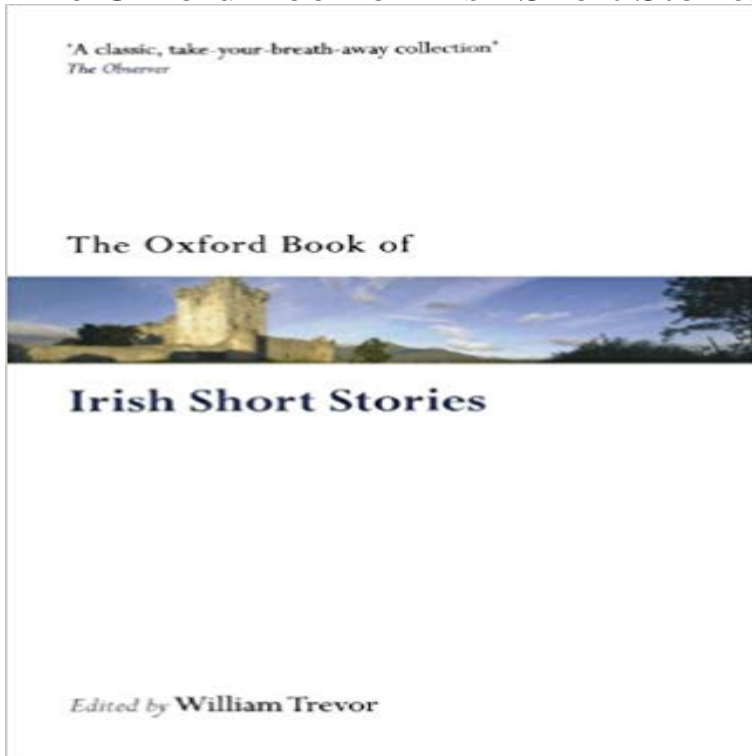


The Oxford Book of Irish Short Stories (Oxford Books of Prose & Verse)



Ireland has been called a nation of story-tellers. Stories of one kind or another have a way of pressing themselves into Irish conversation, both as entertainment and as a form of communication, writes William Trevor. For centuries they have been offered to strangers, almost as hospitality is: tall stories, simple stories, stories of extraordinary deeds, of mysteries and wonders, of gentleness, love, cruelty, and violence. Himself an accomplished short story writer, Trevor has gathered here a collection of stories that represent not only the best of Irish short story writing, but the best of the genre. Spanning the entire history of the Irish short story, from folk-tales to modern writing, this is the most broad-ranging anthology available. Included are such masters as James Joyce and Elizabeth Bowen, who established Ireland at the forefront of the modern short story, as well as Frank O'Connor and Sean O'Faolain, the two most important writers since Joyce and Bowen. Trevor has selected stories by Bernard McLaverty and Desmond Hogan to represent the new generation of writers. But, as Elizabeth Bowen observed, the modern short story in Ireland is a young art, and it is against the nation's deeply rooted oral tradition that it must be considered. Toward this end, *The Oxford Book of Irish Short Stories* includes seven folk tales translated from the Irish by Sean O'Sullivan, and Seamus MacManuss re-telling of an Irish fairy tale. William Trevor is one of today's most famous and respected Irish writers. (His work is represented here by the short story *Death in Jerusalem*.) The 45 stories he has selected for this anthology, for which he has written a generous introduction, cover a 250-year period and works by 35 authors. Together they demonstrate the development of the short story in Ireland, a land where a flair for storytelling has become a national characteristic.

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