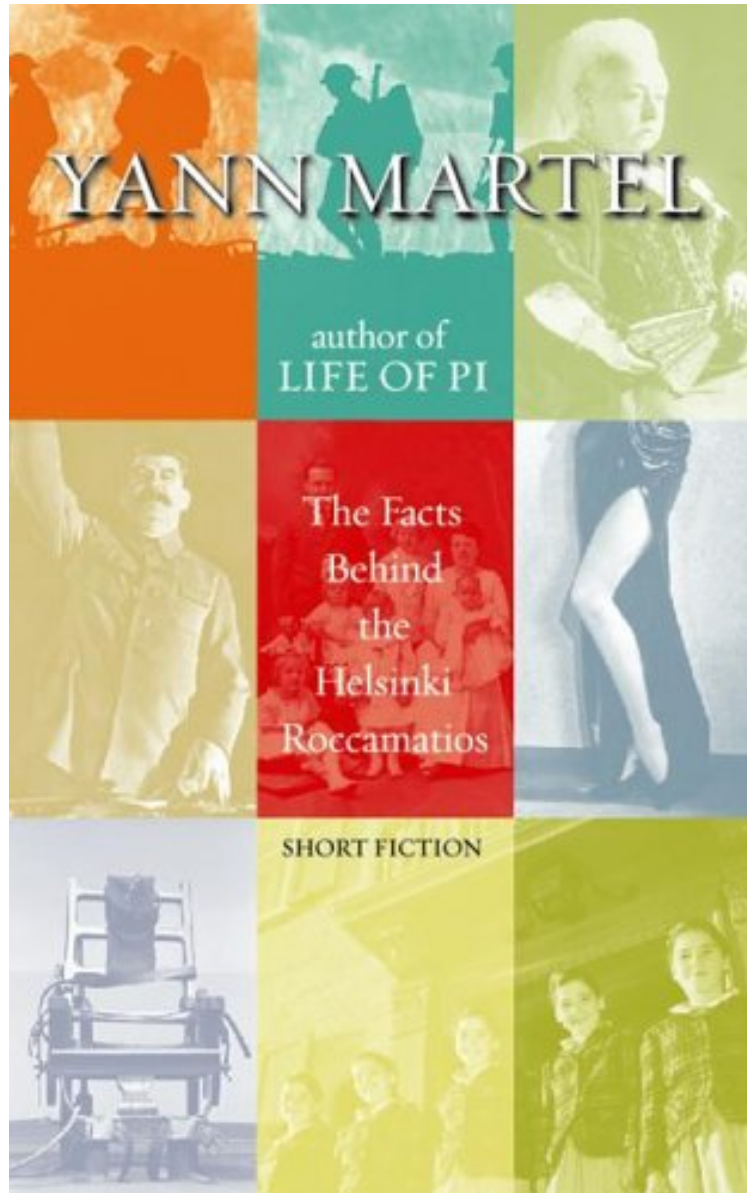


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The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios

Yann Martel

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Yann Martel : The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Recommended for avid Martel fans By Deanna J. Marquart If you are a Yann Martel fan, you will not want to miss this collection of extraordinarily compelling stories. I write fiction and,

to provide myself with daily inspiration, I copied the following sentence from Martel's novel "Beatrice Virgil" and posted it on the cabinet door above my desk: "There's nothing like the unimaginable to make people believe." Writing the unimaginable that makes ME believe is only one of Martel's great strengths, with "Life of Pi" as primary example, and the stories in "The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios" also share this characteristic. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must for Yann Martel LoversBy Customer -Machel ShullI am carrying around Yann Martel's- this one--right now in my purse. His writing is always worth rereading. Brilliant. I can see how he became the writer he is today in these early stories. A must read for any Yann Martel Lovers or anyone that truly appreciates fine prose with a heart.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Simple, but transformative.By zjThis is a collection of short stories by author Yann Martel, predating his Booker Prize winning 'The Life of Pi'. All of the stories offer insightful views of humanity, told in Martel's simple, anecdotal style, but it is the penultimate 'Manners of Dying' that I found most remarkable. By way of a letter to the mother of an executed man, written multiple times, Martel changed my intellectual objection to capital punishment into a visceral disgust of same. It is a brilliant piece of writing, which also allows the reader a glimpse of the hard social criticism that underpins all of Yann Martel's work.

Four stories by the Booker Prize-winning author. Includes "The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios," "the Time I Heard the Private Donald J. Rankin String Concerto with One Discordant Violin, by the American Composer John Morton," "Manners of Dying," and "The Mirror Machine," each in its entirety. Written earlier in Martel's career, these tales display that startling mix of dazzle and depth that have made Yann Martel an international phenomenon.

.com Given the spectacular success of Canadian writer Yann Martel's bestselling novel Life of Pi (winner of the 2002 Man Booker Prize and .com's Best Book of 2002) it's no surprise that his early short story collection, The Facts Behind the Helsinki Roccamatios, would attract new readers. Originally published in 1993, these four well-crafted stories have been slightly revised by him for this new edition (the book's first publication in America). Only one of these stories, "Manners of Dying," reads like apprentice work, but even this piece is highly accomplished and full of interest. Every page here shows the development of Martel's stealthy, understated prose (think Paul Auster with a Canadian quietude). In fact, the title story begins so calmly and matter-of-factly that the opening pages feel almost listless. A college senior describes his budding friendship with the freshman he has been assigned to shepherd through the first months of the school year. When the new friend is diagnosed with AIDS (it is the mid-1980s, and this is a more-or-less immediate death sentence) the emotional stakes gradually increase, not only in predictable ways, as the reluctant narrator is drawn further into his friend's life, but in the jokes, arguments, and revelations brought to light by their collaboration in a sparkling intellectual game--a story the friends write together, in alternating turns--that provides a delicate scaffold for the private drama of death. --Regina MarlerFrom Publishers WeeklyPathos is leavened with inventiveness and humor in this collection of a novella and three short stories first published in a slightly different version in Canada in 1993, nearly 10 years before Martel's Booker-winning Life of Pi. The minor key is established in the title novella, a graceful, multilayered story of a young man dying of AIDS, told through the refracting lens of the history of the 20th century. Infected by a blood transfusion, Paul receives the diagnosis during his freshman year of college. The narrator, Paul's student mentor, devises a plan to keep Paul engaged in lifethey will invent the story of the Roccamatio family of Helsinki, which will have 100 chapters, each thematically linked to an event of the 20th century. The connection between the history, the stories and Paul's condition is subtle and always shifting, as fluid and elusive as life itself. The experience of death is delicately probed in the next two stories as well: in one, a Canadian student's life is changed when he hears the Rankin Concerto, written in honor of a Vietnam veteran; in the other, a prison warden reports to a mother on her son's last moments before he is executed. The book closes with a surreal fable in which mirrors are made from memories. These are exemplary works of apprenticeship, slight yet richly satisfying. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From Bookmarks MagazineMartel's Booker-Prize winning Life of Pi (**** Nov/Dec 2002) merged fact with fiction, reality with fantastical constructs as an Indian boy navigated the Pacific Ocean in a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger. This collection, written a decade before Life of Pi and spruced up for an American audience, shares the novels imaginative plotting, deep humanity, and narrative finesse. Butexcept, perhaps, for the deeply affecting title storyits not a masterpiece. A few reviewers criticized Martel for his literary conceits and lack of conviction in his own stories. Simply put, they had a harder time suspending disbelief in these shorter pieces. Still, if you enjoyed Life of Pi, youll appreciate this dazzling, if somewhat disorienting, collection. Copyright 2004 Phillips Nelson Media, Inc.