



The Insomniac Reader: Stories of the Night

Kevin Sampsell (Editor) , Jonathan Ames , Aimee Bender , James Tate , Thorn Kief Hillsbery , Heidi Julavits , Michelle Tea , Dan Kennedy , more... Stacey Richter , Marshall Moore , Lucy Thomas , Todd Pruzan , Rick Moody , Richard Rushfield , Elizabeth Ellen , Davy Rothbart , Jonathan Lethem , T. Cooper , Monica Drake , Jeff Johnson ...less

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Explore the dark side—literally and figuratively—of evening time with short fiction by Jonathan Ames, Todd Pruzan, Rick Moody, Richard Rushfield, Elizabeth Ellen, Davy Rothbart, Jonathan Lethem, T. Cooper, Monica Drake, Aimee Bender, Jeff Johnson, James Tate, Thorn Kief Hillsbery, Heidi Julavits, Michelle Tea, Dan Kennedy, Stacey Richter, Marshall Moore, and Dave Eggers (writing under the pen name “Lucy Thomas”).

The Insomniac Reader: Stories of the Night Details

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Author : Kevin Sampsell (Editor) , Jonathan Ames , Aimee Bender , James Tate , Thorn Kief Hillsbery , Heidi Julavits , Michelle Tea , Dan Kennedy , more... Stacey Richter , Marshall Moore , Lucy Thomas , Todd Pruzan , Rick Moody , Richard Rushfield , Elizabeth Ellen , Davy Rothbart , Jonathan Lethem , T. Cooper , Monica Drake , Jeff Johnson ...less

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From Reader Review *The Insomniac Reader: Stories of the Night* for online ebook

Andrea says

Another Kevin Sampsell masterpiece. This is a great collection of stories.

Mary says

I'm more of a 4.5 here. This is one of the first anthologies I ever read, and it's really solid. The story by Monica Drake is fantastic. Other favorites: Elizabeth Ellen, Davy Rothbart, Jeff Johnson, and Jonathan Ames. You should buy this.

Kevin says

I was really happy with how this collection turned out. I was able to get some of my favorite writers in this and even some favorites that I didn't think I'd get (almost all the stories are previously unpublished). A year later, I edited an issue of Spork Magazine that I think is also really strong. Right now, I'm getting ready to edit Portland Noir (Akashic Books, 2009) and I'm hoping that will be the best one yet.

Ryan Dilbert says

aimée bender, stacey richter (one of her best), a very funny story by Johnathan Lethem, a Rick Moody. lots to enjoy here.

Ian says

Great compilation altogether, even if the "insomniac" connection is a bit tenuous between the individual pieces and the content covers a broad range, starting with Ames' Gonzo-inspired non-fiction piece about the famous Lennox/Tyson fight in Memphis (the rest are fiction). Some of the stories are dark and depressing, some are light-hearted and funny, but they all involve a certain type of person who maybe doesn't quite fit into mainstream culture the way they seem on the surface. Good short stories can drop you into a fully realized world without wasting a lot of time setting it up, and they leave you wanting more. Most of the stories here are successful in both aspects, but none more than **It's Not Black; It's Always Darker Than That** by "Lucy Thomas" (apparently this is a nom de plume for a famous author from San Francisco, according to the end notes), which really asks more questions than it answers in its brief page(s).

Monica Drake's **Gymkhana** in particular stood out for me, and actually had some lines that were so good I had to put the book down to ruminate over them for a while before continuing. I recently read her **Clown*

Girl* and she has suddenly become one of my favorite contemporary writers. *Gymkhana* is strong enough I could see an entire coming-of-age-amidst-drugs-and-sex-at-a-upscale-university film germinating from those brief pages, better than any of Brett Easton Ellis best attempts.

Marshall Moore's *The Right Way To Eat A Bagel* was another that had a cinematic appeal to me, and I think it would be a great single-act play or short film. One scene, one setting, two characters (plus a waitress), one common thing shared between them. It's no *My Dinner With Andre*, but it makes a conversation over drinks at a diner into a interesting philosophical discourse.

Stalker's Paradise by Richard Rushfield reveals a vivid and interesting "underworld" culture that reminded me of Project Mayhem (*Fight Club*) or the Party Crashers (*Rant*) from Chuck Palahniuk in the way he opens up a door onto a massive underground culture or shared interests that do not line up with what is considered proper society or law & order.

Aimee Bender's *Night Trilogy* is a bizarre snapshot that is almost as much free-verse poem as short story.

Michelle Tea's *Fourteenth Street* was another interesting snapshot, but this time of butch lesbians trying to find a balance between fighting gentrification and experimenting with drugs and love across age boundaries.

Dan Kennedy's *Tonight The Muse Is In a Popular Suburban Steakhouse Franchise* was a really funny take on a writer's hubris and quest for inspiration. I can't help but wonder just exactly how self-aware Kennedy is in this tale of delusions of grandeur.

There was really only one story I did not like, Heidi Julavits' *The MacMillan Hair*, and it was the only one I didn't finish, which was a bit of an abstract and confusing mess.
