

The Fun Parts Sam Lipsyte

[#Sam Lipsyte](#) [#The Fun Parts](#) [#literary fiction](#) [#short stories collection](#) [#contemporary american literature](#)

Dive into the darkly comedic world of Sam Lipsyte's acclaimed collection, 'The Fun Parts.' This literary fiction gem presents a series of insightful short stories that brilliantly dissect the absurdities of contemporary American life with his signature sharp wit and unflinching honesty, making it essential reading for fans of modern literary voices.

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The Fun Parts

A boy eats his way to self-discovery while another must battle the reality-brandishing monster preying on his fantasy realm. Meanwhile, an aerobics instructor, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, makes the most shocking leap imaginable to save her soul. Bold, hilarious and darkly affecting, Lipsyte's stories combine the tragicomic dazzle of his beloved novels and the compressed vitality of his classic debut collection. The Fun Parts is Lipsyte at his best - an exploration of new voices and vistas from a writer Time magazine has said 'everyone should read'.

The Ask

Follows the humorous story of Milo Burke, who must reel in a potential done for his former boss at a university.

No One Left to Come Looking for You

Manhattan's East Village, 1993. Dive bars, DIY music venues, shady weirdos, and hard drugs are plentiful. Crime is high but rent is low, luring hopeful, creative kids from sleepy suburbs around the country. One of these is Jack S., a young New Jersey rock musician. Just a few days before his band's biggest gig, their lead singer goes missing with Jack's prized bass, presumably to hock it to feed his junk habit. Jack's search for his buddy uncovers a sinister entanglement of crimes tied to local real estate barons looking to remake New York City, and who might also be connected to the recent death of Jack's punk rock mentor. Along the way, Jack encounters a cast of colorful characters, including a bewitching, quick-witted scenester who favors dressing in a nurse's outfit, a monstrous hired killer with a devotion to both figure skating and edged weapons, a deranged if prophetic postwar novelist, and a tough-talking cop who fancies himself a retro-cool icon of the homicide squad but is harboring a surprising secret.

Home Land

What if somebody finally wrote to his high school alumni bulletin and told...the truth! Here is an update from hell, a brilliant work from novelist Sam Lipsyte, whom Jeffrey Eugenides calls "original, devious, and very funny" and of whose first novel Chuck Palahniuk wrote, "I laughed out loud---and I never laugh out loud." The Eastern Valley High School Alumni newsletter, Catamount Notes, is bursting with tales of success: former students include a bankable politician and a famous baseball star, not to mention a major-label recording artist. Then there is the appalling, yet utterly lovable, Lewis Miner, class of '89---a.k.a Teabag---who did not pan out. Home Land is his confession in all its bitter, lovelorn glory.

Venus Drive

In 'Venus Drive' Sam Lipsyte portrays the tragicomic lives of the offbeat - the walking wounded hipsters with crummy jobs, drug fiends in various stages of addiction and out-of-control kids packed off to summer camp.

Beatrice and Virgil

Henry, an acclaimed writer, receives a letter from an elderly taxidermist that poses an irresistible puzzle. As he is pulled into the world of this strange and calculating man, Henry becomes involved with the lives of a donkey and a howler monkey—named Beatrice and Virgil—the taxidermist's 'guides through hell'. Together the three embark on an epic journey. This novel from Yann Martel's is a profound meditation on life, art and the liberating power of stories

The Subject Steve

Dark, dazzling American satire from the natural heir to George Saunders or David Sedaris. 'A brilliant novel, in every conceivable way.' Toby Litt Steve's fettle is absolutely fine, but nevertheless, he's dying - of a mystery disease that just might be boredom. At least, that's what the guys in the white coats say. They're not doctors, they're just guys in white coats, and the subject's name isn't Steve, either, but we'll get to that...

Rittenhouse Writers

James Rahn has led the Rittenhouse Writers' Group since he founded it in 1988, making it one of America's longest-running independent fiction workshops. Hundreds of writers and would-be writers have sought out the group for its remarkable level of instruction and collaboration. Rittenhouse Writers is Rahn's memoir of the workshop and how his own evolution as both a teacher and a writer—and as a son, husband, and (somewhat reluctant) father—has been intertwined with the establishment and growth of the RWG. In addition, Rahn includes ten short stories written by current and former members of the workshop. Rahn graduated from the University of Pennsylvania and earned an MFA at Columbia. He then began to imagine a future that included more than just writing, one that would also tap his aspiration to offer other writers support and motivation, tough but gentle—his self-described "Iron Fist in the Velvet Glove" approach. After all, as he says more than once, "Writing is hard." Over the years, James Rahn has witnessed every imaginable writing-group scenario, from awkward flirtations to suicide scares, catty critiques, near fistfights, and of course the satisfaction of watching someone's writing soar. With insight gained through years of observation and participation, and a discerning eye for amusing detail, he takes us along for the journey. Rahn's struggle to perfect his role as instructor runs throughout the narrative, as does his effort to balance that role with the friendships he forms in the group, and to keep up with his own writing while still giving the group the attention it needs to flourish. Through his eyes, we catch the spark of the workshop's spirit and get to meet various spirits who have invigorated Rittenhouse Writers' Group. Rahn cuts back and forth, reflecting, not only on the workshop, but also on his days as a high school dropout in Atlantic City, dead-end jobs and hopeless moves, the difficulty of his mother's decline and death, and his own unexpected plunge into parenthood—when, at age 51, he and his wife took on the responsibility of raising her two young nieces. His memoir serves, in a way, as an introduction to the short stories that follow; and the stories—as surprising and varied as the writers Rahn describes working with—stand as a fitting coda to Rahn's tale and offer another window onto his life's work. "James Rahn, Jersey boy and Philadelphia treasure, has written a moving and insightful book about what happens when you create something vibrant and necessary and stick around for the long haul, whether it's teaching, writing, friendships, or love. The answers aren't always simple, and Rahn explores them with the same gusto, honesty, wry humor, and generosity of spirit he brings to his fiction and his famous workshops. This book is a powerful reminder of the importance of community and mentorship in the making of literature."—Sam Lipsyte The 10 short stories included

in Rittenhouse Writers: "On Fire" by Gwen Florio "Mother—6/7 Months" by Romnesh Lamba "Moon Penitent" by Diane McKinney-Whetstone "The Last Confession" by Tom Teti "Ivory Is Wrong About Me" by Caren Litvin "The Conference Rat" by Samantha Gillison "Dropping a Line into the Murky Chop" by Saral Waldorf "What She Missed" by Lisa Paparone "Kingdom of the Sun" by Alice Schell "The Letters of Hon. Crawford G. Bolton III" by Daniel R. Biddle

Songs Only You Know

A Rolling Stone Best Book: This memoir of a troubled young man's escape into the Detroit punk scene is "a Kerouac-like saga fueled with energy and ecstasy" (Pittsburgh Post-Gazette). Described by Darin Strauss as "Nick Flynn meets Karl Ove Knausgaard" and "a book of relentless compassion," *Songs Only You Know* is an intense, sprawling memoir, equal parts family tragedy and punk rock road trip. It begins in late 1990s Detroit and spans a decade during which a family fights to hold itself together in the face of insurmountable odds. Sean's father endangers his career at Ford Motor as he cycles from rehab to binge. His heartsick sister spirals into depression, and his mother relies on her Catholic faith and good works to spare what can be spared. Meanwhile, Sean seeks salvation in a community of eccentrics and outsiders. But the closer Sean comes to realizing his musical dream, the further he drifts from his family and himself.

Hark

An "extremely funny...brilliantly alive" (The New York Times Book Review) social satire of the highest order from bestselling author Sam Lipsyte, centered around an unwitting mindfulness guru and the phenomenon he initiates. In an America convulsed by political upheaval, cultural discord, environmental catastrophe, and spiritual confusion, so many of us find ourselves anxious and distracted, searching desperately for peace, salvation, and—perhaps most immediately—just a little damn focus. Enter Hark Morner, a failed stand-up comic turned mindfulness guru whose revolutionary program is set to captivate the masses. But for Fraz and Tovah, a middle-aged couple slogging through a very rough patch, it may take more than the tenets of Hark's "Mental Archery" to solve the riddles of love, lust, work, and parenthood on the eve of civilizational collapse. And given the sudden power of certain fringe players, including a renegade Ivy League ethicist, a gentle Swedish kidnapper, a social media tycoon with an empire on the skids, and a mysteriously influential (but undeniably slimy) catfish, it just might be too late. But what's the point of a world, even a blasted-out post-apocalyptic world, if they don't try with all their might to keep their marriage alive? In this "awfully funny...tartly effective sendup of 21st-century America" (Star Tribune, Minneapolis) Sam Lipsyte reaches new peaks of daring in a novel that revels in contemporary absurdity and the wild poetry of everyday language while exploring the emotional truths of his characters. "Recommended reading" (Vanity Fair), in which "every line feels as thrillingly charged as a live wire" (O, The Oprah Magazine), Hark is a smart, incisive look at men, women, and children seeking meaning and dignity in a chaotic, ridiculous, and often dangerous world.

Darker with the Lights On

Wry, intimate, and startlingly imaginative, the stories in this debut bring a sharpness, and a strangeness, to the everyday.

Onward Toward What We're Going Toward

Set over the last half of the twentieth century, *Onward Toward What We're Going Toward* is the epic story of the decline and fall of an American family. Postwar newlyweds Chic and Diane Waldbeeser are determined to carve out a life for themselves and their son, Lomax, in Middleville, Illinois. But when ten-year-old Loxax dies, Chic and Diane take refuge in religion, haiku poetry, doll collecting, food and bowling as they try to make sense of their overwhelming grief and guilt. Meanwhile Chic's older brother, Buddy, struggles to make a life with his exotic, naïve wife Lijy – who is hiding a devastating secret of her own – while attempting to introduce the residents of Middleville to vegetarianism and Ayurveda. (An unusual endeavour in mid-century Middle America.) *Onward Toward What We're Going Toward* is a bittersweet paean to failed lives and missed opportunities, and a deeply heartfelt and gloriously funny dissection of the American Dream.

Portrait Inside My Head

In this stunning new collection of personal essays, distinguished author Phillip Lopate weaves together the colorful threads of a life well lived and brings us on an invigorating and thoughtful journey through memory, culture, parenthood, the trials of marriage both young and old, and an extraordinary look at New York's storied past and present. Opening with his family life, Lopate invites us first into his rough-and-tumble childhood on the streets of Brooklyn, learning the all-important art of cowardice. From there, he takes us to the ball game to discuss the trouble with ex-baseball fans; to high tea at the Plaza; to the theater to dissect Virginia Woolf's opinion that film should keep its hands off literature; and to visit his brother, radio personality Leonard Lopate, offering a rare glimpse into the unique sibling rivalry between two men at the top of their fields. Throughout this rich, ambitious, deliciously readable collection, Lopate's easy, conversational style pushes his piercing insights to new depths, celebrating the life of the mind—its triumphs and limitations—and illuminating memories and feelings both distant and immediate. The result is a charming and spirited new book from the undisputed master of the form.

City of Bohane

All three electrifying books in the "New York Times" bestselling Michael Vey series are available in one boxed set To everyone at Meridian High School, fourteen-year-old Michael Vey is nothing special, just the kid who has Tourette's syndrome. But in truth, Michael is extremely special—he has electric powers. And he's not the only one, either... Join Michael, Taylor, Ostin, and the rest of the Electroclan as they use their powers and wits to prevent a dangerous organization from achieving its sinister goal of global domination. This boxed set includes "Michael Vey," "Michael Vey 2," and "Michael Vey 3."

Idiopathy

Katherine, Daniel and Nathan evaluate their feelings about each other in a shared world marked by such eccentricities as a mysterious cattle epidemic, an unwanted pregnancy and a bio-domed workplace housing a perfectly engineered cornfield. A first novel.

Venus Drive

An intense, mordantly funny collection of short fiction from the author of Home Land and The Ask. A man with an "old soul" finds himself at a Times Square peep show, looking for more than just a little action. A young man goes into some serious regression after finding his deceased mother's stash of morphine. A group of summer-camp sadists return to the scene of the crime. Sam Lipsyte's brutally funny narratives tread morally ambiguous terrain, where desperate characters stumble over hope, or sometimes merely stumble. Written with ferocious wit and surprising empathy, Venus Drive is a potent collection of stories from "a wickedly gifted writer" (Robert Stone). The Picador paperback edition includes an excerpt from The Ask.

Temporary

SHORTLISTED FOR THE BOLLINGER EVERYMAN WODEHOUSE PRIZE 2021 'Terrifyingly entertaining.' Kelly Link 'Masterful.' Washington Post 'Alice in Wonderland set in the gig economy.' New York Times 'What is this?' Los Angeles Times Shortlisted for the Center for Fiction's 2020 First Novel Prize 18 boyfriends. 23 jobs. One ghost who occasionally pops in to give advice. Welcome to the world of the Temporary. 'There is nothing more personal than doing your job'. So goes the motto of the Temporary, as she takes job after job, in search of steadiness, belonging, and something to call her own. Aided by her bespoke agency and a cast of boyfriends - each allotted their own task (the handy boyfriend, the culinary boyfriend, the real estate boyfriend) - she is happy to fill in for any of us: for the Chairman of the Board, a ghost, a murderer, a mother. Even for you, and for me. Wild, hopeful, infinitely sad and infinitely funny, Temporary is the smartest, most humane story of what it is to work and live, here and now.

Double Feature

SAM DOLAN is a young man coming to terms with his life in the process and aftermath of making his first film. He has a difficult relationship with his father, B-movie actor Booth Dolan—a boisterous, opinionated, lying lothario whose screen legacy falls somewhere between cult hero and pathetic. Allie, Sam's dearly departed mother, was a woman whose only fault, in Sam's eyes, was her eternal affection for his father. Also included in the cast of indelible characters: a precocious, frequently violent half-sister; a conspiracy-theorist second wife; an Internet-famous roommate; a contractor who can't

stop expanding his house; a happy-go-lucky college girlfriend and her husband, a retired Yankees catcher; the morose producer of a true-crime show; and a slouching indie-film legend. Not to mention a tragic sex monster. Unraveling the tumultuous, decades-spanning story of the Dolan family's friends, lovers, and adversaries, *Double Feature* is about letting go of everything—regret, resentment, dignity, moving pictures, the dead—and taking it again from the top. Against the backdrop of indie filmmaking, college campus life, contemporary Brooklyn, and upstate New York, Owen King's epic debut novel combines propulsive storytelling with mordant wit and brims with a deep understanding of the trials of ambition and art, of relationships and life, and of our attempts to survive it all.

Seven Days in Rio

An incendiary and provocative new novel from Nicholson Baker and Mary Gaitskill's French-kissing cousin!

The Subject Steve

Meet Steve (not his real name), a Special Case, in truth a Terminal Case, and the eponymous antihero of Sam Lipsyte's first novel. Steve has been informed by two doctors that he is dying of a condition of unquestioned fatality, with no discernible physical cause. Eager for fame, and to brand the new plague, they dub it Goldfarb-Blackstone Preparatory Extinction Syndrome, or PREXIS for short. Turns out, though, Steve's just dying of boredom. *The Subject Steve* is a dazzling debut—by turns manic, ebullient, and exquisitely deadpan—Sam Lipsyte is in company with the master American satirists.

Home Land

"The hero of this comic novel, Lewis Miner, a.k.a. Teabag, was a high-school stoner, and now makes it his mission to write extremely candid letters to the alumni newsletter. His life, as he writes, 'did not pan out.' He works as a dishwasher in his father's cheesy catering business and spends his free time moping with his friend Gary, who sued his parents for molestation and then sued the shrink who conjured up these false memories. Teabag's letters detail his sexual fantasies (most of which involve the leg warmers of the school's jazz-dancing squad), his stalled ambition, and the misshapen pearls of wisdom he's garnered from his bottomed-out life. The story ends in an improbable shootout, but Lipsyte transfigures Teabag's self-loathing into a sensibility that is both hilarious and noble."--Publisher's description.

Note to Self

A darkly humorous reckoning of our modern condition – spam mail, internships, frenemies and hype – and the story of Anna's quest for the meaningful life she knows she deserves.

Early Work

"What a debut! *Early Work* is one of the wittiest, wisest (sometimes silliest, in the best sense), and bravest novels about wrestling with the early stages of life and love, of creative and destructive urges, I've read in a while. The angst of the young and reasonably comfortable isn't always pretty, but Andrew Martin possesses the prose magic to make it hilarious, illuminating, moving." —Sam Lipsyte, author of *The Ask* and *The Fun Parts* For young writers of a certain temperament—if they haven't had such notions beaten out of them by MFA programs and the Internet—the delusion persists that great writing must be sought in what W. B. Yeats once called the "foul rag and bone shop of the heart." That's where Peter Cunningham has been looking for inspiration for his novel—that is, when he isn't teaching at the local women's prison, walking his dog, getting high, and wondering whether it's time to tie the knot with his college girlfriend, a medical student whose night shifts have become a standing rebuke to his own lack of direction. When Peter meets Leslie, a sexual adventurer taking a break from her fiancé, he gets a glimpse of what he wishes and imagines himself to be: a writer of talent and nerve. Her rag-and-bone shop may be as squalid as his own, but at least she knows her way around the shelves. Over the course of a Virginia summer, their charged, increasingly intimate friendship opens the door to difficult questions about love and literary ambition. With a keen irony reminiscent of Sam Lipsyte or Lorrie Moore, and a romantic streak as wide as Roberto Bolaño's, Andrew Martin's *Early Work* marks the debut of a writer as funny and attentive as any novelist of his generation. "Beautifully executed and very funny, *Early Work* is a sharp-eyed, sharp-voiced debut that I didn't want to put down." —Julia Pierpont, author of *Among the Ten Thousand Things* and *The Little Book of Feminist Saints*

Tenth of December

****ESCAPE FROM SPIDERHEAD NOW STREAMING ON NETFLIX - STARRING CHRIS HEMSWORTH AND MILES TELLER****The prize-winning, New York Times bestselling short story collection from the internationally bestselling author of *Lincoln in the Bardo* 'The best book you'll read this year' New York Times 'Dazzlingly surreal stories about a failing America' Sunday Times **WINNER OF THE 2014 FOLIO PRIZE AND SHORTLISTED FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD 2013** George Saunders's most wryly hilarious and disturbing collection yet, *Tenth of December* illuminates human experience and explores figures lost in a labyrinth of troubling preoccupations. A family member recollects a backyard pole dressed for all occasions; Jeff faces horrifying ultimatums and the prospect of Darkenfloxx(TM) in some unusual drug trials; and Al Roosten hides his own internal monologue behind a winning smile that he hopes will make him popular. With dark visions of the future riffing against ghosts of the past and the ever-settling present, this collection sings with astonishing charm and intensity.

At the Bottom of Everything

It's been ages since the "incident" that estranged former best friends Adam and Thomas, and Adam has long since decided he's better off, even if his own life hasn't exactly turned out as planned. Ten years after the two friends spoke their last words, Adam is working as a tutor, sleeping with the mother of a student, and spending most of his nights looking up his ex-girlfriend on Facebook. But when he receives an email from Thomas's mother begging for his help, he finds himself drawn back into his old friend's world. Thomas hasn't been doing well, and now he's disappeared while traveling in India. As Adam embarks upon a magnificently strange and unlikely journey, Ben Dolnick unspools a tale of friendship, spiritual reckoning, and redemption.

The Unknowns

Eric Muller has been trying to hack the girlfriend problem his whole life. But his attempts to decode women - including a journal of 'research' about the girls in his high school class that fell into the wrong hands, with catastrophic results - only confirm that he's better at programming computers than interacting with human beings. By 2002, Eric is a Silicon Valley millionaire. He's managed to coax girls into bed with overpriced cocktails, ironic remarks, and carefully timed intimacies. But hiding his insecurities behind wit and empathy gets lonely, and true love remains beyond his grasp. So when he falls for Maya Marcom, a beautiful and fiercely opinionated young journalist, and, miraculously, she falls for him too, he's in uncharted territory. But his perfect new girlfriend's past is troubled by something dark and unresolved that sends Eric's obsessive mind spiraling into confusion and doubt. Can he reconcile his need for order and logic with the mystery and chaos of love? Gabriel Roth was born and raised in London and educated at Brown University and at San Francisco State University, from which he received a Master of Fine Arts in creative writing. For several years he was employed as a reporter and editor at the San Francisco Bay Guardian. He now works as a writer and software developer and lives with his family in Brooklyn, New York. *The Unknowns* is his first novel. textpublishing.com.au 'Gabriel Roth is a natural. This is a very assured first book - fast, funny, full of snappy dialogue, and never losing its poise even when it's glancing into the abyss. I think he's a find.' Sebastian Faulks 'A wise and mature novel, a cool and contemporary one. It announces the arrival of a bright new talent.' Andrew O'Hagan 'A beautifully written and deeply intelligent novel.' Alex Garland 'This is a debut novel by a skilful young writer and it is predictably slick, but as the story progresses the writing becomes less clever and more thoughtful.' SMH/Age/Canberra Times

Brilliant Blunders

"Drawing on the lives of five great scientists -- Charles Darwin, William Thomson (Lord Kelvin), Linus Pauling, Fred Hoyle and Albert Einstein -- scientist/author Mario Livio shows how even the greatest scientists made major mistakes and how science built on these errors to achieve breakthroughs, especially into the evolution of life and the universe"--

Wolf in White Van

A terrible event leaves Sean Phillips disfigured when he is only seventeen. In the weeks following the incident he creates an adventure game he calls the 'Trace Italian', where players awake in an apocalyptic America and make their way to safety across an irradiated landscape, decision by difficult

decision. The years pass and Sean lives a quiet life enriched by his games. But when a pair of teenage sweethearts try to seek the Trace in the real world their actions prove fatal, and Sean is forced to confront the dangers of his creation and its origins in his own troubled past. A beguiling story of contingency, solitude and escape, *Wolf in White Van* is a heart-stopping debut from a musician and songwriter known for the transcendent power of his words.

The Ask

From the author of *Home Land* and *Venus Drive* comes Sam Lipsyte's searing, beautiful, and deeply comic novel, *The Ask*. A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice Milo Burke, a development officer at a third-tier university, has "not been developing": after a run-in with a well-connected undergrad, he finds himself among the burgeoning class of the newly unemployed. Grasping after odd jobs to support his wife and child, Milo is offered one last chance by his former employer: he must reel in a potential donor—a major "ask"—who, mysteriously, has requested Milo's involvement. But it turns out that the ask is Milo's sinister college classmate Purdy Stuart. And the "give" won't come cheap. Probing many themes— or, perhaps, anxieties—including work, war, sex, class, child rearing, romantic comedies, Benjamin Franklin, cooking shows on death row, and the eroticization of chicken wire, Sam Lipsyte's *The Ask* is a burst of genius by an author who has already demonstrated that the truly provocative and important fictions are often the funniest ones.

The Book of Dave

The *Book of Dave* is Booker-shortlisted author Will Self's dazzling sixth novel What if a demented London cabbie called Dave Rudman wrote a book to his estranged son to give him some fatherly advice? What if that book was buried in Hampstead and hundreds of years later, when rising sea levels have put London underwater, spawned a religion? What if one man decided to question life according to Dave? And what if Dave had indeed made a mistake? Shuttling between the recent past and a far-off future where England is terribly altered, *The Book of Dave* is a strange and troubling mirror held up to our times: disturbing, satirizing and vilifying who and what we think we are. At once a meditation upon the nature of received religion, a love story, a caustic satire of contemporary urban life and a historical detective story set in the far future - this compulsive novel will be enjoyed by readers everywhere, including fans of Martin Amis and Anthony Burgess's *A Clockwork Orange*. 'Vivid, visceral and breathtakingly ambitious, this is Self's best yet' GQ 'Mindboggling ... darkly hilarious ... A fascinating book' Evening Standard Will Self is the author of nine novels including *Cock and Bull*; *My Idea of Fun*; *Great Apes*; *How the Dead Live*; *Dorian, an Imitation*; *The Book of Dave*; *The Butt*; *Walking to Hollywood and Umbrella*, which was shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize. He has written five collections of shorter fiction and three novellas: *The Quantity Theory of Insanity*; *Grey Area*; *License to Hug*; *The Sweet Smell of Psychosis*; *Design Faults in the Volvo 760 Turbo*; *Tough, Tough Toys for Tough, Tough Boys*; *Dr. Mukti and Other Tales of Woe and Liver: A Fictional Organ with a Surface Anatomy of Four Lobes*. Self has also compiled a number of nonfiction works, including *The Undivided Self: Selected Stories*; *Junk Mail*; *Perfidious Man*; *Sore Sites*; *Feeding Frenzy*; *Psychogeography*; *Psycho Too* and *The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Prawn Cracker*.

The Collector Collector

An antique bowl that comes into the possession of a lovelorn London art appraiser is no ordinary piece of clay; it is a ceramic sage, an urn of uncommon erudition that has witnessed all of history's major convulsions. Through its mantel-eye view, the pottery narrates the hilarious events which unfold in this brilliant comic romp.

The Dog of the South

His wife, Norma, has run off with her ex-husband, taking Ray's cards, shotgun and car. But from the receipts, Ray can track where they've gone. He takes off after them, as does an irritatingly tenacious bail bondsman, both following the romantic couple's spending as far as Mexico. There Ray meets Dr Reo Symes, the seemingly down-on-his-luck and rather eccentric owner of a beaten up and broken down bus, who needs a ride to Belize. The further they drive, in a car held together by coat-hangers and excesses of oil, the wilder their journey gets. But they're not going to give up easily.

The Living End

A quintessential Elkin protagonist, Ellerbee is a good husband, a good employer, a good sport who cares greatly about his fellow human beings--until he is killed during a senseless liquor-store hold-up. Suddenly smote by a deity as indifferent as history, Ellerbee is off on a whirlwind tour of a distressingly familiar theme-park Heaven and inner-city Hell--to learn, along with his late coworkers and a marvelously vivid cast of characters, that much of what they've always heard about God's love, God's wrath, and the afterlife is, unfortunately, quite true.

Sensation Machines

A razor-sharp, darkly funny, and deeply human rendering of a Post-Trump America in economic free fall Michael and Wendy Mixner are a Brooklyn-based couple whose marriage is failing in the wake of a personal tragedy. Michael, a Wall Street trader, is meanwhile keeping a secret: he lost the couple's life savings when a tanking economy caused a major market crash. And Wendy, a digital marketing strategist, has been hired onto a data-mining project of epic scale, whose mysterious creator has ambitions to solve a national crisis of mass unemployment and reshape America's social and political landscapes. When Michael's best friend is murdered, the evidence leads back to Wendy's client, setting off a dangerous chain of events that will profoundly change the couple—and the country. Set in an economic dystopia that's just around the corner, *Sensation Machines* is both an endlessly twisty novel of big ideas, and a brilliantly observed human drama that grapples with greed, automation, universal basic income, wearable tech, revolutionary desires, and a broken justice system. Adam Wilson implicates not only the powerbrokers gaming the system and getting rich at the intersection of Wall Street, Madison Avenue, Silicon Valley, and Capitol Hill, but all of us: each one of us playing our parts, however willingly or unwillingly, in the vast systems that define and control our lives.

Fine, Fine, Fine, Fine, Fine

'I wake up and I have to make the right choice,' he said. Master-stylist Ben Marcus returns with a wonder-cabinet of brain-rearranging stories. From the horrifyingly strange to the deeply touching, each story is a literary masterclass unlikely to leave the reader unchanged. From parent/child relationships thrown agonisingly off kilter, to intensely moving scenarios of dependence and emotional crisis; from left-alone bodies to new scientific frontiers, Ben Marcus is the great chronicler of the contemporary uncanny and the peculiar future. Piece by piece, he takes us apart.

Notes from the Fog

A blistering debut that does for the Iraqi perspective on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan what Phil Klay's *Redeployment* does for the American perspective "[A] wonderful collection." —George Saunders, *The New York Times Book Review* The first major literary work about the Iraq War from an Iraqi perspective—by an explosive new voice hailed as “perhaps the best writer of Arabic fiction alive” (*The Guardian*)—*The Corpse Exhibition* shows us the war as we have never seen it before. Here is a world not only of soldiers and assassins, hostages and car bombers, refugees and terrorists, but also of madmen and prophets, angels and djinni, sorcerers and spirits. Blending shocking realism with flights of fantasy, *The Corpse Exhibition* offers us a pageant of horrors, as haunting as the photos of Abu Ghraib and as difficult to look away from, but shot through with a gallows humor that yields an unflinching comedy of the macabre. Gripping and hallucinatory, this is a new kind of storytelling forged in the crucible of war.

The Corpse Exhibition

The Dismal Science tells of a middle-aged vice president at the World Bank, Vincenzo D'Orsi, who publicly quits his job over a seemingly minor argument with a colleague. A scandal inevitably ensues, and he systematically burns every bridge to his former life. After abandoning his career, Vincenzo, a recent widower, is at a complete loss as to what to do with himself. The story follows his efforts to rebuild his identity without a vocation or the company of his wife. An exploration of the fragile nature of identity, *The Dismal Science* reveals the terrifying speed with which a person's sense of self can be annihilated. It is at once a study of a man attempting to apply his reason to the muddle of life and a book about how that same ostensible rationality, and the mathematics of finance in particular, operates—with similarly dubious results—in our world.

The Dismal Science

Visit the House of Holes, where the motto is PLEASURE FIRST, and discover a solution to every sexual problem, insight into every sexual intrigue, or play out your greatest sexual fantasy. Men can begin with a 'good, friendly penis scrub', take the magic sperm sniff test, or visit the Porndecahedron. Greedy women can visit the Hall of the Penises, shy women can order a partner with a 'voluntary head detachment', curious couples can investigate each other further with a 'cross crotchal interplasmic transfer'. But ladies, watch out for the Pearloiner, who might just steal from you what you cherish most.

House of Holes

Diane Williams, an American master of the short story who will “rewire your brain” (NPR), is back with a collection in which she once again expands the possibilities of fiction. These stories depict ordinary moments—a visit to the doctor’s office or a married couple’s hundredth dance together—but within the quotidian, Williams delivers a lifetime of insecurities, lusts, rejections, and revelations, making her work equally discomfiting and amusing. With unmatched wit in every sentence, Williams captures whole universes in a story, delivering visionary insights into what it means to be human. Williams’ devotees will be newly enthralled by her elegantly strange, bewitching stories in *How High? — That High*. Those who have yet to meet “the godmother of flash fiction” (The Paris Review) will find an extraordinary introduction in these pages.

How High?--That High