



# You Don't Say

*Nate Powell*

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## **You Don't Say** Nate Powell

A celebrity glares. A community burns. A child's heart breaks. A recipe summons a ghost. A dying woman makes her peace. An art form sustains the spirit. In *You Don't Say* award-winning graphic novelist Nate Powell -- of the #1 New York Times Bestseller *March: Book One*, and the Eisner Award-Winning "Graphic Novel of the Year" *Swallow Me Whole* -- collects a decade of powerful short works. Autobiography, fiction, essay comics, collaborations, and more fill these thoughtful, pitch-black pages, comprising rare and previously unreleased material from 2004-2013.

## **You Don't Say Details**

Date : Published June 9th 2015 by Top Shelf Productions (first published May 1st 2014)

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Author : Nate Powell

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# From Reader Review You Don't Say for online ebook

## Adela Cacovean says

This book sounded like something I would have liked, but instead I felt very detached from the story and couldn't see the point of what was happening in each chapter . Since I don't enjoy forcing myself to read things that bore me to death, I gave up at 16% .

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## Molly says

This is my favorite collection from Nate Powell as yet. I have been a fan of his art for a long time, and have really been enjoying the *March* series — his work on that series makes more sense to me after reading *You Don't Say*, which includes a couple of stories that showcase his interest in social justice and race relations. Powell's definitely a thoughtful guy, and it's fascinating to see excerpts that were left out of his larger works in their final drafts.

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## Lara says

This is one that I just grabbed off the shelf at work one day because I liked the cover, buuuuuut it's really not working for me. It's a bunch of short comics Nate Powell drew between 2004 and 2013, which...you guys know I'm not good at short stories, and apparently I'm not any better at them in graphic form. I made it through the first 4 or 5, but I just feel like I have no idea what the hell Powell was trying to say with any of them. His art is cool, and I like the look of them, but it feels like the stories themselves just never actually go anywhere at all and leave absolutely no impression when they're finished.

Possibly the later ones are better, but I just can't seem to force my way any further through the book to find out.

I'm calling it. Back to the library with you!

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## David Schaafsma says

Early work from Nate Powell, whose excellent *Swallow Me Whole* I loved. *Swallow* is a dark story of two schizophrenic siblings, a story emerging in part out of his work with developmentally disabled young adults. He also is getting most known for his work in the *March* civil rights trilogy. In the seventeen stories in this volume, you can see brief indications of the work to come in mental health and the American history of racism. Powell grew up in the south and moved to Indiana, expecting to find different racial politics. . . and didn't.

And in many he is responding to our guided by music. Sometimes he suggests a soundtrack for us to listen to as he reads. As a musician, music guides his artistic visions.

Many of these stories are slight, early work, though the artwork is--even then--pretty great. My favorites are "Cakewalk," about a girl who dresses up as Aunt Jemima for Halloween, clueless as to what she is doing; "Like Hell I Will," a brief and painful historical account of the Tulsa massacre of 1921, white Tulsa slaughtering hundreds of black Tulsans because a black kid's stumbling into a white elevator operator got reported as sexual assault; "Conjurers," a sweet story about "conjuring" people and electrification, and the fictional "Villa at the End of the Road," which is emotionally powerful.

I'd call it 3.5, but because so many Goodreads reviewers rate him so low, including on this volume, and I like his work generally so much, I round up to 4.

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### **Wayne McCoy says**

'You Don't Say' is a collection of shorter rare and unpublished works by Nate Powell. He's the artist behind 'March' along with other things. Think of this more like a sketchbook and a glimpse into an artist's work and you may like it as much as I did.

The pieces are from the years 2004 to 2013. They are all rather short. There are unfinished ideas, alternates for published works and unpublished works that were done as art exercises. During part of this time frame, Nate worked as a support provider for adults with developmental disabilities, and some of that influences some of the work. Song lyrics feature in quite a few, including one where he challenged himself to use only the song lyrics for dialogue. A couple are from a friend who tells about Halloween in a very white town, and also attending a Santana concert with her father and getting the death stare from Santana himself.

I love his work on March, and he has a great style. The work here is a little looser in style, but that also lets the work meander over the page without boundaries. Some of the stories are a bit harsh, quite a few have a distinct humor to them. All of them feature a paragraph or so from the artist to give context to how they came to be. It's a pretty interesting look at a pretty talented artist and I'm glad I got to read it.

I received a review copy of this graphic novel from Diamond Book Distributors, Top Shelf Productions, and NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. Thank you for allowing me to review this graphic novel.

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### **Vittorio Rainone says**

I disegni sono affrettati, poco ispirati. Le storie non sono affatto memorabili, e si riducono in quei racconti "shoe gazer" filosofeggianti che tanto fanno indipendente noioso. Da evitare.

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### **Konstantina\_pap says**

Read full review at: <http://thereadingarmchair.blogspot.gr...>

Listen to what *You Don't Say* sounds like, with this *Play(list) by the Book*, a literary playlist:  
<http://thereadingarmchair.blogspot.co...>

Disclaimer: I received an advanced copy of this book from the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

You Don't Say is a collection of short stories, which show us the evolution of Nate Powell as an artist. First of all, I have to confess that this is the first time I read something by Powell, but after this one I will definitely search and read some of his previously released work.

The stories didn't have a common theme. Some were deeply personal, others were surreal sequences, one was a scene that didn't make it to Swallow Me Whole, and some were collaboration of the artist with other writers. From those the more personal stories, sometimes felt almost too personal. It was as if I was reading the diary of Nate Powell, without his permission. These particular stories, which are the first ones in the collection, didn't interest me enough, probably because I couldn't connect with them. I feel that this wouldn't be the case if they were a little more lengthy. My most favourite stories were the last five, which are the most recent ones. These stories were more intriguing to me, because they were either the result of Powell's collaboration with another writer or were just created by him. More precisely, the stories Conjurers and Havens Have Not, were the ones I preferred from the entire collection.

The art style of You Don't Say was impressive. The designs were all unique and memorable. If I happened to pick up a comic, I would recognise it as the work of Nate Powell, without even looking at the cover. The whole collection is in black and white and I'd very much love to see some coloured piece of the artist's work.

All in all, I would say that You Don't Say was a fairly enjoyable read. If you are a fan of Nate Powell, then you should definitely pick it up. If you are, like myself, unaware of his other graphic novels, you could either read this as a guide to the artist's evolution through the years, or start with his other graphic novels. In any case, I believe that this collection is worth a try.

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### **Phoebe Andamo says**

"Intersecting lives shape each other only to become footnotes"

This is a type of graphic novel I don't usually read. Whenever I finish reading every story in this collection, the stories leave me forlorn. It gives me a sense of longing and sometimes emptiness. The lines are overwhelming and some can pass off as written pieces instead of using the graphic platform.

The artist succeeds in transmitting the ink of his art while bleeding his emotions. The generosity of his inking corroborates the loneliness and darkness of the theme. My favorites are Cakewalk, Conjurers, and Havens Have Nots. The artist's progress through time is visible. In reading this artwork, it feels like the artist doesn't care if you understand him, he just wants you to listen.

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### **Alec Longstreth says**

I bought this sight unseen at a convention because I am a huge fan of Nate's work. Months later when I finally sat down to read it, I was initially bummed that much of it is reprinted material from other books that I already had. As it turns out however: 1) it was a real pleasure rereading these stories 2) having this collection means I can now pass on my earlier copies of these stories to other folks 3) There were plenty of

great short stories in here I had never seen before.

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### **Chelsea Martinez says**

I didn't put it together that a long-form magical-realist graphic novel and the March series were illustrated by the same person. This, more than that novel or another collection of stories, really shows why it makes sense that Powell worked on the March series; these autobiographical sketches are sort of informal but not bashful about the authors ideals and how he sees his workaday life exercising them, and seeing this work makes the March series and John Lewis's story a natural fit.

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### **Stewart Tame says**

Nate Powell is a phenomenal artist! This collection of short pieces covers a lot of ground, but all are worth reading. His stories tend to meander a bit, and are more character studies than plot-driven. He has a wonderfully delicate subtlety to his facial expressions and story beats. My favorites from this book are probably "Cakewalk", "Like Hell I Will", "Conjurers", and "Havens Have Not." But, as I said, the whole book is excellent.

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### **Sam Quixote says**

Nate Powell's best known for being the artist on March, the ongoing autobiographical comic of civil rights activist Congressman John Lewis, though you might also know him as the author of Swallow Me Whole. You Don't Say is a collection of his short comics from between 2004-2013, some previously published, some not, and I really want to say it's a great book because it has some comics in here that are excellent, but I found the whole thing very uneven.

Powell's a great artist and all of the pages here are beautifully drawn though it's clear to see his style becoming more streamlined and sophisticated from 2004 to the end of the book in 2013. The early strips have far too much writing crammed in between the art and gives the whole thing a messy look.

But the stories themselves... for the most part, I wasn't really feeling it. It has something to do with their brevity as most are just a couple pages long but also because they're more like illustrated thoughts than stories so they're quite light, unimpressive, and easy to forget. One story is about Powell and a friend having dinner on his birthday then going to a party where he stands around quietly and then leaves. One story is about Powell moving around a lot in his 20s. One story is Powell illustrating Derek Fudesco's lyrics to the Pretty Girls Make Graves song, The Get Away. There are some unused pages from Swallow Me Whole thrown in. Eh...

It's clear right from the start that Powell has a strong social conscience as the opening story is of his time working as a carer for adults with developmental disabilities (Powell credits his childhood love of the X-Men for this by the way!), so it's no surprise that years later John Lewis would pick him to draw his inspiring life story.

It's also towards the end of the book that Powell starts to move away from the wishy-washy stories and latch

onto more substantial subjects such as in “Like Hell I Will”. This comic tells the horrifying true story of Dick Rowland, a black shoe-shiner, who tripped entering an elevator, grabbed the arm of the white female operator to steady himself, and was accused of sexual assault! This being America in 1921, that was all the provocation needed for the white folk of Tulsa to massacre between 300 - 3000 black people - even the police and the national guard joined in, with planes sent in to actually drop bombs on black peoples’ homes! In the aftermath, nobody was arrested.

Conjurers is the other story I liked, about a woman trying to recall the time when, as a kid, her grandmother told her her great-grandmother’s recipe for chicken. Powell effortlessly weaves in the two narratives from different eras into a coherent single thread that connects the women across the years. Beautiful!

The Villa at the End of the Road was an interesting work of fiction that had the menacing tones of some of Hitchcock’s best stories as a woman visits her family’s destroyed cliffside home and meets her odd neighbour.

Though a handful of stories stand out and Powell’s art is wonderful throughout, there are too many average and less-than-average short comics here to recommend You Don’t Say as a great book. That said, there’s bound to be a story or two that’ll stick with you so it might be worth a look.

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### **Kelsey Yandura says**

Ho?ly?cow?. I know from reading other reviews that these stories didn’t do much for some...but damn did they do something for me. Nate Powell’s voice is poignant and honest and striking, taking wide-scale issues and funneling them into unspeakably ordinary moments. This rare combination comes out in short tales that are both unsettling and also full of homespun empathy with a punk-rock twist. Needless to say...I was into it.

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### **Tanvir Muntasim says**

Quite an uneven collection, and more of interest for tracking Powell's growth as a socially conscious artist rather than for literary value. Only 2-3 stories which are good, the rest are too short and middling to leave an impact.

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### **Rowan MacBean says**

I received YOU DON'T SAY as an ARC through NetGalley.com.

I'm unfamiliar with Powell's other work, so I came to this book with no preconceptions. I really like his art-- it looks a little scribbly and casual, but it's still full of details that draw your eye where it needs to go to understand the visual components of the stories.

The stories themselves...vary. I found the first few, a series of four, especially difficult, but it was more my fault than the author's; it covers some of his early adulthood, and there is a lot of stuff there that reminds me

of myself in my late teens and early twenties. Now that I'm in my thirties, the myriad ways in which I've changed over the years make it difficult to remember myself and my peers at that time without a little scorn. It reminds me a little of *CATCHER IN THE RYE*: you need to read it at just the right point in your life, or it won't resonate and it'll leave you baffled or annoyed.

After that small series, the book is full of short stand-alone comics, each just a few pages long. My favorites were the ones that deal with the issue of race, and with the idea of stories, as well as comics as a form of storytelling. There were pieces in *YOU DON'T SAY* that I felt like I really didn't get the point of, but they were few enough that the gems are the ones that stand out to me, that I'll remember when someone asks me if I've read this book.

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