The short story has a unique history dating back to the Oral Tradition often told in the form of rhyming or rhythmic verse. Short sections of verse might focus on individual narratives that could be told at one sitting. The overall arc of the tale would emerge only through the telling of multiple such sections. Today's short stories emerged as their own genre in the early 19th century i.e. The Brothers Grimm's Fairy Tales (1824–26), Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle (1819) and The Legend of Sleepy Hollow (1820), Edgar Allan Poe's Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque (1840) and Nathaniel Hawthorne's Twice-Told Tales (1842). In the latter 19th century, the growth of print magazines and journals created a strong demand for short fiction of between 3,000 and 15,000 words. At this time the first literary theories about the short story appeared. A widely known one is Edgar Allan Poe's “The Philosophy of the Composition” (1846). In the first half of the 20th century, a number of high profile magazines such as The Atlantic Monthly, Scribner's, and the Saturday Evening Post published short stories in each issue. The demand for quality work was so great and the money paid so high that F. Scott Fitzgerald repeatedly turned to short-story writing to pay his numerous debts. John Cheever, John Steinbeck and Eudora Welty were frequent contributors and when Life magazine published Ernest Hemingway's long short story (or novella) The Old Man and The Sea in 1952, the issue sold 5,300,000 copies in only two days. Louise Erdrich wrote poignantly of Native American life and T.C. Boyle and David Foster Wallace explored the psychology of popular culture. The 21st century saw the emergence of new young writers including Jhumpa Lahiri, Kevin Brockmeier, Jaco...

This collection includes a classic assortment of Dick's short stories. Four of the five have been made into movies. "Minority Report" was the basis for the Spielberg film starring Tom Cruise. "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" was the basis for the movie "Total Recall." "Screamers" (1992) was based on the story "Second Variety." "Paycheck" was made into a 2003 film with Ben Affleck and Uma Thurman. Although Dick led a short, impoverished life plagued by mental illness, he is now considered one of the giants of the science fiction genre. His stories often revolve around one's perception of reality and reflect concerns about monopolistic corporations, authoritarian governments and altered states. The audiobook is read by Keir Dullea, who some may remember from the movie "2001: A Space Odyssey." Also recommended are James Tiptree, Jr., Cordwainer Smith, and more recently, Connie Willis.


A number of these are just snippets of characters or developing dialog for a future book. It appears to me the publisher was trying to create an anthology by throwing anything that Hemingway had written but was not yet published into it. There were only two titles I would consider short stories. Definitely not up to Hemingway standards of published work – very disappointing!

Aleksandar Hemon. **Love and Obstacles**. 2009.

"My story is boring; I was not in Sarajevo when the war began... I lived in America." Hemon slowly reveals, in a series of eight short stories, a young man's coming of age as an immigrant in the world. Beginning at age sixteen, the author describes an adolescence transplanted from Sarajevo, Yugoslavia into "a perfect African night, straight out of Conrad"... in Kinshasa, Zaire. The family, a mother, father, daughter and son, is Bosnian, Muslim, and a minority in their town. It is the summer of 1983, Aleksandar's father, a minor Yugoslavian diplomat, brings his family to Kinshasa. It is here the author will meet his American, a cadre of nationalities, and a more worldly view. Through the next stories, Aleksandar will look back on events, a writing career and the people he meets. It is a poignant and moving recollection, made even more wonderful by the author's ability to take us with him on this journey. Aspiring writers, those who find themselves in the world of coming of age, and short story readers will like this collection.


These sixteen stories set in the neighborhoods of Baltimore are part of Akashic's "noir" series featuring various cities. Some carry a kick ("Easy as A-B-C" by Laura Lippman), some will cause the reader to scratch his head saying "what just happened in this story?" ("The Invisible Man" by Rafael Alvarez), and others provide an emotional satisfaction as would-be victims outwit nasty creeps ("Liminal" by Joseph Wallace). "As Seen on TV" by Dan Fesperman supplies chuckles with a hitman assigned a job in Baltimore –starstruck by the series Homicide, he imagines meeting actors from the series and inspiring an episode with his heinous deeds. Ironically, one story in this collection was seen on TV: "Stainless Steel" by David Simon is a retelling of one of his episodes for The Wire. This collection is recommended for fans of noir, the gritty side of Baltimore, or good short crime fiction.


Unsentimental and straightforward, Proulx writes about her home state of Wyoming and the people who live there with stark realism. Life is hard in Wyoming for Proulx's characters who are mostly down-on-their-luck and looking for a place for themselves in a modernizing world. Readers will be most familiar with the story Brokeback Mountain which was made into a movie. It is a love story with no happy ending for the two cowboys who, in spite of their love for each other, know they can never be together. This collection of stories will appeal to adult readers who like to read atmospheric prose and who want to go beyond the romantic images of the west created by traditional westerns and Hollywood images.