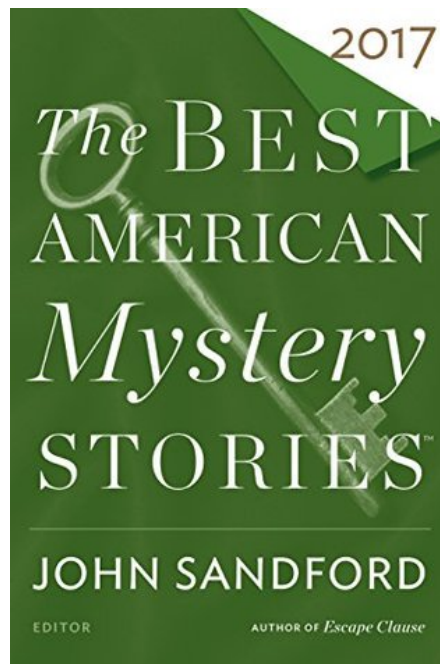




The Best American Mystery Stories 2017

John Sandford (Editor) , Otto Penzler (Editor)

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“A venerable series . . . there isn’t enough Xanax in anyone’s medicine cabinet to calm the jitters these twenty skillful stories will unleash.” —*Kirkus Reviews*

Number-one *New York Times* best-selling author John Sandford—“one of the great summer-read novelists of all time” (Stephen King, *Entertainment Weekly*)—selects the best mystery writing of the year that “will have you on the edge of your seat” (*USA Today*).

The Best American Mystery Stories 2017 Details

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From Reader Review The Best American Mystery Stories 2017 for online ebook

Andrea Engle says

An eclectic collection of mystery/crime short stories ... from “Puncher’s Chance” to “Night Run,” these twenty tales offer variety and all sorts of odd quirks, sure to keep the reader interested and occupied ...

Greg says

As my wife Karen is a fan of mystery novels, some years ago I began presenting her with an annual gift of this "Best American Mystery Stories of ..." and we have both enjoyed them.

While short stories themselves appear to wax and wane in general popularity, I believe it takes a great amount of special skill to write something that, while short, nonetheless is gripping and complete in itself. (Perhaps this is because I am somewhat given to, ah, what might best be called "an excess of loquaciousness," verbally as well as in my writing style.)

This collection for 2017, in my opinion, ranks as one of the very best of recent years. There were only a few stories that disappointed me, and it is not them that I recall after having finished the entire book.

If you look a good short story, and especially if you like murder/mystery tales, this affordable collection is for you!

John Anthamatten says

I am done with these best 20 of “anything’s”. I quit this book on page 132 and don’t care who the sponsor author is or who contributed. I don’t want to go through a bunch of “stuff” to see if there is a real story, short or not. Just going to stick to novels.

Daniel Simmons says

A very mixed bag. Standouts include McGee's "Dot Rat" (disclaimer: the author's a friend of mine), Ferry's "Ike, Sharon, and Me", and Popkes's "The Sweet Warm Earth". Many of the others were interest-grabbingly high concept but lacked satisfying execution.

Trish says

This collections skews toward the hard-boiled, toward the masculine, but the two stories I liked most both have female protagonists:

In Trina Corey's *Flight* a woman with MS is the only one in her nursing home to realize that a killer is preying on residents.

In K. McGee's *Dot Rat* a widow who seems content with her quiet life finds a lonely, mistreated young boy hiding in her garden one night. Once her reluctance is worn away, she becomes a fierce protector.

Margaret Sankey says

You can see guest editor John Sandford's taste in this year's collection of stories gleaned from magazines, literary journals and (new in the last couple of years) websites. In standouts, Trina Corey renders a terrifying but banal situation--a woman with MS who begins to notice murderous goings on in her nursing home--into a race against time, while Brendan Dubois offers the plodding, duty-bound revenge of a New Hampshire handyman against the irresponsible Boston tourists who killed his estranged wife.

Elaine says

Whenever I read an anthology like this, it brings me back to the ye olden days of CDs. When your favorite band released a CD, you worried about shelling out mucho bucks for it because you had a feeling you were only going to like 3 out of the 15 tracks on it. Generally, you did it anyway because *hey, cover art and liner notes!*

That's how I felt about *The Best American Mystery Stories 2017*.

I only liked three out of all the stories but that's not the reason why I gave it only *one star*.

I gave it *one star* because of **false advertising!**

Ninety-nine percent of these stories are not *mysteries!*

Also, what's up with all the stories in which the mob plays a role?

I dislike mob or gangland related stories so those were a snooze for me, personally.

Another side note: psychological suspense does not a mystery make.

Just wanted to clear that up. And no, I was also not psychologically suspended on my toes when I read any of these stories.

The writing is great, but great writing can't make up for the lack of suspense and repetitive themes (*see: mob*).

Here's a helpful tip: *include more stories by female authors!*

Karen says

In the Foreward the series editor Otto Penzler defines mysteries the way most short story publishers do these days: "any work of fiction in which a crime, or the threat of a crime, is integral in the theme or plot." If you're looking for whodunits, novels are a better bet than short fiction.

I found at least ten of these stories excellent, the rest quite good. There were only two that I had to make myself read, one because it was too dark for my taste, and one because it read like a noir parody to me. Several kept me at the edge of my seat. A couple made me laugh. The stand-outs for me were "Flight," "Williamsville," and "Ike, Sharon and Me."

Grady McCallie says

I hated most of the stories in this collection. They are unquestionably well written, but most are oh so dark. Several of them ratchet up the tension only to end inconclusively - the point is the mood, or the character sketch, not the outcome. Some seemed to be experiments in how far the authors could push in depicting human ugliness or psychopathology (answer: far). A couple are just boring. That said, there were a few stories I liked: Craig Johnson, Land of the Blind, a slight but clever story about a hostage situation at Christmas; William Kent Krueger, The Painted Smile, featuring a young boy who identifies with Sherlock Holmes; and I really loved Charles John Harper, Lovers and Thieves, a complicated hardboiled detective story with perfect tone. What made these three stories work for me, beyond good writing, was that they all had some compassion for their characters.

Looking at other reviews, I notice that lots of folks like K. McGee, Dot Rat. Somehow I accidentally skipped over it. It's great, with a lot of heart.

Peter Sidell says

To My taste this volume wasn't as compelling as its predecessors. Perhaps I have become sated having read 4-5 volumes over the past couple of months - but somehow here stories seemed gloomier to me. Having said that I still got a lot of pleasure from the efforts of the editor and compilers and pray they keep up their efforts for the foreseeable future.

ASoner says

There were some stories, which were a bore for me. I skimmed through those stories. Then, there were some very well written stories that were incredible. My favorite ones were The painted Smile by William Kent Krueger and Dot Rat by K. McGee. I would definitely recommend the book most stories are well written.

Jeff says

Mixed collection but highlights for me were:

- Power Wagon (CJ Box)
- Flight (Trina Corey)
- The Man from Away (Brendan DuBois)

- Lovers and Thieves (Charles John Harper)
 - The Painted Smole (William Kent Krueger)
 - Dot Rat (K McGee)
 - Night Run (Wallace Straub)
-

Greg says

Puncher's Choice by Doug Allen ***
The Master of Negwegon by Jim Allyn ***
The Human Variable by Dan Bevaqua **
Power Wagon by C.J. Box
Williamsville by Gerri Brightwell
Abandoned Places by S.L. Coney
Flight by Trina Corey *****
The Incident of 10 November by Jeffery Deaver
The Man from Away by Brendon DuBoius
GI Jack by Loren D. Estleman
Ike, Sharon, and Me by Peter Ferry ***
Lovers and Thieves by Charles John Harper
Land of the Blind by Craig Johnson
The Painted Smile by William Kent Krueger
Dot Rat by K. McGee
The Woman in the Window by Joyce Carol Oates
The Sweet Warm Earth by Steven Popkes
All Things Come Around by William Soldan
The Process Is a Process All Its Own by Peter Straub
Night Run by Wallace Stroby

Tom Pepper says

Like most of these, some good stories, some dull ones. About as good as the mystery mags used to be, and good to keep around to fill an hour.

One criticism I have, and this may be just me, is that I'd like to see less of the big names. I mean, one reason to read these anthologies is to find new authors you haven't already read. But usually at least half of each "best stories" anthology is made up of the best-selling writers we all know already. i mean, sure, I like Craig Johnson and William Kent Krueger and Joyce Carol Oates, but frankly these aren't exactly their best stories, and everyone knows about them already anyway. And the story by Straub is just cliched and lame. And please, this isn't the Pen Faulkner award stories: we don't want to read anything written by an MFA who teaches creative writing!

Chris says

This is an excellent collection of mysteries, much better than I'd expected. It's interesting how creative these writers are with the genre. I liked all but two of the twenty stories, the two being from big name authors. I

also learned a bit about John Sanford, the editor, from his introduction including that his name is a pseudonym. Thanks goes to Otto Penzler, the series editor, for recruiting yet another excellent editor.
