



## Atlanta Noir

*Tayari Jones (Editor)*

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**Brand-new stories by:** Tananarive Due, Kenji Jasper, Tayari Jones, Dallas Hudgens, Jim Grimsley, Brandon Massey, Jennifer Harlow, Sheri Joseph, Alesia Parker, Gillian Royes, Anthony Grooms, John Holman, Daniel Black, and David James Poissant.

Atlanta is one of America's most dynamic and fastest-growing cities, with an increasingly diverse population. This volume honors the city's transformation—albeit in a chilling manner—with a highly talented crew of contributors who know the city inside and out.

From editor **Tayari Jones:**

*People who don't know Atlanta don't understand the codes and contradictions of the New South. Yes, Margaret Mitchell imagined the plantation Tara within the city limits, but it's also the home of OutKast. Atlanta has captured the imagination of trash TV with Todd Chrisley's magnolia-cream accent but also the decidedly urban antics of Love & Hip Hop. The ashes of the Civil War still hang in the air, but immigration is turning the South into the Global South.*

*With Atlanta Noir, my hope was to find the writers who could show the city in all of its dizzy complexity. These fourteen writers represent the city's many neighborhoods and demographics—from the Southern punk scene of Little Five Points to the Junior League world of Peachtree City, where things are not always as they seem. There is more going on at the local Waffle House than just scattering, smothering, and chunking. This is a major international city but it's still the Bible Belt. A megapreacher's past catches up with him, and gentrification cannot tame the outlaw spirit of the city too busy to hate. Our airport boasts that it is the busiest in the world; locals declare that even on the way to heaven, you have to change planes at Hartsfield-Jackson. Let us think of Atlanta Noir as an after-hours welcome to the city where we serve our sweet tea with a shot of bourbon.*

## Atlanta Noir Details

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Author : Tayari Jones (Editor)

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**Download and Read Free Online Atlanta Noir Tayari Jones (Editor)**



## From Reader Review Atlanta Noir for online ebook

### Stacy Cook says

This is the 8th Akashic Noir book I have read and it will definitely go down as one of my favorites. Each story was consistently well written and engrossing. There were only a couple of stories that I did not enjoy as much as the others, but I think it was more a matter of personal taste than lack of good writing. Kudos to Tayari Jones on her editing; she obviously knows her city well. Her own writing is just as stupendous. Her story, Caramel, about what you find when you go looking for your long lost father had what was an unexpected ending for me and her writing drew me in from the beginning. A few other stories stood out for me also.

Terceira was about a gunrunner whose final job goes wrong from the start and while it had an ending I could see coming from a mile away it still took me along for the ride.

I really liked the protagonist in The Prisoner, Payne, a former inmate who is trying to acclimate himself to life outside jail. While I knew early on things weren't going to work out for him, I didn't realize just how wrong they were going to go. One of my favorite in this noir series.

Kill Joy was a most unique tale of 3 neighbors and a late night encounter between them that I truly enjoyed. Lastly, The Bubble, set in Peachtree City, was the story of 2 teen girls and the ties that bind them forever. It was hands down my favorite piece.

Thank you to Akashic books for my Early Reviewers copy which I received in exchange for an unbiased review, which I have provided. I look forward to reading more noir stories from whatever city comes next in your series!

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### Judy Collins says

*Review to follow.*

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### Juanita says

Review: **Atlanta Noir** Edited by Tayari Jones. 08/02/2017

This is a book of short stories that are written about another side of Atlanta, Georgia. I enjoyed the book and I found the stories interesting and many enjoyable. It relates to different citizens and neighborhoods that readers don't see or know about. Most of the stories were organized and the writing was good. Some of the characters were shady but fascinating and some were motivated and caring.

This book has fourteen different short stories by fourteen authors and has been separated into three parts with a good introduction by Tayari Jones who edited the book and one of the stories is his. Some stories are better than others but many short stories books I have read are usually that way because readers all have their own opinions. There's a combination of elements collected within these stories. Each story has its own writing style and emotional background.

I think most of these authors illustrated a good potential of becoming a well known writer and there are some who need to work a little harder at prose, description, and organization to develop and create a fulfilled story. I will say no matter how well a story was presented they were interesting and I believe this "Noir" series is a

wonderful way to publish your work because there is always a reader who will follow an author who is motivated to keep trying until they get it right.

This collection of anthologies held my interest because it gave me a variety of content that gave me insight about the person who wrote the story. No matter if a story is non-fiction or fiction there is realism felt within the story. I'm glad I got the chance to read this book...

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### **Mel says**

As with any anthology, some good short stories. Some blah.  
The first story is excellent. It was nice reading about ATL. I'm going to give the other states a try.

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### **Lewis Whitaker says**

A bit hit and miss. There are a few gems here as well as a few duds. It's fun to read stories set in my hometown, though!

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### **Page says**

A collection of stories which takes place within and around the city of Atlanta.

As with any collection of this sort, there are good and not-so-good stories. However, as a whole, this is a wonderful collection by a diverse--and extremely talented--set of authors.

I thoroughly enjoyed "Selah" by Anthony Grooms, which brings to light not only the tragedy of gentrification, but the despicable lack of resources available to those in dire need of social services-- which, honestly, is as much a byproduct of the said gentrification: folks come in to 'prettify the neighborhood', but fail to acknowledge the effect it has on the lower class residents they callously uproot.

"Comet" by David James Poissant also stood out; a story that is as much about love as it is about dysfunction. A father takes his son to Stone Mountain to see Haley's Comet--a once in a lifetime event--but turns out to be so much more than just that.

Each story highlights the dirt and grime beneath the southern charm, but it is also a fascinating introduction to a host of authors. Some of whom you may not have already been familiar.

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### **Diana says**

ATLANTA NOIR is a new offering in Akashic Books excellent noir series.

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I was lucky to receive an 'Advance Reading Copy' in exchange for an unbiased and honest review. Every title in the noir series explores a different city or area in the US and around the world. Each title is an anthology of stories - each story taking place in an area or neighborhood of the city or state or country in its title. Of course, the stories are deeply cynical, fatalistic and very morally ambiguous; depressing at times and interesting, always.

ATLANTA NOIR is edited by Tayari Jones who also authors one of the stories.

ATLANTA NOIR includes a map (I love the maps); a Table of Contents which lists 3 Parts with 14 stories; an Introduction; and information about the authors/contributors.

Tayari Jones writes an excellent introduction which sets some of the tone of the stories. Favorite quotes include, "Atlanta is rife with contradictions. Priding ourselves on not putting all our business in the street, we shelter secrets for generations." "When we write noir, we don't shine a light into the darkness, we lower the shades."

Stories include:

"Snowbound" by Tananarive Due

"Terceira" by Dallas Hudgens

"The Prisoner" by Brandon Massey

"Kill Joy" by Sheri Joseph

"One-Eyed Woman" by Gillian Royes

"Selah" by Anthony Grooms

"Caramel" by Tayari Jones

"Comet" by David James Poissant

"Come Ye, Disconsolate" by Daniel Black

"The Bubble" by Jennifer Harlow

"A moment of clarity at the Waffle House" by Kenji Jasper

"Four in the morning in the new place" by Jim Grimsley

"Ma'am" by Alesia Parker

"The F\*%# Out" by John Holman

I heartily recommend this new title in Akashic Books noir series.

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## Justin Ogden says

Unlike most of the other reviews on here, i didn't get a free copy in exchange for an unbiased review and i don't know any of the authors. I found a copy, most likely one of the aforementioned "free in exchange for a review" ones, in a Goodwill in Decatur and decided to give it a chance as a fan of the noir genre and in an attempt to gain a greater understanding of this strange city I have recently come to call home.

At the time of purchase i didn't realize this "(City name) Noir" was such a prolific series published by Akashic books out of Brooklyn, already consisting of 75+ entries with more on the way, including such improbable locales as "Helsinki noir", "cape cod noir" and "new haven noir". Some cities, the ones that are more noir than others, even get multiple entries. My first thought, before i read any of the stories in this book, was that i should pick up the entries corresponding to other cities I've spent time in. Then i wondered how they had cranked out so many of these collections.

That question was answered as i started reading the stories. The quality control here is basically non existent, and in terms of "noir" the stories only really stay on brand by being consistently grim and mostly featuring quick, sloppy, cheap unhappy endings to wrap things up. Most of the authors featured here are published and many have multiple novels to their name but the stories themselves feel like quick throwaways, the stuff that gets passed around for critique at a Panera bread writers group meet up. With a few you can practically see

the “prompt” that birthed the whole story.

1. Tananarive Due - Snowbound: two stars. The first story simply tells too much, a misstep repeated by most of these authors. Still, Due demonstrates an ability to craft suspense and ends the story in just the right spot, she just drags us through the paces for far too long on the way there. The plot is standard “there’s someone in the house” fare, but it doesn’t do much to dress it up when all you do is recount every detail you can possibly brainstorm of the life of a one dimensional character. What you end up with is a story, but what you’re missing is a reason for any of us to care.

2. Dallas Hudgens - Terceira: two stars. one of the most directly “noir” entries in the collection, Dallas Hudgens presents us with a comic book about crime in the form of a short story. The elements are there and a few moments are clever enough to remind me to keep turning the pages but the story contains all the depth and realism of a story written by a school kid, giving us the impression that the author has an equivalent level of real world experience with crime and violence. In short, nothing rings true enough here to create the illusion that the author might know what he’s talking about.

3. Brandon Massey - the prisoner: one star. This is tied for the worst story in the collection. The plot is a nonsense throwaway “21 jump street” episode with all the stilted dialogue and cardboard characters to match. That’s an insult to the original 21 jump street series, so all due respect to the parties involved. This guy couldn’t write his way out of a wet paper bag, and he’s a published author, so in a sense that’s kind of inspiring i guess. Without giving you any spoilers, nothing about this story makes any “real world” sense and if we can expect anything at all out of the wide definition of “noir” employed by this collection, can it be, at the very least, enough real world grit and realism to make the story faintly believable? Otherwise are you going to tell me that the saved by the bell episode where Jessie takes all the caffeine pills is noir?

4. Sheri Joseph -Kill Joy: three and a half stars: i enjoyed this one. Sheri Joseph can write, the plot propels itself along smoothly and the characters are fleshed out and real. She drops more back story on the economic plight of the narrator than we actually need, and i think the space could have been used to just show us more details about the parties involved. The ending is a bit abrupt but works in spite of itself. This story is believable and actually funny. Worth a read.

5. Gillian Royes - one-eyed woman: three stars. A good read, not noir in the slightest, but a fully fleshed out and believable character examination that manages to stray (mostly) from tedium despite a nearly complete absence of plot here. At the very least i believe what the author is telling me and I’m compelled to turn the page without shaking my head and furrowing my brow which is more than i can say for most of the rest of the collection

6. Anthony Grooms - Selah: three and a half stars. This is an interesting story, almost on a Poe/early lovecraft kind of vibe through the eyes of the narrator. From start to finish you’re kept guessing at just the level of the narrator’s insanity and also how supernatural the world of the story really is. I wish the author would have pushed the unreliable narrator trope a little further or taken us deeper into the realm of the supernatural to really leave us guessing, but this was an interesting read.

7. Tayari Jones - Caramel: four stars. This one is a slam dunk. Jones can write her ass off and gives us characters and setting that are believable, and situations that make sense. She also never for a second pulls back to offer mercy in a story that’s just so exceedingly grim. I was rooting for her the whole time, that she wouldn’t ruin the whole thing with a trick ending, and when she didn’t i wanted to cheer. Some of the characterization of the corrupt preacher is jettisoned for brevity, which is fair in the context of such a brief short story, but i wished for more. That’s my only complaint about this one. Definitely the best of the bunch. Jones edited the collection and i wish she would have held the rest of the authors to the standard of excellence she sets with this one.

8. David James Poissant - comet: three and a half stars. Far outside the confines of the noir genre but a great story, effectively told from the perspective of a child. The characters, viewed through this lense, are all fleshed out and familiar enough to seem real, as is the voice of the kid himself, no small feat for an adult author to pull off. Everything here is real enough, this is competent literary fiction and is probably the biggest oddball of the bunch, sharing very little in common with the rest of the collection aside from its setting on Stone Mountain just outside of Atlanta. A very enjoyable story.
9. Daniel Black - Come Ye Disconsolate: two stars. This guy can write and the idea of the story is there, but he never manages to connect the dots. The framework he used to plot this one is just too visible because he never makes the whole thing make sense to the characters involved, the desperate husband and his disgruntled wife. The set up is there but the question of "why" is left unanswered. An unhappy marriage and being forced to live in a semi-shitty part of Atlanta aren't enough to justify the leaps in logic taken by the characters here, not without further explanation that we never receive.
10. Jennifer Harlow - the bubble: one star. The other big stinker of the bunch. This is young adult fiction written by an out of touch adult who has apparently picked up an outdated slang dictionary for tips on writing realistic modern teen dialogue (at one point a character uses "fleek" in a context that will send a shudder down your spine), with a gentle sprinkle of subtle racism on top ("didn't even know people had boathouses and shit" is one line of dialogue the white woman who wrote this story came up for the black man to speak). Combine all of that with a plot equal parts stolen from that movie "hard candy" and that one with keanu reaves from a few years ago where those two girls torture him, and you've got this stinker that would have been ineligible for a passing grade in a high school creative writing class yet has somehow has seen print. This is worse than the story by Massey earlier in the book because while that one might put the thought in the head of an aspiring writer of "if this guy could do it, so could i, so could anybody" this one is more likely to make you think "oh fuck it all, why even bother"
11. Kenji Jasper - a moment of clarity at the Waffle House: 2 stars. The references are all here and they provide us branches to grasp onto as we tumble through the plot of this one. Those are the only links to the real world in another comic book-styled tale, with characters and melodrama cribbed from soap operas and no reason present for us to care about any of it. The last three lines are the best in the whole story and they are some of a scant few items of interest here that make me think this author has the capability to construct something more compelling.
12. Jim Grimsley - four in the morning in the new place: 2 stars. This is a rough draft of what could possibly be an interesting story. Or not. Either way, whatever is worth giving a shit about in this one is buried under so many paragraphs of exposition, it would take a brave editor with a machete to hack through it all and give us something that's actually readable. Grimsley can write but i get the feeling that nobody has called him on his shit in awhile.
13. Alesia Parker - Ma'am: one and a half stars. This one gets an extra half a star to put it just slightly above the two one star entries in the collection because it's not terrible the same way those two are, but it's BAD. The ridiculous nature of letter that comprises most of the story being written in the exact same voice as the rest of the story seems to have escaped the author. nobody, i mean nobody would actually write a letter like this, let alone a character like the one who writes it. The plot itself is more pablum but there's a sprinkle of compelling writing here. At least it ends in the right place.
14. John Holman - the fuck out: four stars. The book ends on a good note with this entry, again as far from noir as can be, but also one of the few stories in here worthy of a second read. Real characters, rich language and a consistent narrative drive a story where nothing in particular happens (in contrast to the gimmicks of the other entries in this collection) and we don't need it to. Everything here rings true. I would check out more from Holman in the future.

So I'll say that 6 of the 14 stories here are worth reading. I guess that leaves me with something closer to a 2.5 star review, but we'll go ahead and round down in recognition of the editor's lack of quality control or desire to stay on theme beyond the setting.

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### **Anton Prosser says**

Deeply atmospheric, claustrophobic at times, and rich with worlds you might never see in familiar places. The first story in this is an actual nightmare I've had, and why I refuse to live in a multistory home. Tayari Jones' story is brutal. Overall a good collection of shorts, a snapshot of a city.

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### **Cheryl says**

A short story collection, with each story set in a neighborhood in or near to Atlanta. The definition of noir here is pretty broad, ranging from crime stories to sketches of those who are poor, lonely, or on the fringe of society. My favorite stories are: Kill Joy, Selah, and The Bubble. These get a 4 star rating. There are 3 and 2 star stories in the collection, too, so I averaged my overall rating into a 3. An interesting collection, especially for those who are familiar with Atlanta.

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### **Jamie Canaves says**

Akashic Books has a lot of Noir collections set in different places, and while I usually reach for the collections set outside the US, Tayari Jones is the author of one of my favorite novels ever (Silver Sparrow) so I had to read this collection. It opens with a short story by Tananarive Due (another excellent author: Ghost Summer) which was suspenseful and left me too scared to sleep. While the stories aren't puzzle-type mysteries, they're all crime stories, following either the criminal(s) or victims (or both) and this is noir so don't expect upstanding citizens or happy endings. Definitely a great collection that will introduce you to many writers, and being short stories you can fit one in here and there for a nice small bite of noir.

--from Book Riot's Unusual Suspects newsletter: Big Little Lies is Getting a Second Season & More Mysteries! <http://link.bookriot.com/view/56a8200...>

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### **Kimberly Nicole Whitehead says**

Good stuff

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### **Tonstant Weader says**

If you have followed my reviews, you know I love the Akashic Noir series and have followed the series for years. I have rows of Akashic Noir books that are ripe for re-reading because short stories work that way, you can read them again and again, enjoying them as much as when they were new. The newest release, edited by Tayari Jones, is Atlanta Noir. Atlanta famously styles itself "the city too busy to hate" but that is

slogan, not a narrative and the narrative of Atlanta is as complex as its history and its contradictions. Jones does an admirable job of encompassing those contradictions with a far-ranging and diverse collection of fourteen short stories that are noir in spirit.

There are stories of heart-breaking compassion such as *The One-Eyed Woman* by Gillian Royes, the story of a woman whose fallen from privilege to poverty. There are stories of heroic sacrifice such as Brandon Massey's *The Prisoner*. David James Poissant's *The Comet* broke my heart with a shattering humanity—the unspoken pain of the father recognizing his failures and his son's loving understanding.

Then there are the purely horrifying stories like *The Bubble* by Jennifer Harlow and the story *The Fuck Out* by John Holman that leaves you in the moment, expecting, even knowing, that the horror would come if there were one more page to turn. The totality of all fourteen stories is excellent. There was not one I thought out of place or discordant. They are all noir, they are all well-written, getting our attention in a stranglehold that never lets go. They give a look at the underside of Atlanta that is animated by a love of the city.

This is an excellent addition to the series. *Atlanta Noir* is edited by someone who prioritized good storytelling and the noir sensibility over spanning all genres. This gives this anthology a cohesion that I appreciate. This is one of the stronger editions in the series and I happily recommend it.

I want to take a moment to suggest you add *Akashic Noir* to your gift catalog. If a friend of yours is moving, look up their new home and give them the *Akashic Noir* anthology for their new home. Maybe they will stay! More seriously, though, I think the noir sensibility is important to understanding a place. I think you should give anyone traveling to Paris, or Stockholm, or Trinidad the *Akashic Noir* edition for their destination. They might get ideas for more interesting adventures and will surely have a deeper enjoyment of their trip. For me, I love armchair traveling and *Akashic Noir* is my favorite transport.

*Atlanta Noir* will be released on August 1st. I received an e-galley in advance from the publisher through Edelweiss.

★★★★

[http://tonstantweaderreviews.wordpres...](http://tonstantweaderreviews.wordpress...)

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## **Kim says**

won a copy from [www.librarything.com](http://www.librarything.com)

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## **Nina says**

Jim Grimsley's "Four in the Morning in the New Place." What a perfect story. Hitting notes on non-normative sexuality and gender, the hazy experience of living in devalued bodies, the disappointment of it all. I've already read it a second time and requested *Dream Boy* from the library.

Tananarive Due's "Snowbound" was the perfect opener for this collection. Atlanta aka Black Hollywood is known as the city for Black upward mobility. In "Snowbound," an L.A. transplant whose mother (a woman with commitments to the Civil Rights movement) has recently passed. When news of a snowstorm comes up, the transplant has to fend for herself. And you know Georgia isn't built for snowstorms...

Kenji Jasper's "A Moment of Clarity at the Waffle House" hits all the Atlanta Black pop culture references and feels like a complete story. An engaging and satisfying read.

From a craft perspective, Sheri Joseph's "Kill Joy" is really well done. But it does feel the author was intentional in her elision of race. I wonder why?

Tayari Jones's introduction to the collection is great. I haven't lived in Atlanta for over a decade and sometimes I get caught up in the Black Hollywood mythos. Jones's essay brought me right back to the complexity of Atlanta.

The collection is a mixed bag. In total, I skipped 3 stories (one in each section) but I'd still recommend it. I wish collections like this got more press and publicity support.

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