



## We Live in Water: Stories

By Jess Walter

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**We Live in Water: Stories** By Jess Walter

**From *New York Times* bestselling author Jess Walter, now available in paperback—the first collection of short fiction from Jess Walter—a suite of diverse and searching stories about personal struggle and diminished dreams, all of them marked by the wry wit, keen eye, and generosity of spirit that has made him a bookseller and reader favorite**

The first collection of short fiction from Jess Walter, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Beautiful Ruins*, *We Live in Water* is a diverse suite of stories marked by the wry wit and generosity of spirit that has made him one of America's most talked-about writers.

Stories in *We Live in Water* range from comic tales of love to social satire and suspenseful crime fiction. Traveling from hip Portland to once-hip Seattle to never-hip Spokane, to a condemned casino in Las Vegas and a bottomless lake in the dark woods of Idaho, this is a world of lost fathers and redemptive con men, of personal struggles and diminished dreams.

In title story “We Live in Water”, a lawyer returns to his corrupt hometown to find his father, who disappeared 30 years earlier. In “Thief,” a blue-collar worker turns unlikely detective to find out which of his kids is stealing from the family fund.

“Anything Helps” sees a homeless man try to raise money to buy his son the new Harry Potter book; and in “Virgo,” a newspaper editor attempts to get back at his superstitious ex-girlfriend by screwing with her horoscope.

Also included are “Don’t Eat Cat” and “Statistical Abstract of My Hometown, Spokane, Washington,” both of which achieved cult status after their first publication online.

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## We Live in Water: Stories By Jess Walter Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #110321 in Books
- Brand: Harper Perennial
- Published on: 2013-02-12
- Released on: 2013-02-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x .43" w x 5.31" l, .30 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 177 pages

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## Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

**\*Starred Review\*** This is the first collection of short stories, all of which have appeared previously in Harper's and McSweeney's, among other literary publications, from the much-acclaimed, best-selling Walter (Beautiful Ruins, 2012). With their visceral depictions of the homeless, the bereft, and the marginalized, often presented with a signature blend of wicked humor and heartbreaking tenderness, Walter's intense stories speak directly to the contemporary American experience. In "Anything Helps," a homeless father has lost his wife to a heroin overdose and his son to social services. Determined to buy the latest Harry Potter novel for his son, he brings a practiced eye to his begging, opting to go "to cardboard." In the title story, Walter expertly uses the tropes of crime fiction to tell the grim story of an unrepentant gambler who steals from the wrong person, and his young son, who is forever haunted by his father's disappearance. In "Don't Eat Cat," Walter turns to zombie fiction to unleash a hilarious satire of political correctness ("I'm not one of those reactionaries, but hiring zombies for food service? I just think that's wrong"). Wildly entertaining and thought-provoking fiction from a prodigiously talented writer. --Joanne Wilkinson

## Review

"Walter is a bighearted man who excels at writing about other bighearted, if broken, men. That generosity of spirit coupled with Walter's seeming inability to look away from the messy bits, elevates these stories from dirges to symphonies." (*New York Times Book Review*)

"Walter (*Beautiful Ruins*) writes-beautifully. . . . Darkly funny, sneakily sad, these stories are very, very good. The algorithm for this debut collection is straightforward: if you like to read, you'll like this book." (*Publishers Weekly*, **starred review**)

"Jess Walter, who is revered for his novels, shows a gritty side in these clear-cut stories... Each word is perfectly placed...[Walter] brings his first story collection to a smashing end." (*Daily Beast*)

"Mr. Walter brings (his) outlook to short-story writing easily, and with a vengeance... His most bleakly funny, hard-edge book in years." (*Janet Maslin, New York Times*)

"This badass collection aligns itself... with Walter's gritty, bighearted novels." (*Esquire*)

"[Walter] can mine the least scintilla of humor and wit from his characters' broken lives--people whose dreams will surely not come true but who somehow keep trying." (*Shelf Awareness*)

"Brims with humanity. **A-**" (*Entertainment Weekly*)

"Wildly entertaining and thought-provoking fiction from a prodigiously talented writer." (**Booklist**)

"This debut story collection from Walter proves he's as skilled at satire and class commentary in the short form as in his novels...A witty and sobering snapshot of recession-era America." (*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**)

"Walter's got a great ear and a genius for sympathy with America's new dispossessed." (*NPR's All Things Considered*)

“Deliver[s] unexpected laughs while playing with what it is we think we know...As a reader, I delight in Walter’s work. As a writer (humor me here), I curse. He’s so freakishly, fiendishly good, it isn’t fair.” (*Seattle Times*)

“With a cineaste’s eye, [Walter] mov[es] the action at a terrific pace, such velocity and narrative swing...What he makes us understand is bracing, clear. Fiction or no, it is here we see Walter as trusted interlocutor, saying, let me show you, this is where we are now.” (*The Oregonian (Portland)*)

“It is perhaps a grim and fatalistic vision that Jess Walter presents in *We Live in Water*, yet one that in today’s America seems all-too-recognizable; no, we may not all live in water, but at one time or another, we have all lived in Spokane.” (*San Francisco Chronicle*)

“For over a year, I’ve been waiting for a story collection to floor me the way Alan Heathcock did with *Volt*. The 13 stories of Jess Walter’s *We Live in Water* come close.” (*Cleveland Plain Dealer*)

“Black humor is what we expect from Jess Walter. What is different is that the stories give us a sense of the writer’s heart we haven’t gotten from the parade of bright novels.” (*Newsday*)

“There’s a certain magic that comes with reading a good story. Even one that’s not about a magical time...[Walter’s] collection is full of tragic characters — the homeless, the drug-addicted and those who have lost everything to gambling debts. But it is not without humor.” (*Marketplace.org, The Big Book*)

“Displays... fearless, unflinching prose in these short stories.” (*Bookreporter.com*)

“...gritty, pitch-perfect collection...Walter wrings enlightenment from dark realities.” (*People*)

“Incrementally, profoundly, brutally, [Walter] pulls back the curtain... *We Live in Water* is a great collection, in fact, and an important contribution to the literature of our region.” (*Portland Mercury*)

“Vintage Walter...quirky. And fun.” (*USA Today*)

From the Back Cover

*We Live in Water*, the first collection of short fiction from *New York Times* bestselling author Jess Walter, is a suite of diverse, often comic stories about personal struggle and diminished dreams, all of them marked by the wry wit and generosity of spirit that has made him one of our most talked-about writers. In "Thief," a blue-collar worker turns unlikely detective to find out which of his kids is stealing from the family vacation fund. In "We Live in Water," a lawyer returns to a corrupt North Idaho town to find the father who disappeared thirty years earlier. In "Anything Helps," a homeless man has to "go to cardboard" to raise enough money to buy his son the new Harry Potter book. In "Virgo," a local newspaper editor tries to get back at his superstitious ex-girlfriend by screwing with her horoscope. And the collection's final story transforms slyly from a portrait of Walter's hometown into a moving contemplation of our times.

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Beatrice Pearson:**

The publication with title *We Live in Water: Stories* has lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of advantage after read this book. That book exist new know-how the information that exist in this reserve represented the condition of the world currently. That is important to you to understand how the improvement of the world. That book will bring you within new era of the internationalization. You can read the e-book in your smart phone, so you can read that anywhere you want.

**Samuel Brooks:**

People live in this new time of lifestyle always try and must have the time or they will get wide range of stress from both lifestyle and work. So, whenever we ask do people have free time, we will say absolutely indeed. People is human not really a huge robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity do you have when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer can unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is usually *We Live in Water: Stories*.

**Carl Harber:**

Do you like reading a book? Confuse to looking for your best book? Or your book had been rare? Why so many issue for the book? But any people feel that they enjoy for reading. Some people likes examining, not only science book but in addition novel and *We Live in Water: Stories* or even others sources were given know-how for you. After you know how the fantastic a book, you feel would like to read more and more. Science reserve was created for teacher as well as students especially. Those publications are helping them to bring their knowledge. In some other case, beside science publication, any other book likes *We Live in Water: Stories* to make your spare time more colorful. Many types of book like here.

**Heather Garcia:**

As a student exactly feel bored to be able to reading. If their teacher requested them to go to the library in order to make summary for some book, they are complained. Just minor students that has reading's heart or real their passion. They just do what the instructor want, like asked to go to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading critically. Any students feel that reading through is not important, boring as well as can't see colorful pictures on there. Yeah, it is for being complicated. Book is very important for yourself. As we know that on this time, many ways to get whatever we really wish for. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore this *We Live in Water: Stories* can make you experience more interested to read.

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