

LAURA VALERI

The  
kind  
of  
things  
saints  
do



# The Kind Of Things Saints Do The John Simmons Short Fiction Award

**Clemens Wendtner**



### **The Kind Of Things Saints Do The John Simmons Short Fiction Award:**

*The Kind of Things Saints Do* Laura Valeri, 2005-04 From the Anglo American woman who makes a spectacle of herself trying to be Cuban in Miami to the estranged son leading his father on a hostile hike in New Mexico Valeri's characters carry a heavy load of desire and anger Proud loud and hungry for whatever comes next each person desperately searches for an understanding that lessens his or her burden The saints here are pure only in their anger desperation and desire to be loved holy only in their quest to keep going These stories grow through subtle shifts the bad becomes not so bad the worst livable It is the saintly moments of unexpected understanding that shape the collection one gigolo's lover picks up another at a bus stop and they agree on his worthlessness the love worn man reminds the newly divorced woman of her physical power the estranged son shelters his father from an unexpected storm Valeri navigates the reader through the bones and scars of those who ache with wanting something else and become a little older and a little wiser for it *The Kind of Things Saints Do* is a collection of human imperfections and missed connections that grows into a kaleidoscope of aspiration and hope *Her Kind of Want* Jennifer S. Davis, 2002-08-21 Set mainly in the small towns of Alabama the stories in *Her Kind of Want* ache with the relentless longing of the poor struggling usually discarded southern women who tell us their lives lives that seem to revolve around men whose only presence is their absence Bebe Luna Melly Little Lula Dena These are just a few of the women we meet in Jennifer Davis's award winning collection Women who married too fast had children too young and drink too much Yet beneath their unpolished exteriors these women are flesh and blood and their wants and needs are as severe and deep as any Davis's characters relate their stories in voices as complex and raw as their southern environment Each tale may sound slightly familiar an unwanted pregnancy a fast car flying down a country road but Davis moves beyond the familiar stories of the rural South to expose the gaps that connect these women creating startlingly real and vibrant characters Although often bleak and sometimes disturbing *Her Kind of Want* is a celebration of southern people their perseverance their spirit and their determination to make the ugly beautiful *Short Story Index* ,2004 **The Thin Tear In The Fabric Of Space** Douglas Trevor, 2005-10-01 *The Thin Tear in the Fabric of Space* gathers stories about coping with grief trying to love people who have died and more broadly leaving old versions of the self behind sometimes by choice and sometimes out of necessity In each of the nine stories Douglas Trevor's characters are forced to face uncomfortable realities For Elena Gavrushnekov in the title story that means admitting after the death of her beloved that she still longs for contact with other human bodies For Peter in Central Square it is realizing that like his deceased father before him he is drinking himself to death Unable to confront his incapacitated mother and the memory of the plane crash that killed his father Edwin Morris in Saint Francis in Flint is compelled to acknowledge that his saintly aspirations are not what they appear to be while Sharon Mackaney in *The Surprising Weight of the Body's Organs* struggles with uncontrollable outbursts of rage in the wake of her young son's death In moments of great pain and loss when self expression seems impossible and terribly useless the

characters in these stories nonetheless discover the tenderness of others In *The River* the narrator finds that the friendship he has forged with a French girl with whom he can only just communicate has bred intense almost intuitive compassion while in *Fellowship of the Bereaved* the disconsolate brother of the deceased sister who occupies the empty center of the story uncovers not only anger in his parents but also empathy and humor As these characters persevere in their own lives they do so mindful of and humanized by the experiences of having seen people they know and love slip unexpectedly into the thin tear in the fabric of space that quiet chasm that so resolutely separates the living from the dead *Here Beneath*

*Low-Flying Planes* Merrill Feitell, 2004-10 The stories in Merrill Feitell's award winning collection *Here Beneath Low Flying Planes* examine the fleeting and unexpected moments of human connection reminding us of the indelible impact we have on one another no matter how insignificant or anonymous we might feel under our huge collective sky Feitell's characters deal with shifting dynamics in relationships whether they be best friends lovers family or even strangers that consistently leave them torn between two places or commitments In the title story Janie has undergone a painful childbirth experience and her group of friends must pioneer new dynamics while she wonders how to bring her old self back In *Bike* New York amid thirty thousand cyclists a man on the brink of marriage meets a young girl who in a tiny Brooklyn bakery affirms both who he has been and who he is going to be On this short detour from normal life he comes to understand the funny thing about finding your way in the world There was a place laid out for you and even as you stepped into it happy for the chance to rest you wondered how you ever ended up there Funny big hearted and deft *Here Beneath Low Flying Planes* navigates the reader through the life that happens when you're planning other things It is a collection of experiences roads not taken and the intense and unforeseen sparks of connection we hope for **This Day in History** Anthony Varallo, 2009-09 On the verge of maturity where parents are distant or absent friendships are often more accidental than deliberate and restless angst is common Anthony Varallo's adolescent protagonists dissect the world and their place in it with keen perception *This Day in History* deftly collects their moments of discovery There's a feeling I get whenever I enter an unfamiliar house as if a secret inventory has been handed to me and I am made to understand that the sofa cushions are stained underneath the coffee table nursing one gimp leg the books along the bookcase stolen from summer rental and the dining room table used only for Christmas and taxes the narrator confesses in the first of Varallo's twelve stories Here a birthday party for an unpopular classmate reveals an adult world both familiar and utterly strange In subsequent stories a young girl longs to be a part of her best friend's family only to discover the family is less than ideal two sisters recall the childhood houses they grew up and apart in places inseparable from each woman's notion of the other and a mother and son set off on a bold and hopeless errand their suburban neighborhood momentarily transformed into a stage As these children stand on the brink of adulthood unsure how to move forward striving to make sense of the world around them they often discover that the distance between themselves and others is no nearly so great as first imagined Funny sad and hopeful Varallo's stories make a gentle argument

for connection and community and in doing so seek to extend our sympathy toward the world      *Forthcoming Books* Rose Arny,2002      *Poets & Writers* ,2002      American Book Publishing Record ,2003      *American Wives* Beth Helms,2003 A military wife has an unexpected sexual encounter another woman s husband has an affair with her best friend a young woman finds herself destined to repeat the patterns of her mother s infidelities As each woman seeks control of her life hope and possibility are found      *What You've Been Missing* Janet Desaulniers,2004-10 Populated by characters as frank as their midwestern settings *What You ve Been Missing* Janet Desaulniers s debut collection explores the unsettling moments when ordinary life ceases to exist Parents confused by their five year old s refusal to sit up in her chair lift her blouse to find she s been beaten A woman returns from a shopping trip just in time to see her husband kissing a young co worker A young husband constructs an elaborate and romanticized version of his new marriage and then ruins it in one gesture These singular moments propel each person on a journey beyond the realm of everyday existence Vividly portraying the possible horrors and detours that can mark anyone s life Desaulniers beautifully captures the vast and often conflicting emotions that humans endure at times of loss and sorrow loneliness pain desperation desire Yet this balletic push and pull of emotions will challenge wound and ultimately enlighten her characters transporting them to a place beyond individual sorrow At times unbearably heartbreaking *What You ve Been Missing* is not just another set of stories about bad things happening to good people At its heart this award winning collection is about people continuing to talk rather than shutting down as bad things happen to them As the recently divorced Liza thinks in *The Good Fight* Words do ease us They comfort us Maybe they protect us in a way rescue us from the agony of what our bodies feel      *Bring Me Your Saddest Arizona* Ryan Harty,2003 In the broad dry big sky land of Arizona a series of short stories unfold each one revolving around ordinary characters who confront failing relationships mortality and the ever present reality of the desert      **The British National Bibliography** Arthur James Wells,2003      The Publishers Weekly ,2003      **Chicorel Index to Short Stories in Anthologies and Collections** ,1975      Britannica Concise Encyclopedia Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc.,2008-05-01 Britannica Concise Encyclopedia is the perfect resource for information on the people places and events of yesterday and today Students teachers and librarians can find fast facts combined with the quality and accuracy that have made Britannica the brand to trust A tool for both the classroom and the library no other desk reference can compare      *Saint Lucian Literature and Theatre* John Robert Lee,Kendel Hippolyte,2006      Youth's Companion ,1882      **Billboard** ,2011-04-02 In its 114th year Billboard remains the world s premier weekly music publication and a diverse digital events brand content and data licensing platform Billboard publishes the most trusted charts and offers unrivaled reporting about the latest music video gaming media digital and mobile entertainment issues and trends      The Churchman ,1889

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