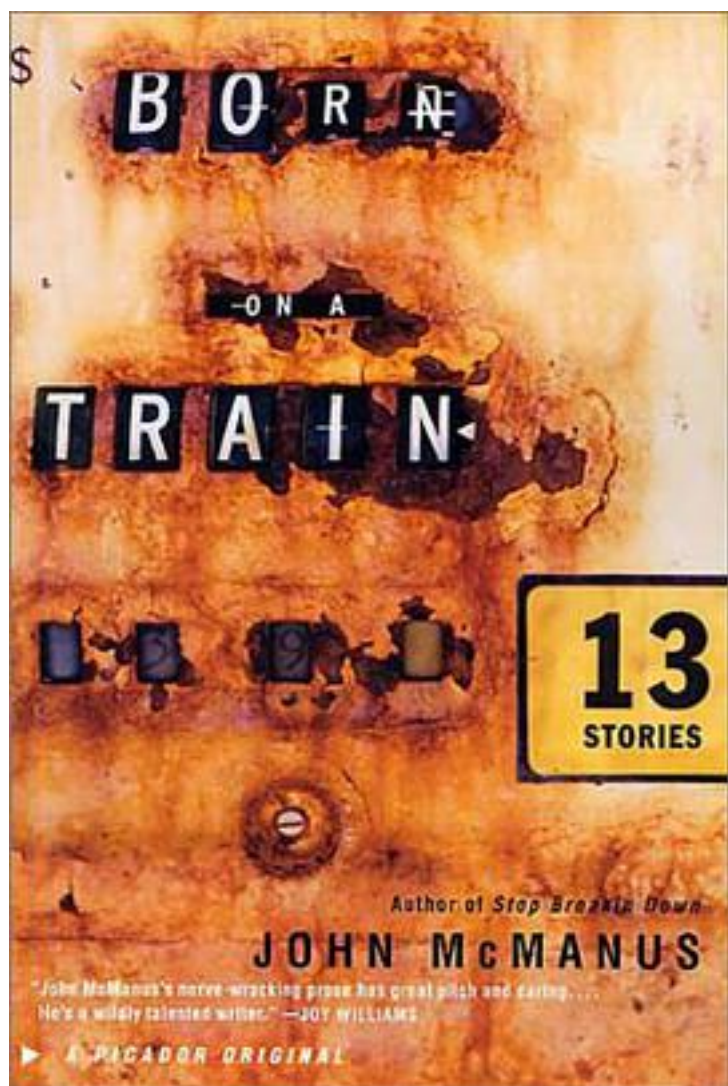


Born on a Train



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Two years ago--at twenty-two--John McManus captivated writers and critics with his first story collection and became the youngest recipient of the Whiting Writers Award. Now McManus returns with a collection of stories equally piercing and visionary: stories about the young and old, compromised by circumstance and curiosity, and undergoing startling transformations. In "Eastbound," a car driven by two elderly sisters breaks down on an elevated highway: Beneath them lies the lost country of the South, overrun with concrete and shopping centers but still possessing the spectres and secrets of the past. In "Brood," a plucky young heroine moves with her mother into the home of the mother's online boyfriend: She will use the "Audubon Guide to Birds," and her own wits to survive the advances of the boyfriend's teenaged son. In "Cowry," two backpackers in New Zealand race to witness the first sunrise of the twenty-first century.

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