



Wild Child: And Other Stories

By T.C. Boyle

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"[A] rollicking collection of...good, old-fashioned, funny- suspenseful-head shaking stories." -*The New York Times*

There may be no one better than T.C. Boyle at engaging, shocking, and ultimately gratifying readers while at the same time testing his characters' emotional and physical endurance. The fourteen new stories gathered here display both Boyle's astonishing range and his imaginative muscle. From "Wild Child," a retelling of the story of Victor, the feral boy who was captured running naked through the forests of Napoleonic France, to "La Conchita," the tale of a catastrophic mudslide that allows a cynic to reclaim his own humanity, these tales are by turns magical and moving, showcasing the mischievous humor and socially conscious sensibility that have made Boyle one of the foremost living masters of the short story.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

The title novella in Boyles's ninth collection is as good as anything the prolific author of *The Women* has written. Basing his story on the historical Victor of Aveyron, the feral child discovered in the wilds of France in 1797 and slowly brought to heel indoors under the patient but understandably frustrated doctor Jean-Marc Gaspard Itard, Boyle interrogates history with an experienced reader's wariness of sentimental revisionism and a great writer's attention to precisely what defines the child's wildness. The 13 other stories are a grab bag of Boyles's signature modes and are, therefore, mixed. There's Question 62, a by-the-numbers suburban comedy concerning an escaped tiger; La Concita, a dutiful requiem for baby boomer ordinary guyism; and Sin Dolor, a bona fide Borgesian legend about a child whose inability to feel pain fails to protect him from more subtle wounds. Stronger material is found in The Lie, about a man who lies about his newborn baby's death to get out of work, comprising one of the book's few surprises. What's largely missing is experimentation, intimacy and deviation from a catalogue throughout which Boyle has proven himself doggedly reliable; one wonders when this wild child got housebroken. (Jan.)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Boyle has created another successful collection of stories, with its unapologetic exaggeration, vivid settings, and gloomy but likable protagonists. Although Boyle operates under a singular theme--ordinary people succumbing to their baser instincts--critics were greatly impressed with his ability to craft 14 distinct story lines. The Los Angeles Times reviewer likened Boyle to his feral character Victor, calling him "that literary wild child whose flights of narrative fancy refuse to be domesticated." And while the New York Times critic felt the shorter stories were contrived and incomplete, the majority agreed that *Wild Child* is a refreshing, bold, and marvelous new collection.

From [Booklist](#)

Although the "wild child" of this book's title is the "Wild Boy of Aveyron," a feral French youth who perhaps embodies the book's epigraph ("In wildness is the preservation of the world"), Boyle's latest collection of stories is as much about the uses adults have for children as it is about the children themselves. In his opening salvo, "Balto," an alcoholic father asks his 12-year-old daughter to be his designated driver, with disastrous results. In "The Lie," a man's impulsive excuse for skipping work ("The baby's dead") goes little better. And in the lengthy and vividly imagined title story, Victor, the wild boy, doggedly resists his superiors' attempts to mold him into something useful and understandable to them—he is wild nature personified. That's a thematic oversimplification of these diverse and wonderful stories, of course, and the appeal of Boyle's short fiction remains remarkably broad. His intelligence and style satisfy lovers of capital-L Literature, while his hooky, propulsive vignettes satisfy readers who just want a damn good story. And there are some damn good stories here. --Keir Graff

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Connie Deroche:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive today, people have do something to make all of them survives, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice by

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Beverly Dyar:

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William Delacruz:

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