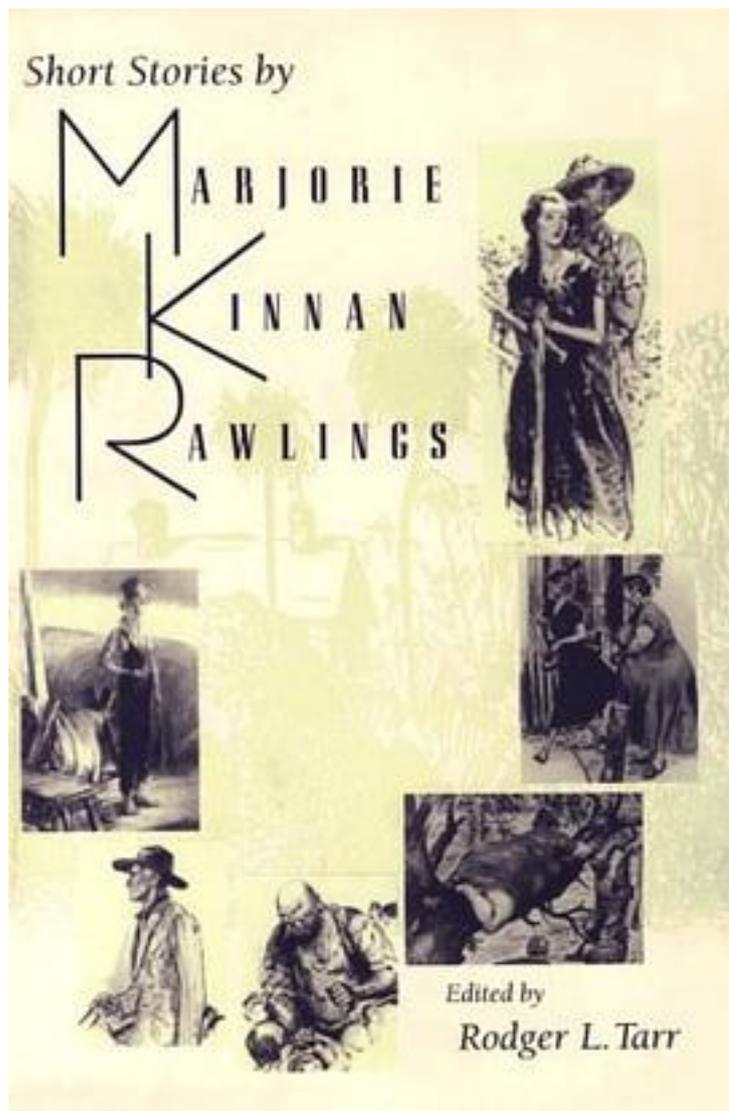


Short Stories by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings



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" Rawlings is] among the first ten American story writers today."--"The New Republic," 1940 "She will help to make the American short story a living part of our literature."--"Boston Transcript," 1940 "One of the two or three "sui generis" storytellers we have."--"Atlantic Monthly," 1940 In "The Yearling," her Pulitzer Prize-winning novel of 1939, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings wrote the bleak but noble life of the Florida Cracker into American hearts. She secured her popularity as a storyteller and her status as a major voice in American literature in 1942 with the instant success of "Cross Creek," the autobiographical vignettes that highlight her ability to create short fiction. Still, no assessment of the full range and power of her talent has been possible without this volume of all twenty-three of her published short stories, collected together here for the first time. Most appeared in "Scribner's Magazine, The New Yorker, Harper's Magazine" and the "Saturday Evening Post," "Scribner's" printed Rawlings's first short story, "Cracker Chidlings," in 1931, just three years after she moved to an orange grove in the backwoods of north-central Florida. With a mix of frontier morality, ingenuity, and humor, the story introduced readers to Fatty Blake's squirrel pilau and "Shiner Tim's corn liquor. Just as important, it brought her work to the attention of Maxwell Perkins, the famous Scribner's editor, who recognized her talent for storytelling and her eye for detail and who encouraged her to capture human drama in more "Cracker" stories. Though Rawlings was at home in a man's world, much of her short fiction is told in a woman's voice. She is merciless in "Gal Young 'Un" as she bores in on two women, both competing for the same man and struggling for their dignity. The story, published in "Harper's," was awarded the O. Henry Memorial Prize for best short story of 1932 and was made into a prize-winning movie in 1979. Her most autobiographical story, "A Mother in Mannville," describes the sense of personal loss endured by a childless woman writer. Often at her best combining satire and sarcasm, Rawlings wrote a series of comic stories that featured Quincey Dover, her alter ego. "She is, of course, me," Rawlings wrote, "if I had been born in the Florida backwoods and weighed nearly three hundred pounds." One story Quincey narrates, "Benny and the Bird Dogs," reportedly amused Robert Frost so much that he fell off a rocking chair in a fit of uncontrollable laughter while listening to Rawlings read from it. Like others who wrote about the South, Rawlings grappled with the problem of how to portray honestly, yet without racism, the situation and the language of her neighbors. Her empathetic description of blacks and her portrayal of the Florida Cracker contribute a valuable perspective on twentieth-century American culture in transition.

作者介绍:

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