



PATCHES OF LIGHT

SHORT STORIES FROM THE CHESHIRE PRIZE FOR LITERATURE 2015

EDITED BY IAN SEED

'The great thing about a short story,' said Emma Donoghue, 'is that it doesn't have to trawl through someone's whole life; it can come in glancingly from the side.' Each story in this anthology does precisely that – enters a life 'glancingly' but illuminates what is truly important about that life in the process of doing so. The world we inhabit is fast-changing, never quite the same from one moment to the next. It has perhaps been ever thus. The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus famously said that we never step into the same river twice. Yet with so much to distract and entice us today, how can we know what is 'real', what has any kind of genuine worth? Does it really matter?

The stories here do not pretend to know the answers. Rather they seek to reflect and explore the hopes, dreams, joys, fears and frailties that are common to us all, but which are revealed differently in each life. They may offer us only glimpses, but each glimpse will leave us changed in some way. Like shifting patches of light on water, they invite us to stop and look, to linger for a brief space of time, to take away something we felt we always knew, but didn't know that we knew before.

The Cheshire Prize for Literature was inaugurated in 2003 as the High Sheriff's Cheshire Prize for Literature. It is administered by the University of Chester. The 2015 competition was for short stories, and this collection contains stories by 21 of the shortlisted entries, including those of the eventual winner and runners up. Details of the Prize are available at: www.chester.ac.uk/literatureprize

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