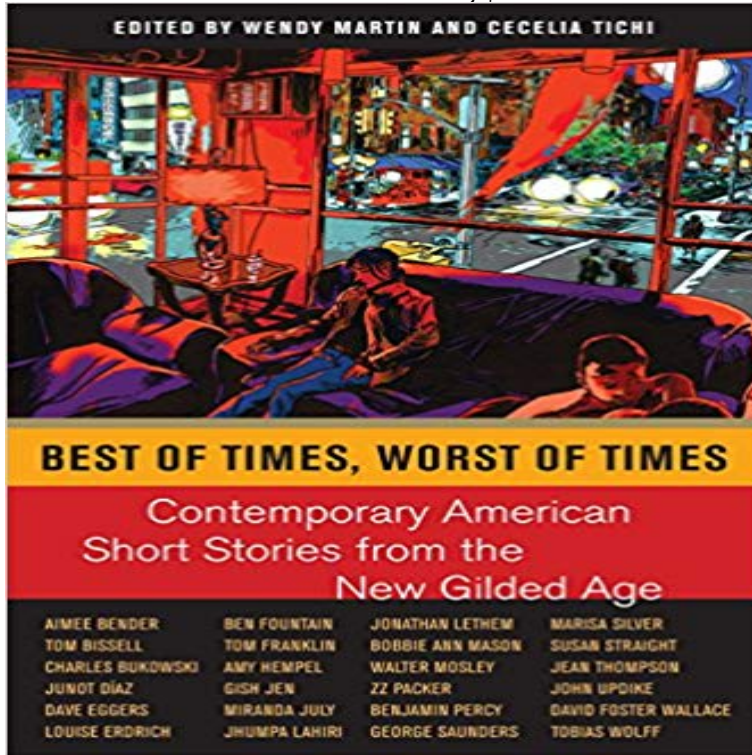


Best of Times, Worst of Times: Contemporary American Short Stories from the New Gilded Age



Late twentieth and early twenty-first century America has been labeled as The New Gilded Age, a phrase that embodies the glitz and glamour of one of the wealthiest countries in the world but also suggests the greed, corruption, and inequalities teeming just below the surface. Identifying some of the sparkling moments of humanity interwoven between the moments of crisis, *Best of Times, Worst of Times* features short stories by such renowned writers as Junot Diaz, George Saunders, Jhumpa Lahiri, Tobias Wolff, and many others, whose distinctive authorial voices lend urgency and a sense of heightened awareness to the modern moment. Commenting on and making sense of what is going on in America today, fractured as it is by two ongoing wars, the aftermath of 9/11, Hurricane Katrina, and the worst economic collapse since the Great Depression, these stories speak to some of the most germane issues confronting America today, from race relations, immigration, and social class to gender issues, Iraq, and imperialism. These expertly culled, emotionally powerful stories provide the perfect mirror with which to examine the real state of the union.

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