



Byzantium: Stories

Ben Stroud

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Winner of the Bakeless Prize for Fiction, an imaginative debut that ranges from Havana to Berlin

** A Kansas City Star Best Book of the Year * One of Publishers Weekly's "Best Summer Books"**

Ancient cities and fallen empires come to life in this masterful collection. In the Byzantine court, a noble with a crippled hand is called upon to ensure that a holy man poses no threat to the throne. On an island in Lake Michigan, a religious community crumbles after an ardent convert digs a little too deep. And the black detective Jackson Hieronymus Burke rises to fame and falls from favor in two stories that recount his origins in Havana and the height of his success in Kaiser Wilhelm's Germany. Ben Stroud's historical reimaginings twist together with contemporary stories to reveal startling truths about human nature across the centuries. In his able hands, *Byzantium* makes us believe that these are accounts we haven't heard yet. As the chronicler of Burke's exploits muses, "After all, where does history exist, except in our imagination? Does that make it any less true?"

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