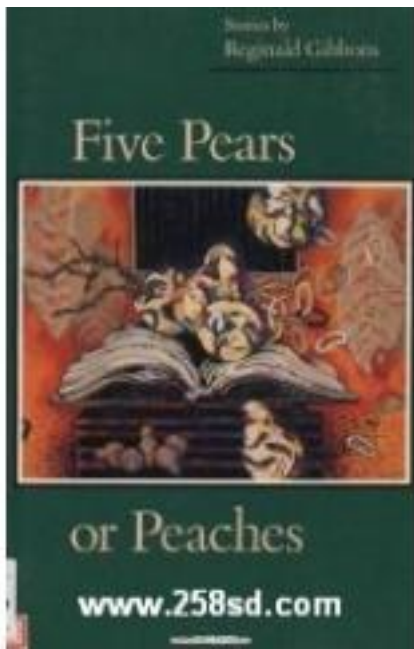


# Five Pears or Peaches



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From Library Journal Brief and plotless, Gibbons's stories ( Five Pears or Peaches) strain for a melancholy too personally based on sentiment and more contrived than derived from everyday events, such as putting a child to bed, walking city streets, cutting down a dying elm, or the first day of school. Not really "stories, " these vignettes (some are less than a page) are long on mood and description and short on everything else. In the sketches "He" and "She, " Gibbons tries to paint word pictures to evoke maleness and femaleness: "fight (sport, spectatorship, partisanship, gambling, money, hierarchy, dominion, betrayal, blood, bloodshed, territory)" versus "(Fruit, kindling, milk, nut, beans, corn)... credit card, henna, black cloth, perfume, " etc. At his best, Gibbons, editor of TriQuarterly Magazine , offers "Proserpine at Home, " a modern glimpse of a not-so-mythological

domestic hell, and "A Singular Accomplishment," a delightful portrait of a preacher who could "put his toe in his mouth while he was standing up." Gibbons's poetry (Maybe It Was So) is a bit more successful and accessible, if only because the mood is more suited to the format. When he strays from concrete imagery--"the affect of elms is of struggle upward and survival"--he strips his work of the resonance that lends music to his words. More successful is his whimsical juxtaposition of "meat scraps and orange rinds" with "the Infinite," and the soulful, but lengthy "From a Paper Boat": "I have breathed again the scent of my children's rumpled beds." Only for large contemporary literature collections.- Ron Antonucci, Hudson Lib. and Historical Soc., OhioCopyright 1991 Reed Business Information, Inc.

作者介绍:

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