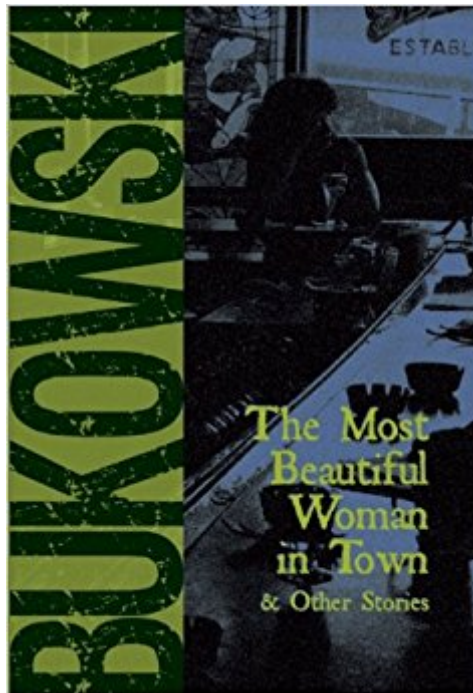


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# The Most Beautiful Woman In Town & Other Stories



## Synopsis

These mad immortal stories, now surfaced from the literary underground, have addicted legions of American readers, even though the high literary establishment continues to ignore them. In Europe, however (particularly in Germany, Italy, and France where he is published by the great publishing houses), he is critically recognized as one of America's greatest realist writers."Collections such as *The Most Beautiful Woman in Town* (1983) . . . showcase Bukowski's impressive narrative and creative abilities in stories that most often take place in bars and dingy apartments but are not simply about sex and alcohol. They're about staying alive in a world where the only choice for the majority of us is to face a firing squad in an office every day; the post office, in Bukowski's case; or maintain a commitment to creativity as we struggle to pay for food and a meager place to live." Adam Perry, Santa Fe Reporter

Charles Bukowski was born in Andernach, Germany on August 16, 1920, the only child of an American soldier and a German mother. At the age of three, he came with his family to the United States and grew up in Los Angeles. He attended Los Angeles City College from 1939 to 1941, then left school and moved to New York City to become a writer. His lack of publishing success at this time caused him to give up writing in 1946 and spurred a ten-year stint of heavy drinking. After he developed a bleeding ulcer, he decided to take up writing again. He worked a wide range of jobs to support his writing, including dishwasher, truck driver and loader, mail carrier, guard, gas station attendant, stock boy, warehouse worker, shipping clerk, post office clerk, parking lot attendant, Red Cross orderly, and elevator operator. He also worked in a dog biscuit factory, a slaughterhouse, a cake and cookie factory, and he hung posters in New York City subways. Bukowski published his first story when he was twenty-four and began writing poetry at the age of thirty-five. His first book of poetry was published in 1959; he went on to publish more than forty-five books of poetry and prose, including *Pulp* (Black Sparrow, 1994), *Screams from the Balcony: Selected Letters 1960-1970* (1993), and *The Last Night of the Earth Poems* (1992). He died of leukemia in San Pedro on March 9, 1994.

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## Customer Reviews

Charles Bukowski was born in Andernach, Germany in 1920 and brought to Los Angeles at age three. Using the city as a backdrop for his work, Bukowski wrote prolifically, publishing over fifty volumes of poetry and prose. He died in San Pedro, California on March 9, 1994. His books are widely translated and posthumous volumes continue to appear.

The very first story in this collection solidified this work and the author as more than the average writer for me. The lead story for which this book is named is the best story in the whole collection. It shows the power of Bukowski like no other story can. While so much of the rest of this book is filled with his self-righteous condemnation of the world that hasn't seen the "truth" as he has, the lead story stands out as a really beautiful and outstanding story. This book is worth the price of purchase for that story alone. Of course the rest of the book is filled with the wonderful Bukowski filth and flare for the seedier sides of life which makes for a great read as well. *Life In A Texas Whorehouse* and *Six Inches* are just fun stories that are great reads that make you feel like you need a shower after reading. The problem I have is with stories like *The Gut-Wringing Machine* which is another story where you get to see how delusional everyone else is that hasn't seen the light like Bukowski has. I have no problem with this or any other author exposing normal folks' delusions about their own mediocre existence, but I generally like to have the writers exposing these delusions or our society to be a little more introspective themselves. This is a great collection of stories that will entertain and make the reader cringe at the same time. This entire work has the blunt charm and brazen language that makes this author wonderful to read. Other than *Ham On Rye* this is his most powerful work.

A fantastic collection of short stories. The title and first story, "the most beautiful woman in town," is one you can read again and again. It's so delicately written and hauntingly beautiful. The other stories jump around from subject to subject, all in Bukowski's traditional style. I don't think there is a bad one in there!

Bukowski. Rarely do I come across a crappy Bukowski.

Chuck Buk, what more to say. Raw, Raunchy, Buk. Never got over himself. Never got over writing it all down. Never got over being drunk, I guess. This is the 1st part, "Tales of Ordinary Madness" is the 2nd part, BUY BOTH. Use them for BATHROOM READING if nothing else, I do, and for reading on transit on the way to work, and at lunchtime at work eating and reading at my desk. My co-workers do not know...

This is a fantastic collection of short stories. A must for Bukowski fans. The story "6 Inches" is particularly brilliant. I have lent this book out twice and my friends have refused to give it back, so I've bought it couple of times now. I'd buy it again. Bukowski's bleak, brutal, yet sympathetic and sensitive voice shines.

Certainly not a pleasant way to spend an afternoon. The stories are about the under belly of society and it ain't pretty! I read the two stories I was interested in, started over at the beginning and quit about a third of the way through. If I want to send myself into permanent depression, I might pick it up again.

I majored in English Lit at Princeton. A couple of years later, I stumbled across Bukowski in a little expat bookstore in Prague and couldn't stop reading him. It galls me to think that I was never ONCE exposed to his work during my four years at Princeton, supposedly one of the "cream of the crop" American universities! What in the hell is up with THAT??? This man is brilliant, simply brilliant. Zero pretension and zero tediousness. Truth flows effortlessly from his pen: simple, raw, real, horrible, hilarious, and beautiful all at the same time. Yes he does miss almost as often as he hits home, and he could've used a more rigorous editor especially for his notoriously uneven poetry. However, if you consider that in baseball, a good hitter gets on base at least 30% of the time, Buke definitely is no slouch...I'd guesstimate him to be around a .400 and caution you that sometimes when he swings and misses he can go down really really ugly ("The Fiend" is an undeniably repulsive fantasy-story about child rape) but when he connects he can blow that sucker out of the park (the first story with the book's title, or "The Copulating Mermaid" or "Six Inches"). But maybe too politically incorrect for the ivory tower...

I really love his short stories. 'Tales of Ordinary Madness' is closer to my heart, but this is really just as great as any Bukowski.

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