

## After the Plague: Stories

By T.C. Boyle

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One of the acknowledged masters of the short story gives readers a gripping ride through narratives that shock, compel, and always entertain.

Few authors in America write with such sheer love of language and imagination as T.C. Boyle, and nowhere is that passion more evident than in his inventive, wickedly funny, and widely praised short stories. In *After the Plague*, Boyle speaks of contemporary social issues in a range of emotional keys. The 16 tales gathered here address everything from air rage to abortion doctors to first love and its consequences. The collection ends with the brilliant title story, a whimsical and imaginative vision of a disease-ravaged Earth. Presented with characteristic wit and intelligence, this collection will delight readers in search of the latest news of the chaotic, disturbing, and achingly beautiful world in which we live.


“Fine, vigorous short stories . . . this is a writer who can take you anywhere.”—*The New York Times*


“Uproarious and unforgiving.”—*The New Yorker*

“In an age of war where the foe is indistinct and difficult to identify, Boyle has become both the poet and the prophet of our time.”—*Los Angeles Times*

“Reads like a flip through the A-section of the newspaper . . . a vivid collage of millennial American life.”—*The Philadelphia Inquirer*

“Boyle's imagination and zeal for storytelling are in top form here.”—*Publishers Weekly*

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## After the Plague: Stories By T.C. Boyle Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

If Boyle's progress as a novelist has been uneven his more recent narratives have not managed to achieve the acclaim of 1990's *East Is East* his talent for crafting amusing and startling short stories has never been in doubt. This compilation (his fifth, not counting a collected volume) culls pieces published in the *New Yorker*, *GQ* and other outlets and showcases the signature elements of his fiction: darkly comic scenarios (a surly airline passenger goes berserk and a downtrodden elementary school teacher saves the day), pitiful and realistic characters (an Internet porn addict) and mundane but serious subjects (love, overpopulation, abortion). While there's not much new ground broken here, Boyle more than makes up for the relative lack of innovation by delivering his trademark dazzler endings. In "She Wasn't Soft," a triathlete's idiot boyfriend tries to atone for his wretched behavior by drugging her rival in a race, with potentially disastrous results. And in the title story, an apocalypse leaves only a handful of people on Earth; after a disastrous experience with another survivor, the narrator learns that, even in the worst of situations, love can prevail. Boyle has matured since 1995's *Without a Hero*: here he relies more on language than farce or shock value, describing the relationship between two lovers who "wore each other like a pair of socks," or, conversely, a college boy who enters a girl's room and feels "like some weird growth sprung up on the unsuspecting flank of her personal space." Boyle's imagination and zeal for storytelling are in top form here, making this collection a smash. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

In his sixth collection of short stories, Boyle presents a series of wickedly ironic, sometimes poignant, sometimes darkly humorous tales that speak directly to the human condition and to a variety of contemporary social issues from abortion to Internet voyeur cams, from railway killers to air rage. Among the best are a wonderfully crafted tale about an elderly widowa beautiful old lady clothed in cats and another about an ex-rocker, ex-actor, surf-shop owner who finally loses his cool when faced with three teenage harassers and a smug jewel thief. Then there are the Black and White Sisters who seem determined to eliminate all color in their lives. Somewhat out of context, but no less touching, is the story of an Italian immigrant farmer who in 1905 purchases, sight unseen, 70 acres of California wasteland and loses his love but keeps on digging, never losing his vision of a better future. The final and title story focuses on four survivors of a disease-induced apocalypse a classic tale of can't live with 'em, can't live without 'em that leaves one smiling in spite of the circumstances. All in all this is classic Boyle, a work to be embraced by his enthusiasts and one that belongs in most collections of serious fiction.

-David W. Henderson, *Eckerd Coll. Lib., St. Petersburg, FL*

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From [The New Yorker](#)

This collection is uproarious and unforgiving: "She Wasn't Soft," the title of one story, says it all. If Boyle finds dark humor in the lives of peeping toms, he also writes with tenderness about a widow waiting "for something she can't name."

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## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

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**Michael Castillo:**

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**Raymond Jackson:**

Playing with family in the park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with pals is thing that usually you will have done when you have spare time, in that case why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of information. Even you love After the Plague: Stories, you can enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout people. What? Still don't understand it, oh come on its named reading friends.

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