



# The Physics of Imaginary Objects

*Tina May Hall*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

# The Physics of Imaginary Objects

*Tina May Hall*

**The Physics of Imaginary Objects** Tina May Hall

Winner of the 2010 Drue Heinz Literature Prize

*The Physics of Imaginary Objects*, in fifteen stories and a novella, offers a very different kind of short fiction, blending story with verse to evoke fantasy, allegory, metaphor, love, body, mind, and nearly every sensory perception. Weaving in and out of the space that connects life and death in mysterious ways, these texts use carefully honed language that suggests a newfound spirituality.

## The Physics of Imaginary Objects Details

Date : Published September 28th 2010 by University of Pittsburgh Press (first published September 15th 2010)

ISBN : 9780822943983

Author : Tina May Hall

Format : Hardcover 160 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Poetry

 [Download The Physics of Imaginary Objects ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Physics of Imaginary Objects ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Physics of Imaginary Objects Tina May Hall**

---

## From Reader Review The Physics of Imaginary Objects for online ebook

### Autumn Kotsiuba says

I should have loved this. I picked it up for the title, honestly. It's poetic, a little dark, lyrical. Short stories. Everything I usually love in literature. But this fell short for me; the imagery felt like it was placed there to shock, not to aid in the story itself.

I dunno. Other stuff I'm reading is good right now, so maybe I'm being momentarily harsh in comparison.

---

### Jason Walker says

There are other comparisons to made but this book breaks ground in a good way. There is a combination of short story tellying as well as short-shorts and a novella told in prose that masquareades as prose-poems in the Simic style.

When reading you can feel that the author is in control of her subject matter and that you are reading a unique work that will not find a parallel in the coming months or years.

This is highly recommended, some of the best writing you will find.

---

### J.Aleksandr Wootton says

Proof that even bargain bin selections at used book stores are worth taking risks on.

Hall is a writers' writer, the sort that aspiring writers should read and admire and study. She is brilliant at indirection and style, at coaxing leaps of intuition out of the reader. Highly recommended.

---

### Julia says

Lyrical and compelling - I especially liked the sonnet piece and the short story at the end told through vignettes.

---

### Renee Alberts says

Tina May Hall is clearly a writer who pays exquisite attention, a collector of news stories and ordinary facts whose inclusion in her prose sparks it to life. The table of contents is enough to pique any reader's curiosity, with titles like "Skinny Girls' Constitution and Bylaws," "Faith Is Three Parts Formaldehyde, One Part Ethyl Alcohol" and "There Is a Factory in Sierra Vista Where Jesus Is Resurrected Every Hour in Hot Plastic and the Stench of Chicken." The collection abounds with quotidian detail and quirky trivia that instantly develop

characters and settings. Her writing is electric, sizzling with precise description, impeccable timing and masterful rhythm. While their darkly magical tone and grounded detail connect the stories, they vary in style, including fables, flash fiction, a novella, lists of fragments from poems and historical records, even a prose sonnet. Some sentences are weighted with so much implied narrative, their collective force creates worlds more than stories, as in "Our mothers won't let us sit on their laps" or "For a moment, I think you are going to propose to me in front of the fry-bread cart, but you are just tying your shoe."

---

### **Michael says**

"For a moment I think you are going to propose to me in front of the fry-bread cart, but you are just tying your shoe. Fathers are dragging their children like wounded soldiers over the grass. The Gravitron is still, its doorway a dead mouth exuding the smell of steel and vomit."  
-from Last Night at The County Fair

You can read my review here:  
<http://redfez.net/redfez/SubPage1.php...>

---

### **Charles Dee Mitchell says**

Stories beautifully told in styles that range from the more-or-less straightforward to the extremely abstract. I think one story is Little Red Riding Hood if it took place in some other dimension. I commend and admire Hall for taking risks and making sure that even her most experimental (I hate that word) approaches never become a pain in the ass.

---

### **'hayat says**

Once you open the book, you are hauled by the titles like "How to Remember a Bird", "A Crown of Sonnets Dedicated to Long-Gone Love", "In Your Endeavors, You May Feel My Ghostly Presence" her pieces are beautifully detailed, so detailed it makes your reading breaks feel a bit more than closing a book then going back to it, she details the little things we barely notice so perfectly that when you finish a piece, every step of yours, every breath will taste/feel different.

The characters stay on you, not as a burden but they stay beneath your finger nails, they are there when you wake up and there to tell you her stories about them to sleep.

As a writer, it's hard to figure out which detail to write about and which to leave unwritten. And Tina's choices were brilliant.

---

### **Rachael says**

straddles the line between poetry and prose. i think there was one short story i didn't like, which was just verbal repetition and sound manipulation, but i can still appreciate what she was doing. i enjoyed her style though.

---

### **Robert Vaughan says**

These short shorts are really riveting. Tina May Hall writes quirky, but savory stories that turn on a dime. She has mastered the element of surprise, and this keeps the reader on his/her toes. I preferred the first part of the book, the non-connected stories, rather than the last quarter, a novella titled "All The Day's Sad Stories." This part consisted of linked flash pieces, and some were illuminating, but overall I was less interested. Still, Hall is a writer to follow, and I have, and will continue to, gladly!

---

### **Kathy says**

Amazingly beautiful book, inside and out. I am an ardent Tina May Hall fan.

---

### **Sean Lovelace says**

Technical mastery. Structurally varied. Lyrical. Attention to sentence and submersion into mood. A study of THE BODY.

The type of meticulous prose that makes me think the sentences are made of tubes of glass, but then sometimes shards. Certainly the eyes glitter.

---

### **Brandi Casey says**

I enjoyed the quick read stories, the writing was clever and beautiful. Some stories required slower reading than others, as well as multiple retakes, however overall I thought it was well done. The ending of the Novella threw me off a little bit, but I think it was meant to be open to interpretation. I enjoyed the snapshots of days and feelings. There was a growing tension throughout the story that was intriguing and page turning. Some of the stories liked more than others, overall it was an enjoyable read and not quite what I expected.

---

### **Richard Thomas says**

(Review originally posted by Richard Thomas at The Nervous Breakdown, October 2010)  
<http://www.thenervousbreakdown.com/rt...>

As it often is with new voices, it all starts with a dull buzz, and the sense of serendipity. Something allows the title or the subject matter or the quality of the prose to break through the daily clutter, the onslaught of suggestions and advertising, to sit with you, to hold your hand and not let go. That is the case with this powerful collection of fiction, *The Physics of Imaginary Objects* by Tina May Hall. For me, it started with early adopters, people like Dan Wickett at Dzanc Books and the Emerging Writers Network, and Roxane Gay at PANK. By the time I saw the cover, and tracked down a story online to get a taste of the voice, I was nearly sold. After reading "When Praying to a Saint, Include Something Up Her Alley" at her website (originally published in *Black Warrior Review*) I was in. All in. So very much invested. And a little bit scared.

### JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER.

Long before I got my copy in the mail, I stared at the cover of this book. It was an early clue of what to expect. Throughout these fifteen stories and one novella, there is a constant sense that things may go wrong, that they will definitely go wrong, and that the paranoia you feel as a reader is not a lie, it is not a misinterpretation, there is indeed something happening, something dark, and uncomfortable. The image on the cover is of a mirror, propped up on a structure, black fabric draped over the hidden form, with the tops of pine trees reflected in it, a wire running down the front, off into the dead branches and out of sight. I have always had issues with mirrors. Mirrors and shadows, the things you catch at the edge of your vision. You turn, and there is nothing there. But was there? There is a sense in that cover art that something is happening just out of sight, the wire, it makes no sense, the table and the mirror out in the forest, you can almost feel the presence of someone (or some thing) standing just out of the shot. It is a feeling that came back to me many times while reading these stories.

### CLUES THAT THIS IS GOING TO BE GOOD.

It was the winner of the 2010 Drue Heinz Literature Prize. Included, is “All The Day’s Sad Stories”, the winner of the 2008 Caketrain Chapbook Competition, selected by Brian Evenson. Black Warrior Review. The Collagist. Etc.

### WHAT’S IN A TITLE?

There is a romantic quality to the title of this book, and quite possibly in the idea, the current trend, towards lengthy book and short story titles, a technique that Tina May Hall uses with great success throughout her collection. I’m reminded of *A Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius* by Dave Eggers or Laura van den Berg’s *What the World Will Look Like When All the Water Leaves Us*. For me, it starts with the imaginary objects, the notion that we must be prepared to fantasize, to conjure up something, maybe from a dream, or a wish. And then, implore the physics of that object, the movement, the relationship of that object to its surroundings, the way that our hopes, our fears, manifest in the realities of our existence. They change, they emerge, and they can grant us pleasure, or they can torment us. It doesn’t take much imagination to see the possibility in the title of her stories “By the Gleam of Her Teeth, She Will Light the Path Before Her” or “There Is a Factory in Sierra Vista Where Jesus Is Resurrected Every Hour in Hot Plastic and the Stench of Chicken.” This humor and eccentricity balances the darkness that seeps into most every story, constantly battling for a place on the page.

### A LIST OF WORDS THAT FLITTED OVER MY EYELIDS AT NIGHT WHEN I TRIED TO GO TO SLEEP, THE WORK REFUSING TO LET ME GO.

Haunting, visceral, lush, foreboding, sinister, mythic, ominous, bittersweet, fabled, rich, surreal, unsettling.

### SOME EXAMPLES OF WHAT I’M TALKING ABOUT.

It would be easy to say that this is simply a collection of strange stories, where magical things happen: a bottomless hole appears in a small town; a pregnant woman’s house is a magnet for wild animals; and a group of skinny girls carry the power of witchcraft around like a purse. But it’s more than that. The language is poetic, lyrical, and it lulls you into a false sense of security, something dreamy and sweet, only to turn on you, with a speed and violence that is unnerving. Take this example from “Skinny Girls’ Constitution and Bylaws”:

“We will gestate plump happy babies in the bone cages of our pelvis. When we lift our arms to the moon, there is a sound like branches scraping.”

And this:

“We will not stick our heads in ovens. We will not throw ourselves from bridges, nor weight our pockets, nor disturb our veins.”

This story goes on to list a baker's dozen of young women, each one more bizarre, and touching, and tormented as the next. The beauty of what Tina May Hall does is the pairing of our humanity, the things we can all relate to, with the darker sides of life, the things we turn away from, and choose to ignore. We don't talk about how we would like to put a curse on somebody that has wronged us. Or how we've stared at a bottle of whiskey and the pills next to it, or the long sharp edge of a razor blade, and considered ending it all. We don't exact revenge, and we don't plot the demise of others. And yet, don't we? In our weaker moments, don't we sometimes whisper to ourselves "I wish he was dead"?

"Skinny Girls' Constitution and Bylaws" may have been my favorite story in this collection, but the winning novella "All the Day's Sad Stories" is a close second. (And "Visitations" a very close third.) It's a simple premise. A couple is trying to get pregnant, but things are not going well. Mercy starts kissing her co-worker, and Jake quits his job to be a professional online poker player. There are signs all around them, hints, perhaps warnings, and then the "Xs" begin to appear. I was immediately reminded of the tension and fear that wrapped around me when I saw *The Blair Witch Project*. Something so simple, a chalk mark, an "X" strategically placed under a window, or on the side of the house, on the mailbox, it created this presence, this paranoia, which overshadows everything they do. I won't spoil the ending, but it's certainly something unexpected. The last lines are reminiscent of the emotion and perspective of her characters:

"Now, sitting on the porch with Jake, drinking day-old wine, she spots a paper-skin ghost of a cicada gripping her chair leg and is suddenly awash in happiness, recalling the way these somnolent insects sip tree sap and wait out the dark, the way they sing themselves from the ground."

#### OTHER VOICES THAT JOINED WITH TINA MAY HALL TO CREATE A CHORUS IN MY HEAD.

William Gay, Lydia Davis, Kelly Link, Stephen Graham Jones, Aimee Bender, Miranda July, Holly Goddard Jones, Brian Evenson.

#### FAIRY TALES AND FABLES.

Another compelling component of this collection is the idea of the fable, or the myth. There is a history to these stories, something that connects the contemporary settings and everyday life with that of the fantastic, the mythical, the unknown. Whereas many of us may have grown up with fairy tales presented by Walt Disney, with the princess waking up, the prince saving the damsel in distress, there are other fairy tales that came to mind while reading these powerful tales. I kept thinking of the Brothers Grimm. I was reminded of a couple giving their baby away in "Rumpelstiltskin", or a wolf devouring a grandmother and an axe-man splitting him open to pull her out in "Little Red Riding Hood", or a witch who lives in a house of candy, cooking and eating lost children in "Hansel and Gretel". Those are the tales that I am reminded of, stories that are fine to laugh about when reading them in all of their illustrated, Rated-G humor, but when they are thought of in a modern day setting they are simply horrific and unthinkable.

#### FINAL THOUGHTS ON THE PHYSICS OF IMAGINARY OBJECTS.

There are a lot of good novels out there, good stories being told. The rarity is the voice that stays with you, and in the case of *The Physics of Imaginary Objects*, haunts you. I found myself going back and re-reading, over and over again, passages, whole stories, and I never do that. I'm always eager to move on. I wasn't this time. In fact, I put off writing this review because I wanted to spend more time with the words, the rich language and the layers of thought, emotion, suggestion, trepidation, and beauty. This is one of the best collections of fiction that I've read this year. One of the best I've read in a very long time. Reach out into the darkness and take its hand, fall in love with the shadows, and open yourself up to the unknown.

## Dawn says

A beautiful collection full of expertly honed, refreshingly unique stories. There were a couple stories that weren't my cup of tea (I enjoy literary experimentation, don't get me wrong, but I'm quite the traditional girl when it comes to certain forms/devices), but I always found something to adore, something to surprise me, in every story. *All the Day's Sad Stories* is now my favorite novella, and good lord, those titles. Who wouldn't love titles like: *The Woman Who Fell in Love with a Meteorologist and Stopped the Rain*, *There is a Factory in Sierra Vista Where Jesus is Resurrected Every Hour in Hot Plastic and the Stench of Chicken*, *Faith is Three Parts Formaldehyde, One Part Ethyl Alcohol*, and *In Your Endeavors, You May Feel My Ghostly Presence?* Fucking fabulous. This pretty little book most definitely deserved the illustrious Drue Heinz Literature Prize it received.

---