



Between Here and the Yellow Sea

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A debut collection of short fiction from this National Magazine Award in Fiction finalist.

Set in a variety of Southern and Midwestern landscapes—from Missouri's Ha Ha Tonka State Park to a crop circle at a Minnesotan farm—the stories in *Between Here and the Yellow Sea* excavate the ambiguous terrain of the human heart. With a forceful and compassionate voice, Pizzolatto finds beauty in loneliness as his characters attempt to bridge the gulfs between themselves and others, past and present, and, sometimes, between their inner and outer selves.

In this both heartbreaking and humorous collection, we meet a base-jumping, samurai park ranger who parachutes off the St. Louis Arch; a stained glass artist who struggles over his masterpiece and learns through great loss what his true subject will be; and a religious elementary school teacher who tries to understand her rebellious, militant son. In the title story, which first appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly*, an orphaned young man and his former high school football coach set out to kidnap the coach's daughter from Los Angeles and bring her back to east Texas.

With an assured, poignant voice, Pizzolatto places us at the crossroads of memory and desire, somewhere between here and the Yellow Sea.

Between Here and the Yellow Sea Details

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Author : Nic Pizzolatto

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From Reader Review Between Here and the Yellow Sea for online ebook

Jeremy Wagner says

I enjoyed this collection very much! Pizzolatto keeps giving great stories. his novel, Galveston, is one of my favorites of this year.

Federico Sosa Machó says

Ninguno de los relatos de esta colección es una obra maestra. Pero ninguno deja de ser interesante, todos muestran una aguda sensibilidad para asomarnos a historias de seres sensibles y vulnerables (de esos que nos mostraron Carver o Ford, casi siempre solitarios o temerosos de serlo, de esos que a veces quedan relegados en nuestras sociedades. Una muy interesante y recomendable lectura del mismo autor de Galveston.

Bruce says

As a huge fan of True Detectives, for which Pizzolatto is the sole screenwriter, I dove into this book with enthusiasm. The writing style is engaging and the character composition well done. The overall theme, though, if there is one, is one of hopelessness, a consequence of an unrelenting reality. I was fine with that, but would also have liked to have seen a story or two in which morality really mattered, and I'm not sure it does matter to Pizzolatto. Hence, a four-star instead of a five-star.

Javier Núñez says

Es indiscutible que sabe escribir. Y muy bien. Domina las historias en ambientes rurales y deprimidos, como demostró en True detective. En este libro de cuentos, salvo dos o tres, narra unas historias profundas, con personajes muy bien perfilados y que, al leerlos, me ha resultado imposible no visualizarlos en blanco y negro.

Larry H says

Before he created the acclaimed television series *True Detective* (at least the first season), before he wrote the superlative thriller *Galveston* (read my original review from 2011), Nic Pizzolatto wrote a short story collection called *Between Here and the Yellow Sea* in 2005.

It's always really interesting to me to read an author's early work, especially when you've read their more recent books. Sometimes you see them struggling to take control of their storytelling ability, their voice, their imagery, and other times you find flashes of genius, genius which becomes even more pronounced as their career progresses. Pizzolatto's collection of nine stories (apparently Amazon has another version of the

collection with two stories not included in the original, but I didn't read that one) is moving, poignant, and thought-provoking, and a number of stories pack a punch.

The characters in these stories are struggling—with loss, adolescence, demons real or imagined, and, of course, all types of relationships. All but one of the stories worked for me, although I had a number of favorites, including: "Ghost Birds," in which a park ranger and BASE jumper wrestles with emotional crises and confronts the fears instigated by his risk-taking girlfriend; "1987, The Races," which tells of a young boy forced to provide emotional stability and companionship to his father, who has been slower to recover following his divorce from the boy's mother; "Two Shores," in which a young man struggles to understand his feelings (and control his curiosity) after the reappearance of an old girlfriend; "Amy's Watch," about a teenage girl forced to make sense of the various relationships in her life; and the fantastic title story, which follows a young man and his high school football coach as they drive to California, ostensibly to kidnap the coach's daughter and bring her back to Texas where she belongs.

I read a lot, but even when a book is really well-written and enjoyable, after I finish reading it I sometimes have trouble recalling specific plot points. But a few days after finishing *Between Here and the Yellow Sea*, I can't seem to get some of these stories out of my head. I've said before that the true sign of an excellent story collection for me is if I can envision some of the stories as full-length novels, and I definitely could here with more than a few of them.

Pizzolatto has real storytelling talent. If you've not read *Galveston*, I'd definitely encourage you to. Beyond that, I hope that he can fit in another novel or story collection sometime in the future, between his television and film writing gigs. This guy deserves to be read as well as have his work come to life on the big and small screens.

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blog...>

Ademption says

"Ghost Birds" and "Between Here and the Yellow Sea" are the best stories in this collection.

While "Ghost Birds" suffers from the protagonist's aspie-like barrage of literary references, this seems to be a feature of Nic Pizzolatto's work and reminds me of *True Detective* Season 1. Constant, self-serious references to good books are a quirk that I can't decide whether I enjoy or not.

The other stories are fine, more mood pieces than anything, clearly the work of a talented but young writer. Twenty pages that capture characters and moods, even though the plots go nowhere, that's these stories. However, the last 100 page "Nepal,"-- no thanks. For every moving and dreary moment, the story was sluggish, and it was not quite a novelette but more than a short story.

Pizzolatto seems to be obsessed with people who self-destruct because they experience childhood, or more recent, trauma that they cannot move past. This seems like his personal, lazy writing trope. Consistent self-destruction should not necessarily be conflated with complexity or beauty. Often, it is simply the opposite of surviving. Definitely in *True Detective* Season 2, and in some of these stories, I think Pizzolatto shortcuts by chronicling self-destructing characters in a bid to signify all their anger and noise as something grandly tragic. Sometimes there is grand tragedy, and sometimes there are just assholes in life and in his work.

I recommend Pizzolatto's *Galveston* as a solid noir novel instead of this collection of early stories.

Casey says

Pizzolatto's writing has momentum. That's the best way to describe it. Even when few things happen, or everything turns to shit, his descriptions are breathtaking, with the twists begging you to read on. My favorite story was the eponymous one, though the final story was also the delight because the setting (early 1900s) was such a shift from the other stories. Now I'm just kicking myself that I read this and Pizzolatto's novel so quickly.

Logan says

I'll go ahead and get this out of the way first: Yes, this is the TRUE DETECTIVE guy, and, no, this book doesn't compare to TRUE DETECTIVE.

I'll also say that I noticed a lot of other reviewers say that these stories, for the most part, didn't stick to their bones. And, I have to agree. After finishing, I have a hard time recalling much of what I read here. Maybe that's my fault, and the other readers'. Maybe we have something wrong with our brains.

I am more than aware, however, of the quality of writing presented in these stories, and the darkness that seeps around the edges. I'm also aware that this is likely a collection of his first fully formed short stories--i.e., maybe written in school or just out of school. It has the feel of an author finding himself. And, with TRUE DETECTIVE, he clearly found his way, but not here in BETWEEN HERE & THE YELLOW SEA.

While this has the sense of being written by a new author (it was published in 2006, so he was 30 or 31 or something), I can say it doesn't read like your typical MFA student's collection of stories--that is, really dry, uber detailed diary writing, which mostly centers around childhood or family, typically the more mundane elements. That's my take on the MFA factory drivel, anyway. Altho, my nutshell take on MFA fiction is: shitty snooze bombs.

But, these stories aren't that. They do, however, drip with LITERARY-ISM. Sometimes that's cool, sometimes it's too obvious the story is attempting to be BIG AND MEANINGFUL.

So it goes.

That is not to say this isn't a book worth reading. And I've heard his novel, GALVESTON, is excellent. This book is good enough that I want to continue reading his fiction. And will.

Also, just to clarify, there were three stories in here (out of nine) that definitely stuck to my bones: GHOST BIRDS, 1987 THE RACES, and NEPAL.

Tim says

Pizzolatto experiments a little in his opening book of short stories. A few of the tales here are clearly proto-narratives that developed later into the full novel Galveston and then into TV series True Detective. The

writing in 1987 and *Between Here and the Yellow Sea* in particular are familiar and gripping, but fleeting - just a glimpse into lives you wish you could learn more about. Some of the others don't work so well - *Ghost Birds* is strained, *Amy's Watch* is just dull, and *Nepal*, while brilliant writing, is an historical fiction that feels somehow sterile - scholastic and lacking in heart. But maybe it's just not what I wanted from Pizzolatto in this book.

You'll find a little *True Detective* here, a lot of Galveston, and a some other writing that maybe Pizzolatto will return to one day with a fresh perspective.

Atram_sinprisa says

Pizzolatto es uno de esos narradores de almas, de perfiladores de personajes, más que contadores de historias. Su fuerza está en cómo describe ambientes, en cómo refleja sentimientos más que en sus tramas. Es capaz de escribir relatos bellísimos sin contar apenas nada en ellos.

Como (casi) todas las recopilaciones de relatos, es irregular y algunos ensombrecen la lista. Pero en mi caso el balance es positivo.

David Nicholls says

First I thought this book was trying way to hard, philosophising, the characters seemed aloof, and it felt rather pretentious. But not long into it realised that it rather suited the book and I was really enjoying it.

I must admit, I (stupidly) didn't even read a description of this book and just assumed it was a collection of stories about the King in Yellow, what with it having 'yellow' in the title, and Pizzolatto's kick-ass treatment of the mythos in *True Detective*. Alas it isn't about the King in Yellow, but a lot of the stories carry that gritty southern noir feeling that the series has.

All in all, as with most collections there are some good, and some not so good stories in here, but worth a read.

Lenore says

I'm adding this because it's from the guy who created *True Detective* and I'm curious.

Frances Thompson says

Moody, raw and touching, this collection of short stories is the work of Nic Pizzolatto, the sole writer behind the TV masterpiece *True Detective*. While all of the stories take place in the southern states of the US, and many deal with modern and real traumas - war veterans, teenage angst, racism and families that are falling apart - there is something provocative and touching in each tale, neatly brought to life by Pizzolatto's fine command of language and creating moments the reader will relate to and remember.

My favourite stories were Two Shores and Haunted Earth.

Baba says

Overall rating 3.5 stars. Review posted November 18, 2014

Both quotes taken from Ghost Birds

Short story #1 Ghost Birds 4.5 stars

A-mazing! Loved it!

Short story #2 Amy's Watch 3.5 stars

Short story #3 1987, The Races 2.5 stars

Boring.

Short story #4 Two Shores 3.5 stars

Short story #5 Between Here and the Yellow Sea 4 stars

Short story #6 The Guild of Thieves, Lost Women and Sunrise Palms 3.5 stars

Short story #7 A Cryptograph 3 stars

Short story #8 Haunted Earth 3.5 stars

While almost every ending is kind of abrupt, this one disturbed me the most and **left me wanting** (instead of 4 stars I downgraded it to 3.5 stars).

(view spoiler)

Short story #9 Nepal 2.5 stars

Again, great writing but I was bored. The plot and characters didn't grab me.

Writing and author's voice 4 stars

First things first. This is **not** a romance book. Between Here and the Yellow Sea is fiction and contains themes such as loss and death, delinquency, parenthood, and religion. As you can gather, these are not fluffy, happy stories. Fact was, the oppressive atmosphere made for a somewhat difficult read. Some stories simply didn't resonate with me, probably because I failed to connect with the characters. Though the prose was always very good and balm to my wounds after having read one too many badly written romance book lately.

Also, due to the great prose I decided to round up to 4 stars. I hope to give Galveston a shot someday soon.

Recommended read.

Ryan Rodriguez says

This book is like an ugly bruise. The impact was surprising, painful and unwanted and every time I see it, it will remind me of the unfortunate event that was reading this book and only time will make the memory of it go away. This is really disappointing to me as I really like the first season of True Detective. I thought the writing and monologues were beautiful and the story was woven in a beautiful but gritty way. I regret reading this book. I had hoped that a collection of these short stories would've shown some diversity and expansion in writing, but it only wound up letting me down and making me feel like I wasted my time on something that I thought, that I'd hoped would pay off in some way...it didn't. I do NOT recommend this book.

Amparo says

Esta colección de relatos parece tener en común el miedo, el miedo como motor, el miedo como cepo. El miedo, pero también la vergüenza que subyace a la conciencia de ese miedo y a las consecuencias de las decisiones que de él se derivan. No todos los relatos son igual de buenos, pero desde luego poseen intensidad, imágenes poderosas y conocimiento de la naturaleza humana con todo su espectro de glorias y miserias. Y éstas últimas son muchas....

"Así que a los veintiuno me hago la idea de que la principal lección de la vida es que uno debe poner límites a sus deseos porque de lo contrario se le pueden infectar"

Chris Champion says

Lately, Pizzolatto is easily one of my favorite writers. I randomly stumbled upon his novel, Galveston, at a bookstore and decided to give it a chance. It was one of the best novels I've read to date. Gripping, stark, and poignant. And so, I definitely made an effort to check out some of his shorter works, and it certainly paid off. Pizzolatto seems to be an incredibly talented and skillful writer, both of novels and short stories. His stories pull you in quickly, while getting you extremely interested in both the characters, settings and interplay between the two. Plus, there's usually a symbol or minor analogy that hits home later on. His prose is tighter than most I've read lately. And his stories range widely (as most short story collections do), yet they all seem to have an underlying link in that they get to the heart of both people, the world we live in, and the constant loss and gain of our lives.

What I loved most about the collection was that I usually had no idea where each story was going and I couldn't put any of them down. Pizzolatto certainly knows how to peak your curiosity while keeping a firm grip on both the tone and pace of each story: A samurai park ranger who reaches his zen by basejumping; A football coach and a former student who go on a road trip to bring back the coach's pornstar daughter; An elementary school teacher who tries to communicate with her runaway son with graffiti; A college professor and two other men who go to meet a woman who has fathered a child by one of them, but who suddenly dies, leaving the professor forever wondering if he was the father. And so on. I don't want to give them all away.

In all, I thought the stories were extremely well-written and original. I love the voicings of his characters and they all seemed to be incredibly well sketched. There's no flat characters or annoying narcissist who you just can't relate with. His third person narrations are poetic to say the absolute least. Pizzolatto is truly an

awesome writer. There's just no other way to put it.

E says

I really liked these:

Between Here and the Yellow Sea
The Guild of Thieves, Lost Women, and Sunrise Palms

I quite liked:

Nepal (opening paragraphs reminiscent in the best way of Denis Johnson)
1987, The Races (I wish this had ended differently – with the father winning small and getting sort of manic just as he's confronting the son over the abandonment. I thought that would make it perfect. But it isn't my story, is it. Otherwise, the penultimate confrontation between them is perfect, really good.)

Some of the others are finding their voice. There's a repetition of certain themes (idealized women in particular) that work brilliantly in some stories but not as well in others, especially as some of the narrators are more interesting than others, although most share certain demographic features (straight, white, mostly working class men).

Overall enjoyed it. I thought Nepal was a nice break in tone from the others, a good closing novella.

Ole André Kleven says

Ghost Birds: 4,5

Amy's Watch: 3

1987, The Races: 1

Two Shores: 3

Between Here and the Yellow Sea: 2

The Guild of Thives, Lost Woman, and Sunrise Palms: 2

A Cryptograph: 4

Haunted Earth: 3

Nepal: 4,5

Frau Sorge (Yuki) says

Nic Pizzolatto is a writer who CAN tell the tales.. I love how he creates such tension in simple stories - and his prose is poetical and fresh.

I liked literary referenes. Rilke, seriously? It was great.
