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# Half a Creature from the Sea

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

David Almond is a peerless writer of highly atmospheric short stories, and this collection of pieces, each originally published elsewhere but now difficult to access, is an absolute treat.

Every story is preceded by an autobiographical sketch explaining its genesis. Many stem from his early belief that during his mostly idyllic childhood, 'Heaven didn't seem too far away.' But there are darker themes too, in particular when it comes to describing the thoughtless and cruel bullying that can always erupt between children. He also writes about a time when there was still heavy industry and the accompanying close communities in his beloved Tyneside, with adults and children more friendly and knowledgeable about each other than often is the case today. But away from social realism Almond explores the unexplained and occasionally supernatural, drawing on an interest he has had since adolescence.

Whatever the subject, he writes sparely and beautifully, never over-egging the fictional pudding and always knowing when to stop. The result is a selection of stories each one of which has the impact of a longer story. This is fiction to treasure.

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