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The Bigness of the World: Stories

Lori Ostlund

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The Bigness of the World: Stories Lori Ostlund

In Lori Ostlund's debut collection people seeking escape from situations at home venture out into a world that they find is just as complicated and troubled as the one they left behind.

In prose highlighted by both satire and poignant observation, Ostlund offers characters that represent a different sort of everyman?men and women who poke fun at ideological rigidity while holding fast to good grammar and manners, people seeking connections in a world that seems increasingly foreign. In "Upon Completion of Baldness" a young woman shaves her head for a part in a movie in Hong Kong that will help her escape life with her lover in Albuquerque. The precocious narrator of "All Boy" finds comfort when he is locked in a closet by a babysitter. In "Dr. Deneau's Punishment" a math teacher leaving New York for Minnesota as a means of punishing himself engages in an unsettling method of discipline. A lesbian couple whose relationship is disintegrating flees to the Moroccan desert in "The Children beneath the Seat." And in "Idyllic Little Bali" a group of Americans gathers around a pool in Java to discuss their brushes with fame and ends up witnessing a man's fatal flight from his wife.

In the eleven stories in *The Bigness of the World* we see that wherever you are in the world, where you came from is never far away.

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