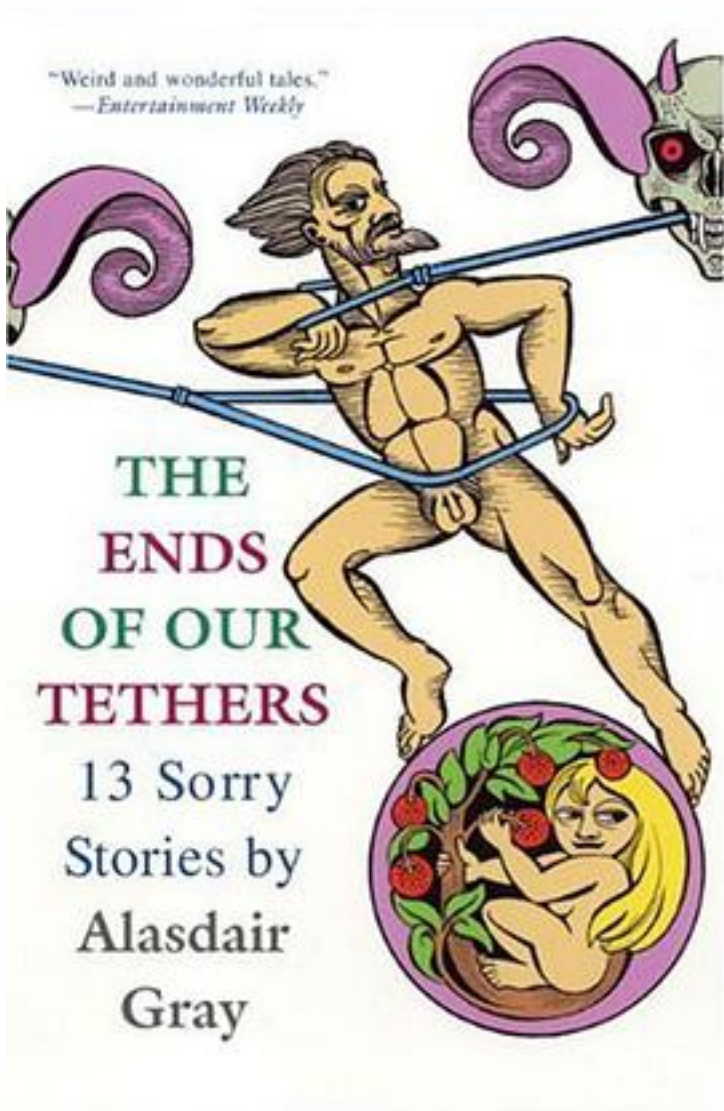


The Ends Of Our Tethers



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著者:Alasdair Gray

出版者:Canongate Bks, UK/Publishers Grp West

出版时间:2007-02-01

装帧:平装

isbn:9781841956268

Fans of the work of Donald Barthelme, Kurt Vonnegut, George Saunders, and T. Coraghessan Boyle will revel in Alasdair Gray's masterful, witty collection. Gray's stories defy genre, and his angular, playful style, prodigious wit, and razor-sharp intellect are matched by his remarkable skill with the short-story form. In "Job's Skin Game," the narrator humbly tells his life story like the evenings news. During a moment of awkward revelation, he shares the strangely exquisite pleasure he receives from scratching at the skin condition he's developed since losing his two sons in the Twin Towers tragedy and a small fortune in the dot-com meltdown. In "Big Pockets with Button Flaps," a wily old man teases and taunts a pair of punk teenage girls as their confrontation takes on social implication through lightning-fast transfers of power and wit. The Ends of Our Tethers is vintage Gray-accessible, experimental, mischievous, wide ranging, beautifully written, and wise.

Gray, the Scottish author of the novels *Lanark* and the Whitbread-winning *Poor Things*, among others, returns to the form he first visited in *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* with a collection filled with wry and mordant humor. In these 13 stories, Gray dances across many of the discontents of modern life, but lingers at the divides of gender and age. Set mainly in Glasgow during the present day, the tales are many so short they're more like sharp, eccentric sketches that feature characters and narrators who observe their world with a mixture of wistfulness and disappointment. "Big Pockets with Button Flaps" opens with a pair of teenage girls trading banter with an old man with odd, semisexual proclivities and closes with a series of reversals in situation and power. In "No Bluebeard," a man recounts his three failed marriages and the unexpected surrender that led to a successful fourth ("It is almost impossible to judge the intelligence of someone from an alien culture so I have never discovered exactly how stupid or mad Tilda is"). In "Miss Kincaid's Autumn," a brother and sister live together far more harmoniously than most married couples, while "Aiblins" centers on the frustrating interactions between an established poet and the young, half-crazed upstart who may or may not be the genius he claims to be. This is a book with a sneaky, cumulative power; the prose is as spare and provocative as the illustrations of leering demon skulls and sly young women drawn by Gray himself.

Accosted by teen thugs, a man "no longer young" seems in for it; then "the smaller, more dangerous-looking youth" recognizes his old teacher; though safe, the man "smiles rather wistfully at the tall youth's combat trousers." Another man shelters a strange young woman fleeing her family; tolerating her profound peculiarities because she's good in bed, he eventually marries her, after which she refuses to sleep with him; he sifts through his three previous marriages for a clue to what it is about him. An author teaching creative writing meets an eccentric young poet who spurns all coaching and then disappears, only to resurface, beaten-looking, years later, demanding that the writer get his original manuscript published, even if under the writer's name; more years pass, and the poet shows up again, yet more decrepit--has the writer's refusal to help driven him insane? At least two persons seem to have reached tether's end in each of the amusingly distressing new stories by the author of the modern Scots classic *Lanark* (1981).

作者介绍:

Gray, the Scottish author of the novels *Lanark* and the Whitbread-winning *Poor Things*, among others, returns to the form he first visited in *Unlikely Stories, Mostly* with a collection filled with wry and mordant humor. In these 13 stories, Gray dances across many of the discontents of modern life, but lingers at the divides of gender and age. Set mainly in Glasgow during the present day, the tales are many so short they're more

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标签

英文

短篇

怪书

评论

除了倒数第二则 其他都蛮好读的 当作一窥Glasgow的趣闻集子吧 Job's Skin Game真的慎读啊.....太他妈重口味了

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书评

袋片带扣的大号衣兜 译者：唐江

九月的一个宜人的清晨。一名不再年轻的男子沿着废弃的铁道，在一条狭窄的小路上若有所思地漫步。喧嚣声阵阵传来，附近似乎有条高速公路，不过小路两旁的树莓、接骨木和山楂把什么都遮了个严严实实， ...

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