

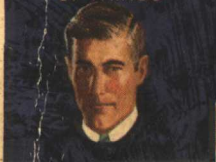
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ADVENTURE! COMEDY! EXCITEMENT!
A TOTALLY UNIQUE COLLECTION OF STORIES
ABOUT YOUNG ADULTS.

TEN TOP STORIES

EDITED BY DAVID A. SOHN

SO MUCH
UNFAIRNESS
OF THINGS



HOODS I HAVE KNOWN



SEE HOW
THEY RUN



PLANET
OF THE
CONDEMNED



FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON



TEST



BACKWARD
BOY



DENTON'S DAUGHTER



THE TURTLE



POLAR NIGHT



551
2

TEN TOP STORIES

Selected by
DAVID A. SOHN



Bantam Books
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INTRODUCTION



These stories are intended to appeal to young adults, one of the hardest groups to please. Readers between twelve and twenty are fierce, discriminating critics of short stories that must pass the tests of both interest and quality. If a tale bores a teenager, he drops it, and if asked, he tells you why. Teenagers react to literature in much the same way that they react to parents, teachers, and other symbols of authority. Their candid reactions make an excellent proving ground for the writer, but he must be willing to submit to brutal scrutiny and accept the impatient rule: "One strike and you're out!"

Ten Top Stories is the result of a long experience with many stories that struck out and a few that survived. Ten times the number of stories in this volume were seriously considered for it, after countless numbers of others were read in a search for tales that would both interest students and contain the mysterious elements which make a story worth reading. The editor was often fooled by stories that seemed "tailor-made" for this group but, happily, students to whom they were read quickly spotted vapidness of style, false characterization, and any other phony, expedient element. Writers who patronized the reader were rejected in short order, and justifiably so. Thus these stories have passed a fiery test of student appraisal; they stand on top of a mountain of other tales that were blasted out of the running for one good reason or another.

This collection also attempts to provide fresh talent for the reader. Though some of these stories have appeared in specialized hardcover anthologies, none of them can be called "old chestnuts." And the editor hopes

that they will retain the sparkle and punch that earlier readers found in them.

Variety and balance are vital considerations in a short-story anthology. The readers of *Ten Top Stories* will find in various places humor, pathos, fantasy, realism, adventure, cruelty, compassion, love, and death. These are stories about astronauts, brilliant people, retarded children, juvenile delinquents, animals, athletes, scientists, and others. Problems in the stories are sometimes serious, sometimes trivial, and often unusual. The young adult reader should find it easy to identify himself with the characters in these stories and in the situations they face.

That every story should please every person who reads it would be miraculous. Obviously this cannot be expected; but most of these stories should satisfy the reading tastes of the typical young adult. At least some of them will prove to be vivid, moving experiences for him.

The following brief descriptions will give the reader some knowledge of the scope and nature of this anthology:

FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON by Daniel Keyes This remarkable story won the Hugo Award, the highest annual award given to a story of fantasy and science fiction. Written in diary form, it concerns a young man, Charlie Gordon, who is intellectually retarded. Charlie is made the subject of a scientific experiment to increase intelligence in human beings.

It has been a successful television play, a movie based on it is planned, and Daniel Keyes intends to convert it into a novel.

SO MUCH UNFAIRNESS OF THINGS by C. D. B. Bryan This is the story of a student in a private school who is faced with the problem of whether or not to cheat on an examination. The atmosphere of the private school and the tension of the examination are created with great power and skill by the author. An extremely vivid reading experience, reflecting an unusual writing talent.

BACKWARD BOY by Gene Coghlan Gene Coghlan, who presently lives in Alaska, has created a memorable character in Auber, the backward boy. This story was selected as one of the best from *The Saturday Evening Post* during the year it was published.

DENTON'S DAUGHTER by Ellen Lowenberg One of the winners of the *Seventeen* writing awards contest, this is an appealing, humorous story about a student who tries to resolve a conflict between good marks and the girl he loves.

HOODS I HAVE KNOWN by Sondra Spatt This story was selected as one of the best from *Mademoiselle*, in its anthology of good stories of the past several years. Its narrator describes, with skilful humor and style, her fleeting relationship with Danny Tooeey, the hood of the class, when she is forced to sit next to him at the back of the room.

PLANET OF THE CONDEMNED by Robert Murphy In an absorbing science-fiction story about astronauts searching for a previously undiscovered planet, the author has combined a keen sense of plot structure with a talent for characterization and realistic detail to form a hair-raising tale that has a jolting surprise ending. Also selected as one of the best stories from the *Post* during the year it was published.

TEST by Theodore L. Thomas An imaginative fantasy in which the author raises an important question about young automobile drivers. This is a story that unites economy of style with an adept knowledge of the use of the unexpected ending. It provokes a great deal of thought from the reader about responsibility.

SEE HOW THEY RUN by George Harmon Coxe Most sports stories are about popular sports such as baseball, basketball, and football. This, however, is a story about a long-distance runner that makes the

reader feel as if he has run the race right along with Johnny Burke. The situation, characterization, and style of writing separate it from the ordinary sports story that depends on plot alone.

POLAR NIGHT by Norah Burke Stories told from the point of view of an animal are difficult to write, but the author of this story skilfully relates the struggle of a polar bear and her cubs against the cruelty of man and nature in the Arctic. The reader, along with these animals, experiences the rugged polar night and its dangers in this artfully constructed story.

THE TURTLE by George Vukelich Another animal story which is simple on the surface, this is also a comment on human nature, expressed with skill and subtlety.

As you can see, various themes and relationships are apparent in this collection. To what extent should science affect the lives of individuals? How considerate are we to people less fortunate than ourselves? When is the will to succeed constructive? When is it a destructive influence?

There are few pleasures that compare to reading a story well told, and when the reader gains greater understanding of his world, his fellow creatures, and himself, it is the precious dividend that excellent writers offer him. To provide such reading enjoyment is the wish of the editor and the purpose of this anthology.

DAVID A. SOHN

FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON

BY DANIEL KEYES



progris riport 1—march 5, 1965

Dr. Strauss says I shud rite down what I think and evrey thing that happins to me from now on. I dont know why but he says its importint so they will see if they will use me. I hope they use me. Miss Kinnian says maybe they can make me smart. I want to be smart. My name is Charlie Gordon. I am 37 years old. I have nuthing more to rite now so I will close for today.

progris riport 2—march 6

I had a test today. I think I faled it. And I think maybe now they wont use me. What happind is a nice young man was in the room and he had some white cards and ink spilled all over them. He sed Charlie what do yo see on this card. I was very skared even tho I had my rabbits foot in my pockit because when I was a kid I always faled tests in school and I spilled ink to.

I told him I saw a inkblot. He said yes and it made me feel good. I thot that was all but when I got up to go he said Charlie we are not thru yet. Then I dont remember so good but he wantid me to say what was in the ink. I dint see nuthing in the ink but he said there was picturs there other pepul saw some picturs. I couldnt see any picturs. I reely tryed. I held the card close up and then far away. Then I said if I had my glases I coud see better I usally only ware my glases in the movies or TV but I said they are in the closit in the hall. I got them. Then I said let me see that card agen I bet Ill find it now.

I tryed hard but I only saw the ink. I told him maybe I need new glases. He rote something down on a paper and I got skared of faling the test. I told him it was

a very nice inkblot with littel points all around the edges. He looked very sad so that wasnt it. I said please let me try agen. Ill get it in a few minits becaus Im not so fast somtimes. Im a slow reeder too in Miss Kinnians class for slow adults but I'm trying very hard.

He gave me a chance with another card that had 2 kinds of ink spilled on it red and blue.

He was very nice and talked slow like Miss Kinnian does and he explaned it to me that it was a *raw shok*. He said pepul see things in the ink. I said show me where. He said think. I told him I think a inkblot but that wasn't rite eather. He said what does it remind you—pretend something. I closed my eyes for a long time to pretend. I told him I pretend a fowntan pen with ink leeking all over a table cloth.

I dont think I passed the *raw shok* test

progris riport 3—march 7

Dr Strauss and Dr Nemur say it dont matter about the inkblots. They said that maybe they will still use me. I said Miss Kinnian never gave me tests like that one only spelling and reading. They said Miss Kinnian told that I was her bestist pupil in the adult nite school becaus I tryed the hardist and I reely wantid to lern. They said how come you went to the adult nite scool all by yourself Charlie. How did you find it. I said I asked pepul and sumbody told me where I shud go to lern to read and spell good. They said why did you want to. I told them becaus all my life I wantid to be smart and not dumb. But its very hard to be smart. They said you know it will probly be tempirery. I said yes. Miss Kinnian told me. I dont care if it herts.

Later I had more crazy tests today. The nice lady who gave it to me told me the name and I asked her how do you spellit so I can rite it my progris riport. THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TEST. I dont know the frist 2 words but I know what *test* means. You got to pass it or you get bad marks. This test lookd easy becaus I coud see the picturs. Only this time she dint want me to tell her the

pictures. That mixd me up. She said make up storys about the pepul in the picturs.

I told her how can you tell storys about pepul you never met. I said why shud I make up lies. I never tell lies any more becaus I always get caut.

She told me this test and the other one the raw-shok was for getting personality. I laffed so hard. I said how can you get that thing from inkblots and fotos. She got sore and put her picturs away. I don't care. It was sily. I gess I faled that test too.

Later some men in white coats took me to a difernt part of the hospitil and gave me a game to play. It was like a race with a white mouse. They called the mouse Algernon. Algernon was in a box with a lot of twists and turns like all kinds of walls and they gave me a pencil and a paper with lines and lots of boxes. On one side it said START and on the other end it said FINISH. They said it was *amazed* and that Algernon and me had the same *amazed* to do. I dint see how we could have the same *amazed* if Algernon had a box and I had a paper but I dint say nothing. Anyway there wasnt time because the race started.

One of the men had a watch he was trying to hide so I wouldnt see it so I tryed not to look and that made me nervus.

Anyway that test made me feel worser than all the others because they did it over 10 times with different *amazeds* and Algernon won every time. I dint know that mice were so smart. Maybe thats because Algernon is a white mouse. Maybe white mice are smarter than other mice.

progris riport 4—Mar 8

Their going to use me! Im so exited I can hardly write. Dr Nemur and Dr Strauss had a argament about it first. Dr Nemur was in the office when Dr Strauss brot me in. Dr Nemur was worryed about using me but Dr Strauss told him Miss Kinnian rekemmeded me the best from all the people who she was teaching. I like Miss Kinnian

because shes a very smart teacher. And she said Charlie your going to have a second chance. If you volenteer for this experament you mite get smart. They dont know if it will be perminint but theirs a chance. Thats why I said ok even when I was scared because she said it was an operashun. She said dont be scared Charlie you done so much with so little I think you deserv it most of all.

So I got scaird when Dr. Nemur and Dr. Strauss argud about it. Dr. Strauss said I had something that was very good. He said I had a good *motorvation*. I never even knew I had that. I felt proud when he said that not every body with an eye-q of 68 had that thing. I dont know what it is or where I got it but he said Algernon had it too. Algernons *motor-vation* is the cheese they put in his box. But it cant be that because I didn't eat any cheese this week.

Then he told Dr Nemur something I dint understand so while they were talking I wrote down some of the words.

He said Dr. Nemur I know Charlie is not what you had in mind as the first of your new brede of intelekt* * (coudnt get the word) superman. But most people of his low ment* * are host* * and uncoop* * they are usually dull apath* * and hard to reach. He has a good natcher hes intristed and eager to please.

Dr Nemur said remember he will be the first human beeng ever to have his intellijence tripled by surgicle means.

Dr. Strauss said exakly. Look at how well hes lerned to read and write for his low mentel age its as grate an acheve* * as you and I lerning einstines therey of * *vity without help. That shows the inteness motor-vation. Its comparat* * a tremen* * achev* * I say we use Charlie.

I dint get all the words but it sounded like Dr Strauss was on my side and like the other one wasnt.

Then Dr Nemur nodded he said all right maybe your right. We will use Charlie. When he said that I got so exited I jumped up and shook his hand for being so good to me. I told him thank you doc you wont be sorry for giving me a second chance. And I mean it like I told

him. After the operashun Im gonna try to be smart. Im gonna try awful hard.

progris riport 5—Mar 10

Im skared. Lots of the nurses and the people who gave me the tests came to bring me candy and wish me luck. I hope I have luck. I got my rabbits foot and my lucky penny. Only a black cat crossed me when I was comming to the hospitil. Dr Strauss says dont be supersitis Charlie this is science. Anyway Im keeping my rabbits foot with me.

I asked Dr Strauss if Ill beat Algernon in the race after the operashun and he said maybe. If the operashun works Ill show that mouse I can be as smart as he is. Maybe smarter. Then Ill be abel to read better and spell the words good and know lots of things and be like other people. I want to be smart like other people. If it works perminint they will make everybody smart all over the wurld.

They dint give me anything to eat this morning. I dont know what that eating has to do with getting smart. Im very hungry and Dr. Nemur took away my box of candy. That Dr Nemur is a grouch. Dr Strauss says I can have it back after the operashun. You cant eat be- for a operashun . . .

progress report 6—Mar 15

The operashun dint hurt. He did it while I was sleeping. They took off the bandijis from my head today so I can make a PROGRESS REPORT. Dr. Nemur who looked at some of my other ones says I spell PROGRESS wrong and told me how to spell it and REPORT too. I got to try and remember that.

I have a very bad memary for spelling. Dr Strauss says its ok to tell about all the things that happin to me but he says I should tell more about what I feel and what I think. When I told him I dont know how to think he said try. All the time when the bandijis were on my eyes I tryed to think. Nothing happened. I dont

know what to think about. Maybe if I ask him he will tell me how I can think now that Im suppose to get smart. What do smart people think about. Fancy things I suppose. I wish I knew some fancy things alre dy.

progress report 7—mar 19

Nothing is happening. I had lots of tests and different kinds of races with Algernon. I hate that mouse. He always beats me. Dr. Strauss said I got to play those games. And he said some time I got to take those tests over again. Those inkblots are stupid. And those pictures are stupid too. I like to draw a picture of a man and a woman but I wont make up lies about people.

I got a headache from trying to think so much. I thot Dr Strauss was my frend but he dont help me. He dont tell me what to think or when Ill get smart. Miss Kinnian dint come to see me. I think writing these progress reports are stupid too.

progress report 8—Mar 23

Im going back to work at the factory. They said it was better I shud go back to work but I cant tell anyone what the operashun was for and I have to come to the hospitol for an hour evry night after work. They are gonna pay me mony every month for learning to be smart.

Im glad Im going back to work because I miss my job and all my frends and all the fun we have there.

Dr Strauss says I shud keep writing things down but I dont have to do it every day just when I think of something or something speshul happins. He says dont get discoridged because it takes time and it happins slow. He says it took a long time with Algernon before he got 3 times smarter than he was before. Thats why Algernon beats me all the time because he had that operashun too. That makes me feel better. I coud probly do that *amazed* faster than a reglar mouse. Maybe some day Ill beat him. That would be something. So far Algernon looks smart permanent.

Mar 25 (I dont have to write **PROGRESS REPORT** on top any more just when I hand it in once a week for Dr Nemur. I just have to put the date on. That saves time)

We had a lot of fun at the factory today. Joe Carp said hey look where Charlie had his operashun what did they do Charlie put some brains in. I was going to tell him but I remembered Dr Strauss said no. Then Frank Reilly said what did you do Charlie forget your key and open your door the hard way. That made me laff. Their really my friends and they like me.

Sometimes somebody will say hey look at Joe or Frank or George he really pulled a Charlie Gordon. I dont know why they say that but they always laff. This morning Amos Borg who is the 4 man at Donnegans used my name when he shouted at Ernie the office boy. Ernie lost a packige. He said Ernie for godsake what are you trying to be a Charlie Gordon. I dont understand why he said that.

Mar 28 Dr Strauss came to my room tonight to see why I dint come in like I was suppose to. I told him I dont like to race with Algernon any more. He said I dont have to for a while but I shud come in. He had a present for me. I thot it was a little television but it wasnt. He said I got to turn it on when I go to sleep. I said your kidding why shud I turn it on when Im going to sleep. Who ever herd of a thing like that. But he said if I want to get smart I got to do what he says. I told him I dint think I was going to get smart and he puts his hand on my sholder and said Charlie you dont know it yet but your getting smarter all the time. You wont notice for a while. I think he was just being nice to make me feel good because I dont look any smarter.

Oh yes I almost forgot. I asked him when I can go back to the class at Miss Kinnians school. He said I wont go their. He said that soon Miss Kinnian will come to the hospitol to start and teach me speshul.

Mar 29 That crazy TV kept up all night. How can I sleep with something yelling crazy things all night in my ears. And the nutty pictures. Wow. I don't know what it says when Im up so how am I going to know when Im sleeping.

Dr Strauss says its ok. He says my brains are lerning when I sleep and that will help me when Miss Kinnian starts my lessons in the hospitl (only I found out it isn't a hospitl its a labatory.) I think its all crazy. If you can get smart when your sleeping why do people go to school. That thing I don't think will work. I use to watch the late show and the late late show on TV all the time and it never made me smart. Maybe you have to sleep while you watch it.

progress report 9—April 3

Dr Strauss showed me how to keep the TV turned low so now I can sleep. I don't hear a thing. And I still dont understand what it says. A few times I play it over in the morning to find out what I lerned when I was sleeping and I don't think so. Miss Kinnian says Maybe its another langwidge. But most times it sounds american. It talks faster than even Miss Gold who was my teacher in 6 grade.

I told Dr. Strauss what good is it to get smart in my sleep. I want to be smart when Im awake. He says its the same thing and I have two minds. Theres the *sub-conscious* and the *conscious* (thats how you spell it). And one dont tell the other one what its doing. They dont even talk to each other. Thats why I dream. And boy have I been having crazy dreams. Wow. Ever since that night TV. The late late late show.

I forgot to ask him if it was only me or if everybody had those two minds.

(I just looked up the word in the dictionary Dr Strauss gave me. The word is *subconscious*. *adj. Of the nature of mental operations yet not present in consciousness; as, subconscious conflict of desires.*) There's more but I still dont know what it means. This isnt a very good dictionary for dumb people like me.

Anyway the headache is from the party. My friends from the factory Joe Carp and Frank Reilly invited me to go to Muggsys Saloon for some drinks. I don't like to drink but they said we will have lots of fun. I had a good time.

Joe Carp said I should show the girls how I mop out the toilet in the factory and he got me a mop. I showed them and everyone laughed when I told that Mr. Donnegan said I was the best janitor he ever had because I like my job and do it good and never miss a day except for my operashun.

I said Miss Kinnian always said Charlie be proud of your job because you do it good.

Everybody laughed and we had a good time and they gave me lots of drinks and Joe said Charlie is a card when hes potted. I dont know what that means but everybody likes me and we have fun. I cant wait to be smart like my best friends Joe Carp and Frank Reilly.

I dont remember how the party was over but I think I went out to buy a newspaper and coffe for Joe and Frank and when I came back there was no one their. I looked for them all over till late. Then I dont remember so good but I think I got sleepy or sick. A nice cop brot me back home Thats what my landlady Mrs Flynn says.

But I got a headache and a big lump on my head. I think maybe I fell but Joe Carp says it was the cop they beat up drunks some times. I don't think so. Miss Kinnian says cops are to help people. Anyway I got a bad headache and Im sick and hurt all over. I dont think Ill drink anymore.

April 6 I beat Algernon! I dint even know I beat him until Burt the tester told me. Then the second time I lost because I got so exited I fell off the chair before I finished. But after that I beat him 8 more times. I must be getting smart to beat a smart mouse like Algernon. But I don't *feel* smarter.

I wanted to race Algernon some more but Burt said thats enough for one day. They let me hold him for a

minit. Hes not so bad. Hes soft like a ball of cotton. He blinks and when he opens his eyes their black and pink on the eges.

I said can I feed him because I felt bad to beat him and I wanted to be nice and make friends. Burt said no Algernon is a very specshul mouse with an opera-shun like mine, and he was the first of all the animals to stay smart so long. He told me Algernon is so smart that every day he has to solve a test to get his food. Its a thing like a lock on a door that changes every time Algernon goes in to eat so he has to lern something new to get his food. That made me sad because if he couldn't lern he woud be hungry.

I don't think its right to make you pass a test to eat. How would Dr Nemur like it to have to pass a test every time he wants to eat. I think Ill be friends with Algernon.

April 9 Tonight after work Miss Kinnian was at the laboratory. She looked like she was glad to see me but scared. I told her dont worry Miss Kinnian Im not smart yet and she luffed. She said I have confidence in you Charlie the way you struggled so hard to read and right better than all the others. At werst you will have it for a littel wile and your doing somthing for science.

We are reading a very hard book. Its called *Robinson Crusoe* about a man who gets merooned on a dessert Iland. Hes smart and figers out all kinds of things so he can have a house and food and hes a good swimmer. Only I feel sorry because hes all alone and has no frends. But I think their must be somebody else on the iland because theres a picture with his funny umbrella looking at footprints. I hope he gets a frend and not be lonely.

April 10 Miss Kinnian teaches me to spell better. She says look at a word and close your eyes and say it over and over until you remember. I have lots of truble with *through* that you say *threw* and *enough* and *tough* that you dont say *enew* and *tew*. You got to say *enuff*