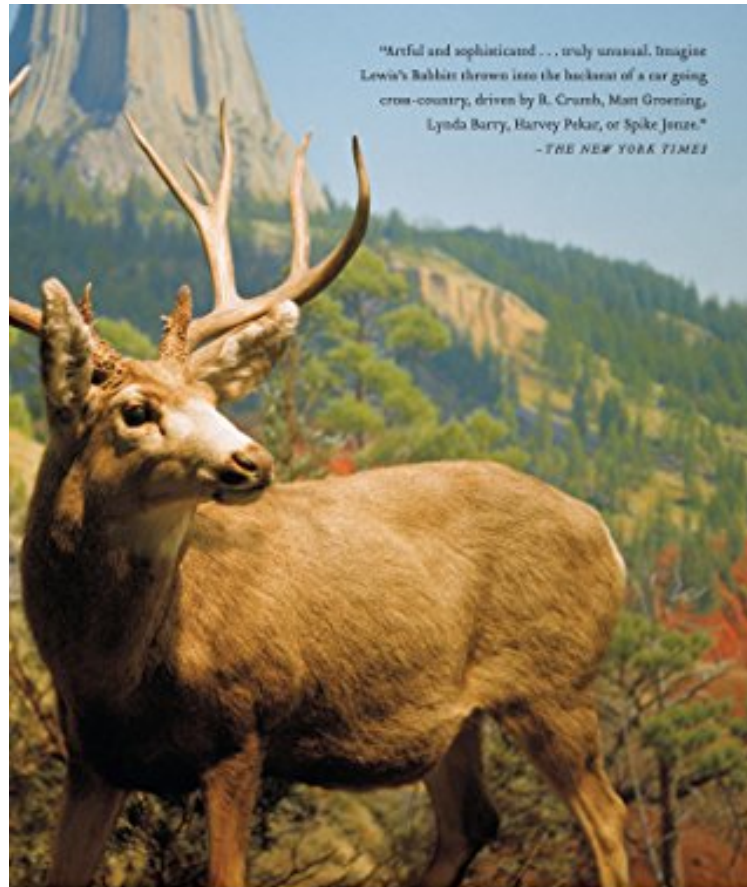


## Pastoralia

Von George Saunders  
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GEORGE SAUNDERS  
STORIES AND A NOVELLA  
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**Von George Saunders : Pastoralia** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pastoralia:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Comic, Original, ShatteringVon Alice DarkEvery so often I read a book that shakes me to the bottom of whatever's in me. This is such a book. The title story still has me quaking; I saw the human race in every sentence and had to laugh and

mourn. Sea Oak has lines that are howlers, but it's also terrible and touching. Here is a voice as original and truthful as Flannery O' Connor and Franz Kafka. George Saunders portrays our disgrace with great compassion and comic sensibility. This is enlightened writing. Thank you, Mr Saunders.1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. One Of The Best Books I've Read This YearVon Bradford ParksI finished this book last night and have to say this is one the best books I've read this year. The stories are all about lower-middle-class people with real problems, so real in fact that much of the book is very, very sad, but also very beautiful. Because ultimately what the author is trying to say about these people and these situations is Hey, wake up, look around you, see what's happening, and realize that the world around us has to change. The stories are funny, and true, and many of them are not only excellent stories beautifully written, but are obviously metaphorical and applicable to our real lives, no matter how absurd they may seem on the surface.I would highly recommend this book. If it gives you any indication, Saunders is on equal footing with other current gifted writers such as David Foster Wallace, Thom Jones, and T.C. Boyle.1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A melancholy look at modern lifeVon KevinThere are some very imaginative and witty scenarios played out in the six stories contained within. However, I didn't find them particularly as humorous as I did bleak and disturbing. For instance, there's the man and woman in the title story that play cavepeople to an audience of no one but have to keep up the facade in order to keep a job. Then there's the man who visits a motivational speaker and as he finally musters up the courage to make a drastic change in his life, his dreams come crashing down as he's faced with his reality. The book probably isn't intended to be this dark, but that's the underlying feeling I got from it. I still give Saunders 4 stars for his quirky and off-the-wall writing style. Interpretation is everything with this book.

KurzbeschreibungFrom the #1New York Timesbestsellingauthor of the novelLincoln in the Bardoand the story collectionTenth of December, a 2013 National Book Award Finalist for Fiction. Hailed by Thomas Pynchon as "graceful, dark, authentic, and funny," George Saunders now surpasses his New York Times Notable Book, CivilWarLand in Bad Decline, with this bestselling collection of stories set against a warped, hilarious, and terrifyingly recognizable American landscape.One of Entertainment Weekly's Ten Best Books of the Year "Artful and sophisticated... truly unusual. Imagine Lewis's Babbitt thrown into the backseat of a car going cross-country, driven by R. Crumb, Matt Groening, Lynda Barry, Harvey Pekar, or Spike Jonze." -- The New York Times "Saunders is a provocateur, a moralist, a zealot, a lefty, and a funny, funny writer, and the stories in Pastoralia delight. We're very lucky to have them." -- Esquire.deIn both his acclaimed debut, CivilWarLand in Bad Decline, and his second collection, Pastoralia, George Saunders imagines a near future where capitalism has run amok. Consumption and the service economy rule the earth. The Haves are grotesque beings, mutilated by their crass desires and impossible wealth. The Have Nots are no less crippled, both emotionally and physically, by their inferior status. It's a kind of Westworld scenario, but instead of robots, the serving wenches, bellboys, and extras are real people, all of them mercilessly indentured by the free market.Sounds like bleak stuff, doesn't it? Yet Saunders handles his characters with grace and humour In the title story, for example, a couple occupies a squalid corner of a human zoo, where they act out a parody of caveman times, communicating in grunts and hand motions speaking is instantly punishable by the Orwellian management) and conducting their lives during 15-minute smoke breaks. In "Winky", a born loser (really, all of Saunders's characters are born losers) visits a self-help seminar, where he's encouraged to rid himself of all those people who are "crapping in your oatmeal". Exhilarated at the prospect of dumping his simple, crazy-haired, religion-besotted sister, he returns home to the bleak discovery that he needs her as much as she needs him. The protagonist of "Sea Oak" works as a stripper in an aviation-themed restaurant and lives next to a crack house with his unemployed sisters, their babies, and a sweet old maid of an aunt. The aunt dies, and then returns from the grave--not so sweet, now, and still decomposing--with strange powers and a sobering message:"You ever been in the grave? It sucks so bad! You regret all the things you never did. You little bitches are going to have a very bad time in the grave unless you get on the stick, believe me!"The characters and situations in the rest of Pastoralia are equally wretched. But Saunders rescues them from utter despair with a loving belief in the triumph of the human spirit: yes, things can always get worse, but worse is better than the cold dirt of the grave. And in the small space between wretchedness and death there is plenty of room for laughter, and even love. --Tod NelsonPressestimmenIntoxicating. Time OutExuberantly weird . . . brutally funny The New York TimesCompulsively swallowed, sweetly addictive San Francisco Bay GuardianDemands to be reread immediately The Wall Street JournalHilarious and heartrending The Village VoiceBreathhtaking . . . a masterpiece San Diego Union TribuneRiveting U.S. News and World ReportScreamingly funny TimeSaunders is a provocateur, a moralist, a zealot, a lefty, and a funny, funny writer, and the stories in Pastoralia delight. Were very lucky to have them. EsquireBreathhtaking, brutally hilarious satire, a savage skewering not only of the American workplace, but of the American character itself. . . . Pastoralia is a masterpiece of unsettling comedy. San Diego Union TribuneArtful and sophisticated. . . .truly unusual. Imagine Lewis's Babbitt thrown into the back seat of a car going cross-country, driven by R. Crumb, Matt Groening, Lynda Barry, Harvey

Pekar or Spike Jonze. That'd be a story Saunders could tell. The New York Times The short-story collection of the year . . . Pastoralia does everything a gathering of tales is supposed to do: It touches the reader but also provokes reflection, mirth, and pain. Kansas City Star Dazzling . . . Saunders's misfits confront their degradations with heroic optimism; rarely have the comic nuances of suffering been tracked with such precision. These stories, injected with Saunders's highly original blend of irony and tenderness, ride you down spirals of the absurd and fling you back to your own life, startled. Mens Journal A master of distilling the disorders of our time into fiction. Salon Fiercely funny . . . [Saunders is] a master of the self-flagellating interior monologue. The Boston Globe