



Stories of Your Life and Others

By Ted Chiang

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Soon to be a major motion picture starring Amy Adams.

This new edition of Ted Chiang's masterful first collection, *Stories of Your Life and Others*, includes his first eight published stories plus the author's story notes and a cover that the author commissioned himself. Combining the precision and scientific curiosity of Kim Stanley Robinson with Lorrie Moore's cool, clear love of language and narrative intricacy, this award-winning collection offers readers the dual delights of the very, very strange and the heartbreakingly familiar.

Stories of Your Life and Others presents characters who must confront sudden change—the inevitable rise of automatons or the appearance of aliens—while striving to maintain some sense of normalcy. In the amazing and much-lauded title story, a grieving mother copes with divorce and the death of her daughter by drawing on her knowledge of alien languages and non-linear memory recollection. A clever pastiche of news reports and interviews chronicles a college's initiative to "turn off" the human ability to recognize beauty in "Liking What You See: A Documentary." With sharp intelligence and humor, Chiang examines what it means to be alive in a world marked by uncertainty and constant change, and also by beauty and wonder.

Ted Chiang is one of the most celebrated science fiction authors writing today and is the author of numerous short stories, including most recently "Exhalation," which won the Hugo, British Science Fiction, and Locus awards. He lives near Seattle.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This marvelous collection by one of science fiction's most thoughtful and graceful writers belongs on the bookshelf of anyone interested in literary science fiction.

Collected here for the first time, Ted Chiang's award-winning stories--recipients of the Nebula, Sturgeon, Campbell, and Asimov awards--offer a feast of science, speculation, humanity, and lyricism. Standouts include "Tower of Babylon," in which a miner ascends the fabled tower in order to break through the vault of heaven; "Division by Zero," a precise and heartbreaking examination of the disintegration of hope and love; and "Story of Your Life," in which a linguist learns an alien language that reshapes her view of the world. Chiang has the gift that lies at the heart of good science fiction: a human story, beautifully told, in which the science is an expression of the deeper issues that the characters must confront. Full of remarkable ideas and unforgettable moments, *Stories of Your Life and Others* is highly recommended. --Roz Genessee

From Publishers Weekly

Here's the first must-read SF book of the year. Chiang has acquired a massive reputation on the basis of very few pieces of short fiction. This collection contains all six previously published tales, including the Nebula Award-winning "Tower of Babylon," plus a new story, "Liking What You See: A Documentary." It's rare for a writer to become so prominent so fast. In this case, though, the hype is deserved. Chiang has mastered an extremely tricky type of SF story. He begins with a startling bit of oddity, then, as readers figure out what part of the familiar world has been twisted, they realize that it was just a small part of a much larger structure of marvelous, threatening strangeness. Reading a Chiang story means juggling multiple conceptions of what is normal and right. Probably this kind of brain twisting can be done with such intensity only in shorter lengths; if these stories were much longer, readers' heads might explode. Still, the most surprising thing is how much feeling accompanies the intellectual exercises. Whether their initial subject is ancient Babylonians building a tower that reaches the base of Heaven, translation of an alien language that shows a woman a new way to view her life as a mother, or mass-producing golems in an alternative Victorian England, Chiang's stories are audacious, challenging and moving. They resemble the work of a less metaphysical Philip K. Dick or a Borges with more characterization and a grasp of cutting-edge science.

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From Booklist

Starred Review A "what-if" question fuels each of Chiang's eight thought-provoking stories. "What if the famed biblical skyscraper actually reached the 'vault of heaven'?" asks "Tower of Babylon," as it follows a miner hired to tunnel through that vault all the way up and beyond. "What if genuinely alien aliens visited Earth, and an earthling learned their conceptually different language?" is the engine of "Story of Your Life." "What if an omnipotent Old Testament God and His angels visited Earth regularly, distributing blessings, tribulations, and chastisements?" drives the grindingly ironic "Hell Is the Absence of God." "Understand" answers the same question about artificially enhancing intelligence that Daniel Keyes' classic *Flowers for Algernon* did, but the stakes are considerably higher. In fact, the stakes are high in all Chiang's stories, for their social and existential implications concern him as much as their construction. These are stories to enjoy for their form--one is the transcript of a radio or video documentary, another the response to a query from the British science journal *Nature*. Also intriguing are their foundations--"Story of Your Life" and "Division by Zero" extrapolate from a physical theorem and a mathematical equation, respectively. Finally, if Chiang doesn't offer much rounded characterization and dynamic action, he puts the science back in science fiction--brilliantly. *Ray Olson*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alberto Holbrook:

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James Robbins:

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