



The Best American Short Stories 2013

Elizabeth Strout

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“As our vision becomes more global, our storytelling is stretching in many ways. Stories increasingly change point of view, switch location, and sometimes pack as much material as a short novel might,” writes guest editor Elizabeth Strout. “It’s the variety of voices that most indicates the increasing confluence of cultures involved in making us who we are.” *The Best American Short Stories 2013* presents an impressive diversity of writers who dexterously lead us into their corners of the world.

In “Miss Lora,” Junot Díaz masterfully puts us in the mind of a teenage boy who throws aside his better sense and pursues an intimate affair with a high school teacher. Sheila Kohler tackles innocence and abuse as a child wanders away from her mother, in thrall to a stranger she believes is the “Magic Man.” Kirstin Valdez Quade’s “Nemecia” depicts the after-effects of a secret, violent family trauma. Joan Wickersham’s “The Tunnel” is a tragic love story about a mother’s declining health and her daughter’s helplessness as she struggles to balance her responsibility to her mother and her own desires. New author Callan Wink’s “Breatharians” unsettles the reader as a farm boy shoulders a grim chore in the wake of his parents’ estrangement.

“Elizabeth Strout was a wonderful reader, an author who knows well that the sound of one’s writing is just as important as and indivisible from the content,” writes series editor Heidi Pitlor. “Here are twenty compellingly told, powerfully felt stories about urgent matters with profound consequences.”

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