

INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure to present the second volume of the *Short Story America* anthology series. This collection brings to over a hundred the number of quality short stories published by Short Story America since the organization's inception in 2010. All of the authors and I are grateful to you, dear reader, for your devotion to short fiction. The short story, once so widely read in the days prior to electronic entertainment, is making a comeback in today's culture, and it is individuals like you who are helping to bring such well-deserved audiences to these and other superb authors and the stories and characters which they create.

The forty-eight stories in this volume were selected from nearly three thousand stories submitted. While Short Story America can only publish a small percentage of the stories we receive, we are thrilled by the level of talent and commitment from the thousands of authors who have offered their fine work. This era does not afford the writer the opportunity to make a full living from writing short fiction, not like a writer could do in the days of O. Henry, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Flannery O'Connor, or more recently the late Raymond Carver or the late Ray Bradbury. Today, a writer of short stories creates tales without expectation or reasonable hope of a big payday. He or she creates characters and puts them into situations which often matter to us as much as to the characters themselves, because the author believes that we have much in common, we human beings, and that art in all its forms matters to our souls; indeed it can have, in the case of short stories, that "singular effect" which Edgar Allan Poe described when writing on the topic of great short fiction.

Whether you are an early collector of our young series at Short Story America, or whether you are enjoying our short stories on your electronic reader or smartphone, please be in touch with us. Our mission is dedicated completely to the short story and its author. To remain informed of the developments and direction of our mission, whether for writers or the classroom or simply in support

of the short story as an indispensable contributor to human understanding, go to our website at www.shortstoryamerica.com. Join our mailing list there. Pick up the phone and call us. Tell us when you love a story, or ask for help in contacting a favorite author in this book or in any of our collections in this series. We are fans of short stories, all of us. That's why we're here.

I'm glad you're joining us. Long live the short story, and its writer and reader!

– T.D.J.