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The Book of Fables

W.S. Merwin

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“Metaphors, puns, surrealist visions, converted into sharp, disturbing little narratives . . . only a poet, and a good one, could have written it.”—*The Atlantic Monthly*

W.S. Merwin’s acclaimed short prose—many of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*—blur the distinction between fiction, poetry, essay, and memoir. Reminiscent of Kafka, Borges, and Beckett, they evoke mythical patterns and unlikely adventures and raise questions about art, reality, and meaning. As the *Saturday Review* remarked, they have “astonishing range and power.”

The Book of Fables is an affordable paperback of all the short prose from two out-of-print collections, *The Miner’s Pale Children* and *Houses and Travellers.* The pieces run from a single sentence to a dozen pages and create a poetic landscape both severe and sensuous.

From “A Garden”:

You are a garden into which a bomb once fell and did not explode, during a war that happened before you can remember. It came down at night. It screamed, but there were so many screams. It was heard, but it was forgotten. It buried itself. It was searched for but it was given up. So much else had been buried alive . . .

Poet and translator **W.S. Merwin** has long been committed to artistic, political, and environmental causes in both word and deed. He has received nearly every major literary accolade, including the 2005 National Book Award in Poetry for *Migration.* Merwin lives in Hawaii, where he cultivates endangered palms.

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Joyce Morton:

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