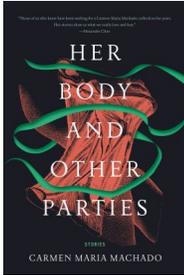


# Books by the Stack



## ***Her Body and Other Parties* by Carmen Maria Machado**

In *Her Body and Other Parties*, Carmen Maria Machado blithely demolishes the arbitrary borders between psychological realism and science fiction, comedy and horror, fantasy and fabulism. In this electric and provocative debut, Machado bends genre to shape startling narratives that map the realities of women's lives and the violence visited upon their bodies.

**Why you'll like it:** *Fantasy. Creepy. Thought-provoking.*

**About the Author:** Carmen Maria Machado's work has appeared in *Granta*, *The New Yorker*, NPR, *Electric Literature*, and elsewhere. She has been nominated for a Nebula Award and a Shirley Jackson Award, and was a finalist for the Calvino Prize. She lives in Philadelphia.

### **Questions for Discussion**

1. This book is a collection of short stories. Do all of the stories tie together in some way? How so? Is there a story that you believe does not belong in the collection? Why?
2. The word "party" can be a noun that means (1) a person, (2) a social gathering, (3) a political group or a verb that means to enjoy oneself at a social gathering. What does the word mean in the context of the title of this book? Why does this collection have this title?
3. What story in the collection did you like the most? Why? What story in the collection did you like the least? Why?
4. The collection opens with two quoted poems by Jacqui Germain and Elizabeth Hewer. What do those poems mean to you? Do they set the tone for the book? What tone is that? Did your interpretation of those poems change after you read the book?
5. What did you think of each of the stories in the collection? Why? How did they make you feel? What do you think they are about? What is the author trying to say in each story, if anything?
6. "The Husband Stitch" relates to a children's story called "The Green Ribbon." What is that relationship? Does this story stand on its own if you haven't read "The Green Ribbon?" Does the "Husband Stitch" make you re-think any earlier opinions you might have had about "The Green Ribbon?"
7. There are periodic instructions throughout "The Husband Stitch" for the reader to take certain actions while reading it out loud. Do those instructions enhance the story? How so?
8. Why do you think Machado chose the first story to be first and the last story to be last?

**9.** What about the titles? What is the author trying to do with the titles? Some possibilities: Titles can tell you what to pay attention to; titles can set the tone of a story; titles can be mysterious until after you have finished the story, when their meaning becomes clear. Does Machado have a “title style”?

**10.** Are there particular stories you could see going on to being novels? If so, why?

**11.** Did you find yourself wondering about certain characters once the story was over? If so, why do you think specific ones stuck with you?

*(Questions provided by book-wyrm.com)*



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