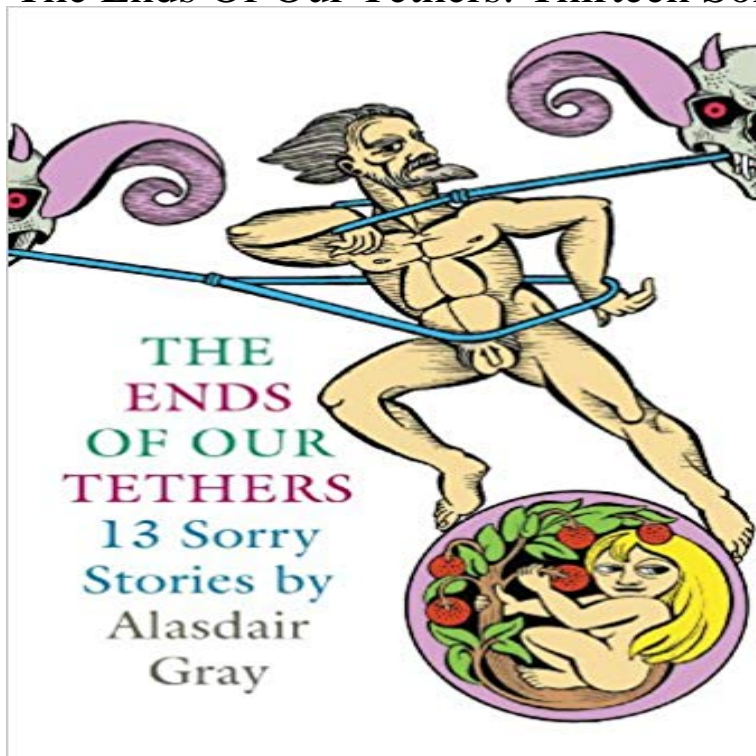


The Ends Of Our Tethers: Thirteen Sorry Stories: Thirteen Sorry Stories



Since 1981, when Alasdair Gray's first novel *Lanark* was published by Canongate, his characters have aged as fast as their author. *The Ends of Our Tethers* shows the high jinks of many folk in the last stages of physical, moral and social decrepitude - a sure tonic for the young. The first work of fiction in over six years by one of Britain's most original and brilliant writers, this wonderful (and very funny) new collection reaffirms Gray's position as a master of the short story. *The Ends of Our Tethers* is vintage Gray - experimental, mischievous, wide-ranging but also subtly connected. And as always the work is hallmarked with his highly engaging prose style, dry wit and fecund imagination. These thirteen tales challenge prejudice, question social imbalances and explore human foibles. In *No Bluebeard*, a socially reclusive man, veteran of three marriages, meets a disturbed and eccentric woman desperate to remain hidden from her family. In *Jobs Skin Game* a father develops a skin condition in response to the emotional shock of losing his two sons in the September 11th attacks and his fortune in the dot-com crisis. The exquisite pleasure he takes from scratching and peeling his dead epidermis becomes his sole preoccupation and a metaphor for what is ultimately a wholly sane response to tragedy. *Wellbeing* offers a politically charged dystopian vision of a future Britain as seen through the eyes of a once-revered writer, now homeless yet stubbornly refusing to move to a more hospitable country as there are better ways of living than being happy, but they require strength and sanity. Beautifully produced and illustrated throughout with Gray's distinctive drawings, this is an important and highly accessible collection.

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