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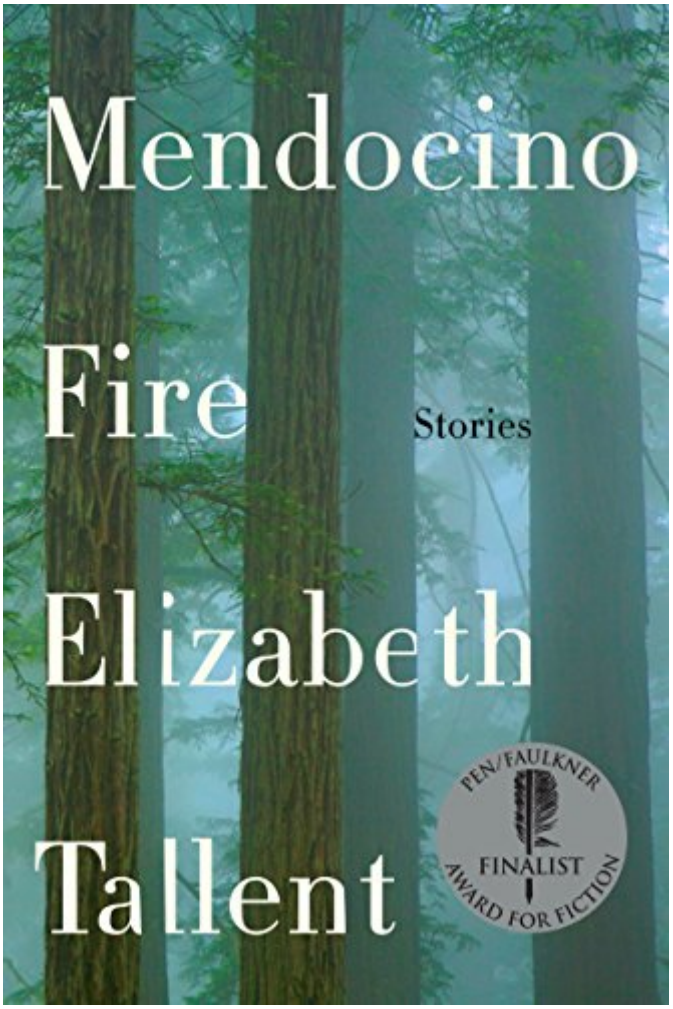
Mendocino Fire: Stories



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Synopsis

The triumphant, long-awaited return of a writer of remarkable gifts: in this collection of richly imagined storiesâ ”her first new work in twenty yearsâ ”the master of short fiction delivers a diverse suite of stories about men and women confronting their vulnerabilities in times of transition and challenge.Beginning in the 1980s, Elizabeth Tallentâ ™s work, appeared in some of our most prestigious literary publications, including The New Yorker, Esquire, and Harperâ ™s. Marked by its quiet power and emotional nuance, her fiction garnered widespread praise.Now, at long last, Tallent returns with a new collection of diverse, thematically linked, and deeply powerful stories that confirm her enduring gift for capturing relationships at their moment of transformation: marriages breaking apart, people haunted by memories of old love and reaching haltingly toward new futures. Mendocino Fire explore moments of fracture and fragmentation; it limns the wilderness of our inner psyche and brilliantly evokes the electric tension of deep emotion. In these pages, Tallent explores expectations met and thwarted, and our never-ending quest to avoid being alone.With this breathtaking collection, Elizabeth Tallent cements her rightful place in the literary pantheon beside her contemporaries Lorrie Moore, Ann Beattie, and Louise Erdrich. Visceral and surprising, profound yet elemental, Mendocino Fire is a welcome visit with a wise and familiar friend.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Mendocino Fire by Elizabeth Tallent is a very highly recommended collection of ten short stories.The stories capture relationships and lives during times of transformation with clarity and insight into the complicated emotional landscape of all relationships. Tallent explores relationships between genders, with an emphasis on female relationships, as well as broken marriages. Many of the stories deal with creative people, writers, artists, or ecological/environmental activists. Several are set on university campuses or have a tie in to academia. Almost all of the stories involve exes, severed relationships, struggling relationships. The emotions run high as we hear the inner thoughts of the characters struggling to make sense of their lives, actions, obsessions, and circumstances. Tallent describes lives that are messy, with emotional fallout and struggles.All of these stories are extremely well written with exceptionally descriptive prose and phrasing. There are several passages I marked to take note of in my advanced reading copy. Tallent manages to capture the inner thoughts of her characters and their feelings with a clarity of emotion that is complete and realistic, but with a poetic grace and beauty of wording that often belies the raw emotions being expressed.I don’t know if the page numbers will be similar, but the acuity and mental pictures drawn from some of her descriptions is astonishing. For example: "Tamped down love means not only sublimated energy but also a ranting, pointless impatience: before long, she’s sick of obsession’s two-lane Nebraska highway." (pg 79)Or: "It can’t be true that she can’t see in. That she can’t know the story. This is her life she’s been shut out of!"(pg.

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