



The Difference Between Women and Men

Bret Lott

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In this deeply affecting, beautifully crafted collection of short fiction, Bret Lott broadens his stylistic range, striking a surprisingly surreal tone with stark, hyperrealistic prose. As story after dazzling story deliberately takes you down a deceptively ordinary path, the arresting center of each startles your unsuspecting sensibility.

Among the narrative gems is "Family," in which a husband and wife bicker incessantly before realizing that their two children are missing, only to discover them in a surprising place—and in a disturbing condition. In "Everything Cut Will Come Back," a long-distance phone call between two brothers takes a turn when their own tragic past crackles over the line. In "History," a widow thinks she spots her son at the airport and is left instead with a simple memory of her late husband that resolves her grief. The innocence of three boys is lost when they witness a devastating winter tragedy in "The Train, the Lake, the Bridge."

Within these pages, adulterers are unceremoniously caught, epiphanies arrive during bizarre encounters, and characters move through everyday moments with a fortitude that elevates these stories almost to mythical status. Without a stroke of false sentimentality, *The Difference Between Women and Men* will leave you strangely shaken—and ever aware of the odd permutations of humankind.

The Difference Between Women and Men Details

Date : Published July 5th 2005 by Random House (first published 2005)

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Author : Bret Lott

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From Reader Review The Difference Between Women and Men for online ebook

Lauren says

A delightful collection of short stories. Not much to say about it yet, but it is delicate, perceptive, lyrical, and nostalgic.

Adam says

Bret Lott's short fiction seems to be one of the great, accidental secrets of today's literary scene. Borges, Kafka, Flannery O'Connor, Raymond Carver--I have to go back to the Dead Greats to find someone to compare him with. Lott's stories are thumbnail sketches of heartbreak and tragicomedy, and almost everyone is written straight from the gut. Like Carver, Lott has mastered the craft of narrative minimalism, and yet each collection is *substantial*. His 3 books of stories put to shame most of the modern novels I read. In this book Lott makes a welcome addition to his bag of tricks, giving us a handful of superb magical realism tales. So I dare you: pick this up, read maybe "The Family" or the very short "A Part of It," and then try--just try!--to tear yourself away from the book.

Corey says

I didn't care for it although I liked his book Jewel

Ian says

I was caught off guard by the surreal stories I found in this collection. I guess I expected more melodrama, or at least a more realist story telling approach, but I was pleasantly surprised by my miscalculation.

Lott does some interesting thing with point of view. Two stories in particular stand out: Somebody Else and A Way Through This. Both of these pieces, as well as many of the others, employ this shifting POV that allows the reader to see the truly impossible way human beings try to communicate.

Because of the scripture reference at the beginning of the book, I got the sense that the author believes we live in a world afflicted with a Babylonian sense of confusion, and I have to agree. This collection at least goes a long way in convincing me.

Abby Peck says

I enjoyed this collection of stories immensely despite the unbelievability of some of the stories which is usually a big deal for me, I can't read stuff I can't imagine realistically happening.

Jeremy says

This is a collection of short stories, including a re-written "A Rose for Emily." Many ended as sad commentaries on human existence, but a few ended positively.

Nicholas says

Definitely read "Rose", a re-telling of "Rose for Emily" with some new additions.

This collection is such a departure from Lott's usual voice, this world where everyone is meant to fail and feel pain and be stuck without any answer or outside redemption. The title story, "Everything Cut Will Come Back", "The Train, the Lake, the Bridge", "A Part of It" and "An Evening on the Cusp of the Apocalypse" are quality stories. Most of the stories are pretty short, and for the ones that don't really work, they seem to be too preachy or hanging by a gesture. Definitely worth the read.

Joanne says

Found some of these stories a little strange. This is my first encounter with Bret Lott and know that Jewel is rated to be a great book and have every intention of reading it, but after having read the short stories, probably wouldn't look for another book by him.

Delsol says

This is the worst piece of crap I have ever read. The good news: I only paid \$1 for the book but it is going in the dumpster. Obviously I don't live in this particular literary world. There is no sense to the 3 stories I read. There was nothing in the real world that I could relate to. How can a woman pick up an Amour & lift it to the ceiling? The endings made no sense.

Natalie says

Puts a stereotypical light on men and women both, more notably on women, but the writing is very good in itself. However there is literally *no* plot.

Melissa says

An unusual (which explains why I liked it) and unique collection of short stories. The prose is beautiful and at times lyrical. If you're looking for a great epic story, this probably isn't your book. However, if you love a compelling read that inspires introspection and connection somewhere below the surface of the instant

obvious, this could be a book for you. If you are fascinated by the intricacies of male/female everyday scenarios, the obstacles of life and you like to be stuck in your own head, then I highly recommend it!
