



# Had a Good Time: Stories from American Postcards

*Robert Olen Butler*

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## **Had a Good Time: Stories from American Postcards** Robert Olen Butler

For many years Pulitzer Prize-winning author Robert Olen Butler has collected picture postcards from the early twentieth century-not so much for the pictures on the fronts but for the messages written on the backs, little bits of the captured souls of people long since passed away. Using these brief messages of real people from another age, Butler creates fully imagined stories that speak to the universal human condition. In "Up by Heart," a Tennessee miner is called upon to become a preacher, and then asked to complete an altogether more sinister task. In "The Ironworkers' Hayride," a young man named Milton embarks on a romantic adventure with a girl with a wooden leg. From the deeply moving "Carl and I," where a young wife writes a postcard in reply to a card from her husband who is dying of tuberculosis, to the eerily familiar "The One in White," where a newspaper reporter covers an incident of American military adventurism in a foreign land, these are intimate and fascinating glimpses into the lives of ordinary people in an extraordinary age.

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