



The Getaway and Other Stories

Dorothy Thomas

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Despite the rustic charm of their settings, the bitingly humorous short stories of Dorothy Thomas (1898–1990) challenge stereotypes of good-hearted country people—a harried woman tries to rid herself of her impertinent son as he refuses to cooperate with her plans to leave him and his father for another man; an old woman given a late second chance to marry the man she loves loses out once more because of her literal mindedness; a child's fib grows into a detailed fiction leading one family to embarrassment and another to stretch beyond their means; and two little girls with childish ingenuity foil their step-mother's opportunity for a romantic fling when their father is away.

In these twelve stories Thomas is most concerned with the flaws in familial relationships, but her analysis never turns bitter. Thomas used what she called "telling detail" to animate her characters as they repeatedly trump their family's needs with their own desires, and children are often the most prescient of all about the self-destructive plans of the adults around them.

Dorothy Thomas dropped out of high school and taught school in Scottsbluff, Nebraska, to help support her family. While living in western Nebraska, she began to write short stories inspired by the insights afforded by her position as a live-in teacher in the homes of her students. She began to publish her stories in magazines such as the *New Yorker* and *Atlantic Monthly* and eventually gave up teaching to write full time. She also published two books—*Ma Jeeter's Girls* and *The Home Place*, both available in Bison Books edition—and became part of the writing community centered around the literary magazine *Prairie Schooner*.

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