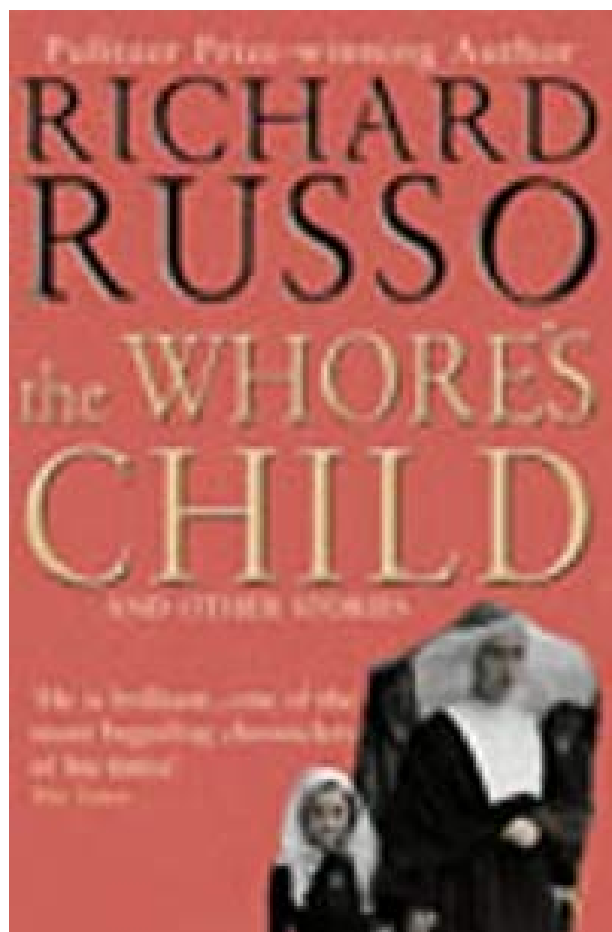


The Whore's Child and Other Stories



Pages:	240
Genre:	Short Stories
Author:	Richard Russo
ISBN13:	9780099437529
Language	English
Goodreads Rating:	3.74
Published:	November 1st 2003 by Vintage Books USA
ISBN10:	009943752X

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With a fluency of tone that will surprise even his devoted readers these short stories capture both bewildering horror and heartrending tenderness with an absorbing, compassionate authority. Awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his best-selling *Empire Falls*—also named the year's best novel by *Time*—Richard Russo now focuses, in his first book of short fiction, on a fresh and fascinating range of human behavior. With a fluency of tone that will surprise even his devoted readers, he captures both bewildering horror and heartrending tenderness with an absorbing, compassionate authority.

We warm to these newcomers—as to all Russo's characters—almost despite ourselves. A jaded Hollywood moviemaker uncovers a decades-old flame he never knew he'd harbored. A precocious fifth grader puzzles over life, love and baseball as he watches his parents' marriage dissolve. Another child is forced into a harrowing cross-country escape whose actual purpose he learns only after the fact. An elderly couple rediscovers the power, and the misery, of their relationship during a long-awaited retreat to a resort island. And in the title story, a septuagenarian nun invades the narrator's college writing workshop with an incredible saga.