto, che dà il titolo a tutta la raccolta. Un'America antica e sconvolgente come piace a me.

Javier says

She had captured the station, and the pleasure this gave her was enormous. Yet her grievances were true grievances. She was telling the truth. But she behaved like a liar.

I want to give this a 4 but people have been giving me hell on my stars and I just can't be having people thinking I'm easy.

Melinda says

When I was in undergrad, Brian Morton would talk about Saul Bellow. It took a roadtrip through Portland, OR, six or so years later, to pick up a book by Bellow. And it is so beautiful, such lovely character-driver fiction.

Dan Pecchenino says

The title story drags on, but "Leaving the Yellow House" is a masterpiece about an old desert-she-rat (not what one thinks of as standard Bellow fare) that produces what all good fiction should: sympathy for a largely unlikable person. The rest of the stories are, to greater and lesser degrees, about male panic in the middle of the 20th century. No one did that quite as well as Bellow, though none of the stories in this collection does it quite as well as SEIZE THE DAY.

