



Island: The Complete Stories

By Alistair MacLeod

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Winner of the PEN/Malamud Award: “The genius of his stories is to render his fictional world as timeless.”?Colm Tóibín

The sixteen exquisitely crafted stories in *Island* prove Alistair MacLeod to be a master. Quietly, precisely, he has created a body of work that is among the greatest to appear in English in the last fifty years.

A book-besotted patriarch releases his only son from the obligations of the sea. A father provokes his young son to violence when he reluctantly sells the family horse. A passionate girl who grows up on a nearly deserted island turns into an ever-wistful woman when her one true love is felled by a logging accident. A dying young man listens to his grandmother play the old Gaelic songs on her ancient violin as they both fend off the inevitable. The events that propel MacLeod's stories convince us of the importance of tradition, the beauty of the landscape, and the necessity of memory.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

"Once there was a family with a Highland name who lived beside the sea." So begins "As Birds Bring Forth the Sun," a 1985 entry from *Island*. The story continues, "And the man had a dog of which he was very fond." And there you have the basic elements of an Alistair MacLeod story: dog, family, and sea. The author--whose 2000 novel *No Great Mischief* won him a measure of long-overdue acclaim--shuffles these elements into a surprisingly infinite variety of configurations, always with the same precise, confident, quiet language.

His big theme is the abandonment of the rural. Though his characters live in the fishing communities of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, the seaside isn't a place where they dwell contentedly. In half the stories, young men and boys feel a pull toward academe and the center of the country. In the other half, academically successful middle-aged men return to the wild eastern coast of Canada to try to reclaim the life they left behind. Both dilemmas are impossible to resolve--no one can be both a city mouse and a country mouse--and MacLeod wisely doesn't offer easy solutions.

What makes the writing sing, though, is the specificity of his descriptions of rural life. He tells you exactly how things work: "The sheep move in and out of their lean-to shelter, restlessly stamping their feet or huddling together in tightly packed groups. A conspiracy of wool against the cold." The people here are ultimately defined by the physical world, and MacLeod has a farmer's visceral feel for geography. As he writes in "The Lost Salt Gift of Blood": "Even farther out, somewhere beyond Cape Spear lies Dublin and the Irish coast; far away but still the nearest land, and closer now than is Toronto or Detroit, to say nothing of North America's more western cities; seeming almost hazily visible now in imagination's mist." This is regional fiction in the best sense: it belongs to one perfectly evoked place. --*Claire Dederer*

From Library Journal

One of Canada's most important writers, MacLeod grew up in Cape Breton. Here he presents a powerful collection of short stories set on Canada's Eastern shore, where the traditions and Gaelic language of transplanted Scots continue in a harsh new world. All of these affecting, elegiac tales focus on the strong ties of loving kin, particularly the link between fathers and sons. Fathers share the experience of work with their sons, and boys puzzle over family events and tragedies and learn to be men in the close-knit communities. Sadly, as times change, fathers lose their sons, who become educated men and leave the land and sea for professions in the city. MacLeod's characters are deeply touching and memorable, and their simple lives are rich with loyalty and affection for their families and way of life. The sumptuous language, which immerses the reader in this stunning but unrelenting land, begs to be read aloud. A very special collection; recommended for all public libraries. DCathleen A. Towey, Port Washington P.L., NY
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From [The New Yorker](#)

The author, an expatriate from Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, writes about his homeland and its dying traditions, in tales that marry the elemental themes of Gaelic song (loneliness, sorrow, work, death) with a simple but deceptively modern narrative style. In the course of the sixteen stories (presented in order of publication, from 1968 to 1999), MacLeod's spare style grows more artful, but the ache of loss is constant as he captures the direct eloquence of the islanders—the coal miners, lobstermen, farmers, and lighthouse keepers who know they are the last of their kind.
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Louise Graham:

Book is to be different for each and every grade. Book for children until adult are different content. As it is known to us that book is very important for people. The book *Island: The Complete Stories* was making you to know about other information and of course you can take more information. It is very advantages for you. The publication *Island: The Complete Stories* is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to get your friend when you sense bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your guide. Try to make relationship while using book *Island: The Complete Stories*. You never experience lose out for everything if you read some books.

Bethany Hall:

Why? Because this *Island: The Complete Stories* is an unordinary book that the inside of the e-book waiting for you to snap it but latter it will shock you with the secret it inside. Reading this book next to it was fantastic author who write the book in such incredible way makes the content inside of easier to understand, entertaining method but still convey the meaning thoroughly. So , it is good for you for not hesitating having this ever again or you going to regret it. This amazing book will give you a lot of positive aspects than the other book get such as help improving your proficiency and your critical thinking technique. So , still want to postpone having that book? If I were you I will go to the book store hurriedly.

Dixie Love:

The book untitled *Island: The Complete Stories* contain a lot of information on it. The writer explains your ex idea with easy approach. The language is very straightforward all the people, so do certainly not worry, you can easy to read this. The book was written by famous author. The author provides you in the new age of literary works. You can easily read this book because you can please read on your smart phone, or program, so you can read the book inside anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site and also order it. Have a nice examine.

John Dinwiddie:

In this period globalization it is important to someone to receive information. The information will make you to definitely understand the condition of the world. The condition of the world makes the information better to share. You can find a lot of referrals to get information example: internet, classifieds, book, and soon. You can observe that now, a lot of publisher this print many kinds of book. Often the book that recommended to you personally is *Island: The Complete Stories* this reserve consist a lot of the information of the condition of this world now. This book was represented how can the world has grown up. The language styles that writer make usage of to explain it is easy to understand. Typically the writer made some analysis when he makes this book. Here is why this book appropriate all of you.

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