



# The Human Fly and Other Stories

By T.C. Boyle

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***New York Times* bestselling author T.C. Boyle speaks to a brand-new audience in this anthology of his classic, richly imagined short fiction about teenagers.**

His many, varied novels are part of the American literary landscape—but one of the best ways to appreciate T. C. Boyle is through his richly imagined short fiction. Boyle's kaleidoscopic humor and wit, his keen, unforgiving take on American life, and his all-too-human protagonists all combine to make his a singular voice. Here is a collection of classic Boyle stories about teenagers (including the O. Henry Award-winning "The Love of My Life") that will speak directly to them, as well as to anyone who was once a teenager. Includes the previously uncollected story, "Almost Shooting an Elephant."

**"Boyle repeatedly demonstrates his masterful grasp of human nature, exposing his characters' foibles and eccentricities."—*Publishers Weekly***

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## **The Human Fly and Other Stories** By T.C. Boyle Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—In this collection of previously published and new stories, Boyle delivers compelling tales of humor, compassion, and intrigue. In the title story, a washed-up talent agent finds his second wind representing Zoltan Mindszenty, aka La Mosca Humana, a frail, reticent daredevil seeking notoriety in the U.S. In *The Champ*, Angelo D. must defend his 37-year reign as champion eater. Newcomer Kid Gullet challenges his title, all the while hilariously dissing Angelo with his Mohammed Ali-like banter. *Beat* is a lyrical satire in which a young man travels to Long Island at Christmastime, 1957, to meet his idol, Jack Kerouac, in what becomes a true-to-form hedonistic weekend with the writer and his Beat colleagues. *The Love of My Life* is a heartbreaking story of two young lovers, who find their world shattered when China becomes pregnant, and the pair tries to deliver the baby themselves in a motel room. Other notable stories are *Achates McNeil*, in which a dead-beat novelist father visits his son's college as a guest speaker, and *56-0*, a linebacker's desperate-but-witty attempt to find a life lesson in continuous defeat. Boyle's stories are short but often challenging in their nuances, and therefore are not recommended for reluctant readers. The collection will find its best audience among thoughtful older teens.—*Jane Cronkhite, Cuyahoga County Public Library, OH*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 10-12. Like Joyce Carol Oates' *Small Avalanches* (2002), this collection brings together stories previously published for adults. Boyle's fiction is well-suited to older teens able to handle the sometimes raw, graphic subject matter. Many of the characters are young adults, and Boyle perfectly echoes an adolescent voice in unsparing, often hilarious observations (one college student notes that his middle-aged father's eyes appear to have been "sucked down . . . volcanoes of wrinkles"). There are absurd, satiric twists of reality (a hit man's permanent hood keeps him in constant shadow) and some shocking scenarios. In "Love of My Life," for example, two teens abandon their newborn baby in a dumpster. Teens may already know "Greasy Lake," a widely anthologized story of pranks and excess gone wrong, and students who have read George Orwell's essays will find contemporary parallels in "Almost Shooting an Elephant." Whether the characters are confronting sex with the wrong person, the desire for fame, or an egotistical parent, their uncomfortable, sharply authentic stories will speak directly to many readers. *Gillian Engberg*  
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Review

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"Boyle perfectly echoes an adolescent voice in unsparing, often hilarious observations . . . Sharply authentic."—*Booklist*

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