



Tell Me 30 Stories

Mary Robison

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Tell Me 30 Stories

Mary Robison

Tell Me 30 Stories Mary Robison

Chosen from Robison's three long-unavailable collections, along with four new stories, *Tell Me* reflects the early brilliance as well as the fulfilled promise of Mary Robison's literary career. In these stories (most of which have appeared in *The New Yorker*), we enter her sly world of plotters, absconders, ponderers, and pontificators. Robison's characters have chips on their shoulders; they talk back to us in language that is edgy and nervy; they say "all right" and "okay" often, not because they consent, but because nothing counts. Still, there are small victories here, small only because, as Robison precisely documents, larger victories are impossible. Here then, among others, is "Pretty Ice," chosen by Richard Ford for *The Granta Book of American Short Stories*, "Coach," chosen for *Best American Short Stories*, "I Get By," an O. Henry Prize Stories selection, and "Happy Boy, Allen," a Pushcart Prize Stories selection. These stories-sharp, cool, and astringently funny-confirm Mary Robison's place as one of our most original writers and led Richard Yates to comment, "Robison writes like an avenging angel, and I think she may be a genius."

Tell Me 30 Stories Details

Date : Published September 19th 2002 by Counterpoint (first published 2002)

ISBN : 9781582432588

Author : Mary Robison

Format : Paperback 278 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Literary Fiction, Short Story Collection

 [Download Tell Me 30 Stories ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Tell Me 30 Stories ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Tell Me 30 Stories Mary Robison

From Reader Review Tell Me 30 Stories for online ebook

Paul says

I liked this a lot, though with both of Robison's novels that I've read, I have reservations. This was nothing like *One D.O.A.* or *Why Did I Ever*, except for one story which kind of resembled those novels, and except the dialogue is similar, naturalistic, Don DeLillo, etc. These were clearly New Yorker stories—very mannered, very . . . well, very New Yorker. Toward the end, when the stories started to feel a little formulaic (maybe they aren't meant to be read all together), there was a big Lish-via-Carver feel, and but the problem was Robison's endings were sort of anticlimactic. And not in a Hollywood sort of way, just in a "Well, that just doesn't really do it for me" sort of way. What the collection overall resembled most, though, and this surprised me, was Salinger. And BIG time.

Anyway. Still worth reading. Overly mannered and occasionally same-y, but still very enjoyable. Great dialogue. Robison, I'm deciding, is no Lydia Davis or Amy Hempel and certainly no Lorrie Moore, but she's still really good.

Catherine Corman says

"You say I lie?" Phil said.

"No, Phil," Jackie said.

I sucked in a breath. "It's just that people, they don't ever do what they don't want to do. And they can't ever be what they aren't already."

-Mary Robison, "Smart"

Nicole says

Someone once told me that a cookbook is never wasted if you find one great recipe in it; likewise, one exceptional short story can redeem an entire collection. The last story in this collection, *Yours*, is stunning. Well-chosen imagery and an unconventional relationship create a story that left me crumpled, exposed, and utterly concerned for the characters.

Paul says

I enjoy Robison's novels, but her short fiction is where it's at. Each of these gems shines a brilliant spotlight even as it cuts deep.

Sara Comuzzo says

Mary Robison, pressochè sconosciuta in Italia, è una scrittrice di grande talento. Questo libro è una raccolta di una trentina di racconti, alcuni anche molto brevi, di qualche pagina, in cui vengono aperti spaccati delle vite delle persone o delle famiglie o delle situazioni in cui stanno vivendo. In essi vi è un che di minimalista, di umano che va oltre la maggior parte degli scrittori di racconti conosciuti: una donna che anche con poche parole, e spesso senza dire tutto, riesce a sorprendervi e a farvi dire, cavolo, è proprio brava. Storie familiari, di rapporti tra madri e figlie, tra coniugi, ma non solo: è una buona raccolta di racconti, una delle migliori che ho letto. Si direi Carver al femminile e anche con qualcosa in più.

Matias says

Más que probable que este libro no merezca 4/5, pero se los voy a poner igual porque esta ha sido de esas felices veces en las que una cosa te encuentra en el momento ideal de tu vida para tener el mayor impacto posible sobre ti. En este caso porque aprendí muchísimo, no sólo a nivel técnico sino también en un plano clave de la prosa.

El minimalismo de este compendio de relatos acerca de la lánguida vida común, a veces melancólicos, a veces nostálgicos, también desesperados, me ha dado muchas pistas para mejorar mi voz narrativa. Lo que no quiere decir que este libro sea significativo desde un punto de vista esencial porque no creo que sea así, desde luego que yo pretendo escribir mejor que esta mujer.

La mejor literatura es sutil porque se parece mucho a la vida, que puede darte un mordisco materialmente devastador pero que es realmente fascinante porque te deforma y socava, segundo a segundo, grano a grano, gota a gota. Y es horrible, y es bella.

La belleza de la sutileza.

Paul Cockeram says

Stories like this begin somewhere past the middle, near the ending. They don't give you the backgrounds of the characters, outside of a few sentences about the way the characters are related or maybe their age. Their histories are rationed carefully and often just half true. What can you really know about people? Robison lets you listen to the way they talk, observe their hair style, see the limp or beard or frizzy hair that distinguishes them in a crowd. Everything else, you'll have to pick up by paying attention, by reading between the lines. The pregnant woman lives in a filthy, messy squalor that we learn about by watching the expression on her neighbor's face, by listening to her brother's complaints when he visits. Charlie and Don are lovers who found each other late in life, you suppose, because one agrees to fly kites in a hurricane with the other.

You learn just enough about the way these characters doubt one another to understand why they worry, and then we're on to the next tale. The style might be hyper-minimalism, but I wouldn't call it flash fiction. Every word hints toward the others beyond it; most of the story lies in those hinterlands.

What are these stories about? They end, sometimes, late enough to tell; more often, earlier. Robison must have been listening carefully when Hemingway said the right place to end a story was before the big thing happened—Hemingway’s example was finishing his story before the old man went and hung himself, because readers could already tell the old man was going to hang himself so there was no point in following it through. The danger, of course, is that readers couldn’t tell exactly that the old man was going to hang himself; rather, they sensed something bad was going to happen, some desolation or despair hovering in the background. But maybe the fun was speculating what it was for themselves.

For Robison, it’s not so much about suicide or despair. It’s more about people figuring out the precise way in which they are stuck, or trapped. “Pretty Ice” is a prime example of that motif, which runs through many of these stories. I’ve read it half a dozen times and there is always more to see inside it. Robison’s stories need the reader to finish them this way, to make connections and observe the patterns and connect the dots. Maybe her stories are more pointillist than minimalist. The main thing is to trust that everything you need is there, in the details and language. Observant readers only need apply. Their time will be richly rewarded.

Jenn(ifer) says

Definitely a solid 3.5 for this collection of stories. It didn't blow me away, but I did enjoy it! I wouldn't go as far as to say I reaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaally liked it, but there were some good stories in there. My only problem with this collection is that most of the stories just ended too abruptly. Short story writing is an art -- and great short story writers manage to say all that needs to be said briefly but with an impact that doesn't leave you feeling cheated.

Olivia says

Reading this book was like stepping inside my head. It's a bit scattered, but quite entertaining.

Tuck says

okay okay, so mary robison is a genius short story writer. Her characters especially, feel real, are trying really hard, get slapped down most of the time. that doesn't make me resent her any less. jjk, hah.

Tyler Barton says

Each of these stories is funny, memorable, so sharp in detail that I want to live inside. However, if there is a spectrum of "what does it all mean" and to the right is a story explained fully and everything adds up with a perfectly tied bow and to the left is a random assortment of word salad, Robison is farther to the left than most story writers. Not saying it's a bad thing. It's purely her own vision, aesthetic. That said, it makes it so that certain stories don't really LAND, they just trail off. Though there were a few that knocked me out. Reading Robison is like reading Carver but you're laughing more.

Dan Abromowitz says

she does so much with so little!!

G says

Generally, Goodreads doesn't disappoint when it comes to recommendations of short story collections. But not this time.

With this exception of a few standouts, I found this collection by Mary Robison to be unimpressive. The dialogue is often clunky, jarring and unnatural. Many of the stories end abruptly as though the author simply tired of them. Quick endings can be impressive of course. Lucia Berlin in particular had endings that came from nowhere, and many times caused me to rethink the story I'd just read, or made me imagine what happened beyond the last word. Here however, many stories just stop without even the impression of a resolution or the need to ponder what happens next. Maybe the stories are doing more than I can see and I simply am not smart enough to tease out the real meaning.

L a n c e says

i don't think there's another writer whose stories weigh on me quite like these. Mary Robison's stories are so strong.

Alissa Hattman says

In this collection of short stories, Robison truly shows that "less is more." Robison splits her short stories into sections, revealing only the flash scenes we need to understand the underlying of the story. An excellent collection showing examples of narrative voice, tone, irony, relevant detail and dry humor.
