



The Unfinished World: And Other Stories

By Amber Sparks

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A highly anticipated collection of wildly imaginative short stories from “one of contemporary fiction’s true mad scientists” (*Necessary Fiction*).

In the weird and wonderful tradition of Kelly Link and Karen Russell, Amber Sparks’s dazzling new collection bursts forth with stories that render the apocalyptic and otherworldly hauntingly familiar. In “The Cemetery for Lost Faces,” two orphans translate their grief into taxidermy, artfully arresting the passage of time. The anchoring novella, “The Unfinished World,” unfurls a surprising love story between a free and adventurous young woman and a dashing filmmaker burdened by a mysterious family. Sparks’s stories?populated with sculptors, librarians, astronauts, and warriors?form a veritable cabinet of curiosities. Mythical, bizarre, and deeply moving, *The Unfinished World and Other Stories* heralds the arrival of a major writer and illuminates the search for a brief encounter with the extraordinary.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Sparks's stylish second collection is the work of a young writer whose voice feels far wiser than her years...[S]he plays with both fantasy and form. No one story sounds like another, yet her singular voice floats through the collection, tying it together with opulent prose that draws heavily on history and the macabre.” (Rachel Syme - New York Times Book Review)

“Amber Sparks uses the surreal and fantastic in stunning, surprising ways. Like Carola Dibbell's *The Only Ones* and Emily Mandel's *Station Eleven*, the book is a masterful work of speculative fiction.” (Nancy Hightower - Washington Post)

“Amber Sparks's *The Unfinished World and Other Stories* has all the furnishings of a twenty-first century homage to the carnally macabre Angela Carter. The collection captures an off-kilter universe of almost-fairy tales with equal parts beauty and melancholy.” (Keziah Weir - Elle)

“Fabulist authors such as Lauren Groff, Kelly Link, Karen Russell and Margaret Atwood examine monumental family sagas and twisted love affairs through [mythology and fairy tales] because these universal stories demand the profound gravity that emerges only from a distorted sense of reality. Amber Sparks' crackling, dark clutch of sharply focused short stories falls into this canon. . . . Forged in an evocative and sensual fire, these tales transcend tradition to shine new light onto timeless complications.” (Lauren LeBlanc - Minneapolis Star Tribune)

“Fascinating in its serendipity, yet alert to pangs of the ordinary, *The Unfinished World*...[is] lovely, brave.” (John Domini - Bookforum)

“The images tumbling from Sparks's mind in her extraordinary second story collection (following *May We Shed These Human Bodies*) are fantastical and sublime.... In present-day, historical, and fantasy settings, the author is assured; her spare but colorful prose takes the reader on journeys of longing and mystery, often into uncharted territory, all the while capturing setting and character in a few words.... [T]he breadth of her imagination never ceases to amaze.” (Publishers Weekly, Starred review)

“In *The Unfinished World and Other Stories*, Amber Sparks is a master of the fantastic. Here are stories about fever librarians and brothers who are swans, time travelers and space janitors. With each story, Sparks defies the known world in absolutely thrilling ways.” (Roxane Gay, author of *An Untamed State* and *Bad Feminist*)

“Amber Sparks is one of my favorite writers working today. Her stories are brutal beauties, guaranteed to explode your brain and steal your heart, and *The Unfinished World and Other Stories* is vintage Sparks: endlessly inventive, thrillingly imaginative, utterly assured. I loved this wild miracle of a collection.” (Laura van den Berg, author of *Find Me*)

About the Author

Amber Sparks is the author of a previous collection, *May We Shed These Human Bodies*, and her fiction has appeared in *American Short Fiction*, *The Collagist*, and elsewhere. She lives in Washington, DC.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Michael Joslyn:

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John Harrison:

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Kenneth Quisenberry:

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Pierre Winter:

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