



Labor Days: An Anthology of Fiction About Work

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In this superb and subversive collection, the finest fiction writers capture the full experience of showing up, clocking in, and working it. Denis Johnson's "Emergency" is set in a Vietnam-era emergency room, where stoned orderlies deal matter-of-factly with a guy who has a knife stuck in his head. In Raymond Carver's "Fat," a waitress recounts how attending to an overweight customer inspired her life-altering speculations on consumption, deprivation, pleasure, and neglect.

Excerpts from longer works—Richard Ford's *Independence Day*, whose hero, real estate agent Frank Bascombe, is a case study in suburban angst; Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* and its earnest considerations of race and unionism—and short stories such as "Pastoralia," George Saunders's manic tale of a prehistoric theme park in which actors don pelts and grunt for disaffected spectators, all express what can be absurd, touching, and traumatic about any occupation.

Edited by Pulitzer Prize finalist David Gates, *Labor Days* is more edifying than cruising the Web on the company's dime or making personal phone calls. Whether you slave in a cubicle or put your feet up in a corner office, it is the perfect antidote for the grind and the glances at the clock, where the second hand sweeps slowly toward quitting time.

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