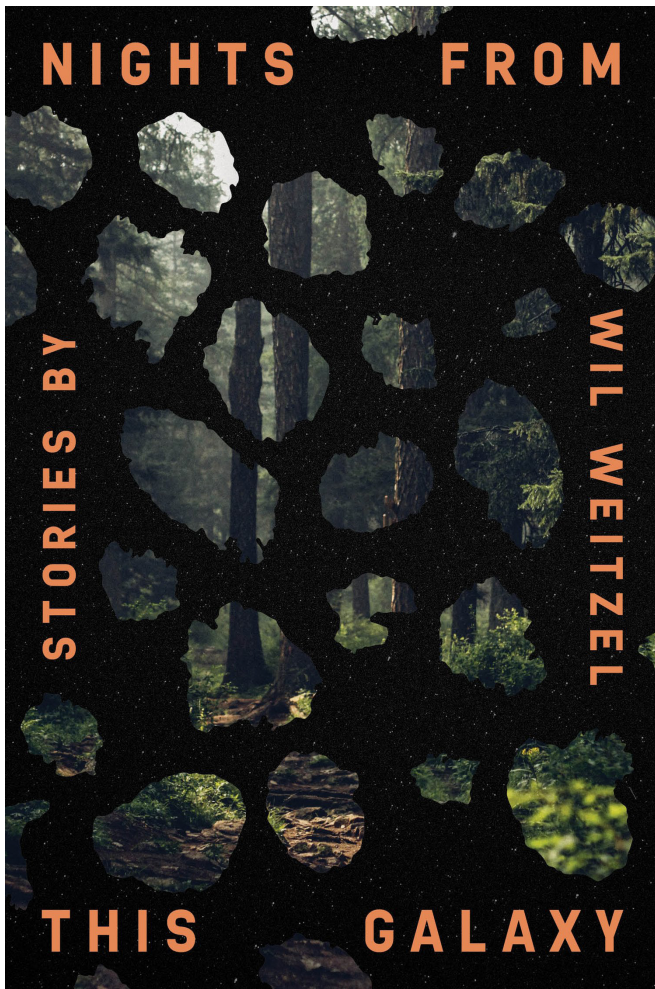




NIGHTS FROM THIS GALAXY

WIL WEITZEL

STORIES



QUESTIONS

1. How do you think Molly in “Three Parts of Hunger” will react at the end once she’s had more time to see the old lion alive?
2. Syd seems to have a multi-sensory relation to the forest in “Run”; how would you describe Vincent’s way of seeing, hearing, and feeling the world around him?
3. In “One Road,” the old man in the Hilux is not a principal character but he seems to matter to Michael—how does the old man change things, or what role does his presence serve for Michael?
4. Kathy in “Wilderness” and “The Canoeist” is maybe the same person but her personal details are not identical. What are the overlaps? Who is she and what does she care about deep down??
5. In “Leviathan,” Harold seems to undergo some shift through this experience in the ocean with the tiger shark. He doesn’t usually get in the ocean, but he did today. What changes in him or what does he find within himself—or is there another way you would ask that question that gets at his experience somehow?
6. What happens at the end of “Wilderness”—does Kathy survive? Does the wolf/do the wolves survive? What happens after the story stops telling us?
7. The narrator of “Coyote” seems lost and found at the same time, like he doesn’t know what he wants or where he is going, but he does. What does the coyote show him, or what does he show the coyote? How does traveling, movement across the land, fit into that?

8. The woman in “The Night Shades of the Ocean” seems also to be on the move, both night and day, even though it is within the restricted sphere of an apartment and its small yard. How does the ocean function in this story, the tree? Why and how do they matter for her?
9. Kathy in “The Canoeist” goes out into the woods with Orion. They’ve always done that together. How do her relations with Orion, her father, and Paul come together—or never come together??

WRITING PROMPTS

1. Imagine a landscape that looks just like one you know well but with a few crucial differences. What are those differences and how do they change what is important or real about that landscape, how its parts fit together? Try, if possible, in imagining these shifts in topography, weather, climate, or ecology to put this part of the earth you know into motion so it is at once familiar and unfamiliar. How does it own its stories or reveal them through these shifts you are imagining? How do we see species (human and non-human) adapting?
2. How can somebody alone have a conversation with a forest, a mountain, or the ocean? What if they don’t use words but thought and action? What would that conversation look like or sound like, feel like? How might the surrounding world respond? In a storm? A biodiverse language of species? What if discovery and exploration were ways to speak to the land or to a lake or river or sea? How might somebody coming to know a place, learning its shape and secrets, start to make a story out of that connection?



Wil Weitzel received a PhD in Comparative Literature from Harvard University and an MFA in Fiction Writing from New York University Writers Workshop in Paris. His stories have appeared or are forthcoming in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Conjunctions*, *Crazyhorse*, *EPOCH*, *Kenyon Review*, *The O. Henry Prize Stories*, and *Prairie Schooner*, among others. He received a New York City Emerging Writers Fellowship at the Center for Fiction and won the Washington Square Review Flash Fiction Award. His fiction has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and been a finalist for the American Short Fiction Halifax Ranch Prize. His creative nonfiction was recognized as notable in *The Best American Essays*, and he is currently at work on a novel focused on the natural world and connecting with other species.