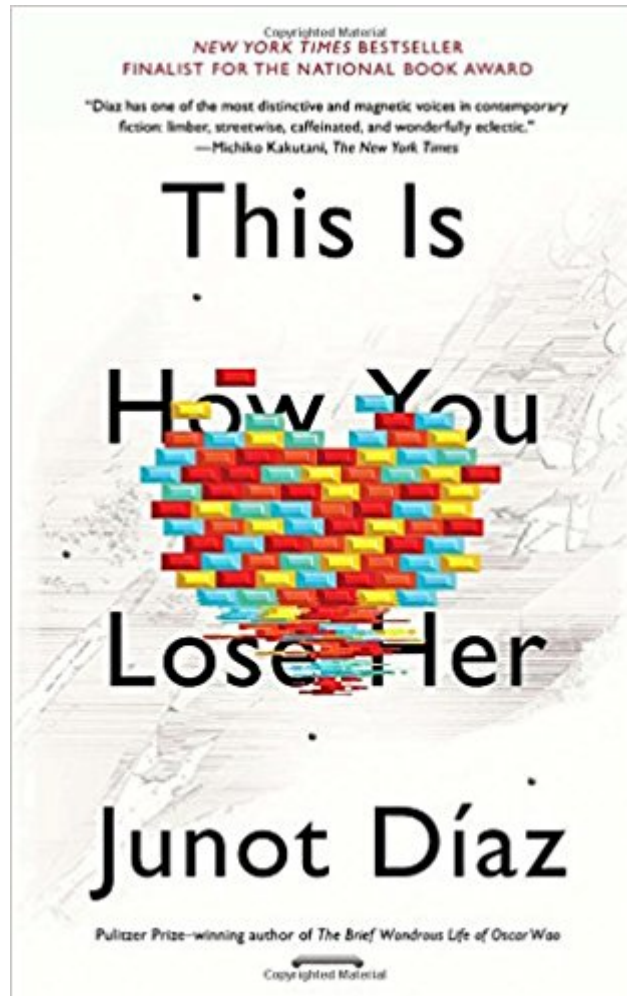




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# This Is How You Lose Her



## Synopsis

Finalist for the 2012 National Book Award  
A Time and People Top 10 Book of 2012  
Finalist for the 2012 Story Prize  
Chosen as a notable or best book of the year by The New York Times, Entertainment Weekly, The LA Times, Newsday, Barnes & Noble, the iTunes bookstore, and many more... "Electrifying."  
The New York Times Book Review  
"Exhibits the potent blend of literary eloquence and street cred that earned him a Pulitzer Prize  
His prose is vulgar, brave, and poetic.  
O Magazine  
From the award-winning author, a stunning collection that celebrates the haunting, impossible power of love. On a beach in the Dominican Republic, a doomed relationship flounders. In a New Jersey laundry room, a woman does her lover's washing and thinks about his wife. In Boston, a man buys his love child, his only son, a first baseball bat and glove. At the heart of these stories is the irrepressible, irresistible Yunior, a young hardhead whose longing for love is equaled only by his recklessness--and by the extraordinary women he loves and loses. In prose that is endlessly energetic, inventive, tender, and funny, these stories lay bare the infinite longing and inevitable weakness of the human heart. They remind us that passion always triumphs over experience, and that "the half-life of love is forever."

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Best Books of the Month, September 2012: This Is How You Lose Her features nine stories by Junot Diaz, who won the Pulitzer Prize for his novel The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao in 2008. At the center of each story is Yunior (making his third appearance in Diaz's work), a Dominican

American stud who, despite his macho exterior, aches to be loved. At first blush, this slim volume lacks the ambition and scope of Oscar Wao, a condensed pop-culture epic. But Diaz has done an extraordinary thing here: He has taken Yunior's heart and battered it every which way to show how love--romantic, physical, or familial--can affect even the most masculine character. The final story, "The Cheater's Guide to Love," features the collection's stickiest line: "The half-life of love is forever." Diaz compares heartbreak to radiation, its strength decaying exponentially over time. You can bury it underground and try to forget about it, but it never goes away entirely. --Kevin Nguyen

--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Junot Díaz writes in an idiom so electrifying and distinct it's practically an act of aggression, at once enthralling, even erotic in its assertion of sudden intimacy [It is] a syncopated swagger-step between opacity and transparency, exclusion and inclusion, defiance and desire. His prose style is so irresistible, so sheerly entertaining, it risks blinding readers to its larger offerings. Yet he weds form so ideally to content that instead of blinding us, it becomes the very lens through which we can see the joy and suffering of the signature Díaz subject: what it means to belong to a diaspora, to live out the possibilities and ambiguities of perpetual insider/outsider status.

• The New York Times Book Review "Nobody does scrappy, sassy, twice-the-speed of sound dialogue better than Junot Díaz. His exuberant short story collection, called *This Is How You Lose Her*, charts the lives of Dominican immigrants for whom the promise of America comes down to a minimum-wage paycheck, an occasional walk to a movie in a mall and the momentary escape of a grappling in bed."

• Maureen Corrigan, NPR "Exhibits the potent blend of literary eloquence and street cred that earned him a Pulitzer Prize. Díaz's prose is vulgar, brave, and poetic.

• O Magazine "Searing, irresistible new stories. It's a harsh world Díaz conjures but one filled also with beauty and humor and buoyed by the stubborn resilience of the human spirit.

• People "Junot Díaz has one of the most distinctive and magnetic voices in contemporary fiction: limber, streetwise, caffeinated and wonderfully eclectic. The strongest tales are those fueled by the verbal energy and magpie language that made *Brief Wondrous Life* so memorable and that capture Yunior's efforts to commute between two cultures, Dominican and American, while always remaining an outsider.

• Michiko Kakutani, The New York Times "These stories are virtuosic, command performances that mine the deceptive, lovelorn hearts of men with the blend of tenderness, comedy and vulgarity of early Philip Roth. It's Díaz's voice that's such a delight,

and it is every bit his own, a melting-pot pastiche of Spanglish and street slang, pop culture and Dominican culture, and just devastating descriptive power, sometimes all in the same sentence. "USA Today" "Impressive comic in its mopiness, charming in its madness and irresistible in its heartfelt yearning." "The Washington Post" "The dark ferocity of each of these stories and the types of love it portrays is reason enough to celebrate this book. But the collection is also a major contribution to the short story form..." "It is an engrossing, ambitious book for readers who demand of their fiction both emotional precision and linguistic daring." "NPR" "The centripetal force of Díaz's sensibility and the slangy bar-stool confidentiality of his voice that he makes this hybridization feel not only natural and irresistible, but inevitable, the voice of the future" "[This is How You Lose Her] manages to be achingly sad and joyful at the same time. Its heart is true, even if Yunió isn't." "Salon" "[A] propulsive new collection [that] succeeds not only because of the author's gift for exploring the nuances of the male but because of a writing style that moves with the rhythm and grace of a well-danced merengue." "Seattle Times" "In Díaz's magisterial voice, the trials and tribulations of sex-obsessed objectifiers become a revelation." "The Boston Globe" "Scooch over, Nathan Zuckerman. New Jersey has bred a new literary bad boy" "A." "Entertainment Weekly" "Ribald, streetwise, and stunningly moving • a testament, like most of his work, to the yearning, clumsy ways young men come of age." "Vogue" "[An] excellent new collection of stories [Díaz is] an energetic stylist who expertly moves between high-literary storytelling and fizzy pop, between geek culture and immigrant life, between romance and high drama." "IndieBound" "Taken together, [these stories] braggadocio softens into something much more vulnerable and devastating. The intimacy and immediacy is not just seductive but downright conspiratorial" "A heartbreaker." "The Daily Beast" "Díaz manages a seamless blend of high diction and low, of poetry and vulgarity" "Look no further for home truths on sex and heartbreak." "The Economist" "This collection of stories, like everything else [Díaz has] written, feels vital in the literal sense of the word. Tough, smart, unflinching, and exposed, This is How You Lose Her is the perfect reminder of why Junot Díaz won the Pulitzer Prize" "[He] writes better about the rapid heartbeat of urban life than pretty much anyone else." "The Christian Science Monitor" "Filled with Díaz's signature searing voice, loveable/despicable characters and so-true-it-hurts goodness."

Flavorwire “DÁfÁ- az writes with subtle and sharp brilliance | He dazzles us with his language skills and his story-making talents, bringing us a narrative that is starkly vernacular and sophisticated, stylistically complex and direct | A spectacular read. • Minneapolis Star-Tribune “[This is How You Lose Her] has maturity in content, if not in ethical behavior | DÁfÁ- az’s ability to be both conversational and formal, eloquent and plainspoken, to say brilliant things Trojan-horsed in slang and self-deprecation, has a way of making you put your guard completely down and be effected in surprising and powerful ways.”

The Rumpus “As tales of relationship redemption go, each of the nine relatable short stories in Junot DÁfÁ- az’s consummate collection This Is How You Lose Her triumphs | Through interrogative second-person narration and colloquial language peppered with Spanish, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author authentically captures Junior’s cultural and emotional dualities. • Metro “Searing, sometimes hilarious, and always disarming | Readers will remember why everyone wants to write like DÁfÁ- az, bring him home, or both. Raw and honest, these stories pulsate with raspy ghetto hip-hop and the subtler yet more vital echo of the human heart. • Publishers Weekly (starred review)

“DÁfÁ- az’s standout fiction remains pinpoint, sinuous, gutsy, and imaginative | Each taut tale of unrequited and betrayed love and family crises is electric with passionate observations and off-the-charts emotional and social intelligence | Fast-paced, unflinching, complexly funny, street-talking tough, perfectly made, and deeply sensitive, DÁfÁ- az’s gripping stories unveil lives shadowed by prejudice and poverty and bereft of reliable love and trust. These are precarious, unappreciated, precious lives in which intimacy is a lost art, masculinity a parody, and kindness, reason, and hope struggle to survive like seedlings in a war zone. • Booklist (starred review) “DÁfÁ- az’s third book is as stunning as its predecessors. These stories are hard and sad, but in DÁfÁ- az’s hands they also crackle. • Library Journal (starred review) “Magnificent | an exuberant rendering of the driving rhythms and juicy Spanglish vocabulary of immigrant speech | sharply observed and morally challenging. • Kirkus “A beautifully stirring look at ruined relationships and lost love • and a more than worthy follow-up to [DÁfÁ- az’s] 2007 Pulitzer winner, The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao. • Bookpage “In Á This Is How You Lose Her, DÁfÁ- az writes with subtlety and grace, once again demonstrating his remarkable facility for developing fully-realized and authentic characters with an economical rawness... Á DÁfÁ- az skillfully portrays his protagonist so vividly, and with so Á Á much apparent honesty, that Yuniór’s voice comes across with

an immediacy that never once feels inauthentic." *California Literary Review*  
"D'Aí- az continues to dazzle with his dynamite, street-bruised wit. The bass line of this collection is a thumpingly raw and sexual foray into lives that claw against poverty and racism. It is a wild rhythm that makes more vivid the collection's heart-busted steadiness." *Dallas Morning News*

I had heard all about this author and this was the first book of his that I read. I was caught off guard at first by how 'colloquial' the language was. But because of that, the story was very real, raw, sincere, touching. Throughout the book I was left wondering what portion of the book was autobiography, memoir, fiction, or fiction loosely based on reality. I still don't know the answer, but I haven't dug too much to find out because in some ways I think it is better to be left debating with myself regarding where I think it falls along the spectrum. I would definitely recommend the book to others as an example of modern high quality literature rooted outside of the 'mainstream' (read: whitewashed) literary circles.

I LOVE Junot Diaz. I loved *Drown* and I loved *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao*. I looked forward to this book with great anticipation. I was somewhat disappointed in the beginning but ended up thinking this book was OK. In my opinion, it is very uneven. The best story is the last one which was excellent. Most of the stories did not live up to what I expect from Junot. Another note: If you aren't from the DR or another Caribbean Spanish speaking country, it is helpful to read this book with an e-reader. E-readers allow you to quickly switch online to look up a word or phrase in Urban Dictionary or BabelFish. There are many Spanish words and slang that I am unfamiliar with in the book. It helped to look them up to get proper context. I read *Drown* and *The Brief Life* as regular books and it was much harder to reference some of the words Diaz uses. However, with an e-reader, it was a snap!

I had difficulty finishing this book. It tells the character's story through a series of vignettes that jump around through his life. In some of the chapters he's telling the story and in others someone else is. That was one difficulty in following it. The character also refers to himself as "you" and other characters as "me" so there were many times that I wasn't clear on which character was actually talking. And there is a lot of Spanish, particularly slang and swear words, liberally sprinkled throughout. So unless you speak Spanish, you have to infer the meaning through the context. I know this is an award winning author and I found out after finishing that it is semi-biographical,

which made it more interesting in retrospect, but I wasn't riveted.

I had very high expectations about this book. My expectations were so high that I waited until my semester, in college, was over to read it because I knew I would damn the real world and submerge myself in Junot's. I glad I did. In this book we find lots of what has made Junot's style well his style. He brings his background from the Dominican Republic and Urban settings of NY and NJ. Those things for what I have read seem to alienate some people ( something I do not understand, because these same people seem very at ease with a story about "imaginary" types of humans, as elves, gobbling ect). If you are looking for a book where people act perfectly make no mistakes, ever, and the guy loves the girl how hollywood taught us this is certainly not your book. I'm so sorry this is such a long review. To end this before I keep on I just want to tell you that I loved this book, that the characters in it were flawed. That I laughed that I cried ( yes actual tears) and that's all I have for you. Ps: I read in some reviews some people said that the only things they learned about this book was that all Dominican men cheat and the Dominican women were "whores", If you are going to base your opinion of a whole nation of people in a few fictional characters you might need to read other types of books. You know about how to overcome prejudice and stuff :-)

I did not know what to expect from this book as I needed it for my English class. As we began reading it I started seeing insight in the life of an immigrant. The struggles and life that must be lived to survive sometimes. He chooses his words gracefully and with intent. Being a minority in the United States is hard. I am not a minority but did grow up in a minority strong city. The struggles are real and I give praise for someone to write so directly and passionate. I will be reading more of his books for sure. I would recommend for an adult.

I haven't found a better writer than Diaz in many decades. Dark, truthful, intricate language that envelops you and keeps you reading all night. His writing often feels like a punch in the stomach. His style is that powerful. I am a huge fan of Junot Diaz. His complex characters ruin themselves and their lives sometimes, but it feels so true that you ache along with them.

I found that this book left too much to be desired. I expected that stereotypes wouldn't be reinforced to the degree that they were in this book. This was an opportunity for the author to inform me about a different culture--Dominicans in urban America -- but he chose to stay within the lines. Several of the characters deserved more--and should have been allowed to show who they really were. I

thought this was disappointing and certainly not worthy of a supposed excellent contemporary writer.

If you read the author's *The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao* first, you will double your pleasure. But it isn't required: *This is How You Lose Her* will sweep you into the romantic life and hopes of a writer/professor from the Dominican Republic teaching college in the United States. Díaz takes you on a ride that is always entertaining, even when sad, as his (autobiographical?) narrator looks for love and forever messes up his chances. His is a rich, ethnic voice, very street-wise, intimate and savvy: it perfectly captures his efforts to find some kind of happiness in a country not quite his own. Junot Díaz is an authentic talent, highly-praised by critics and readers. If you like contemporary stories, you will really appreciate the unique Díaz style.

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