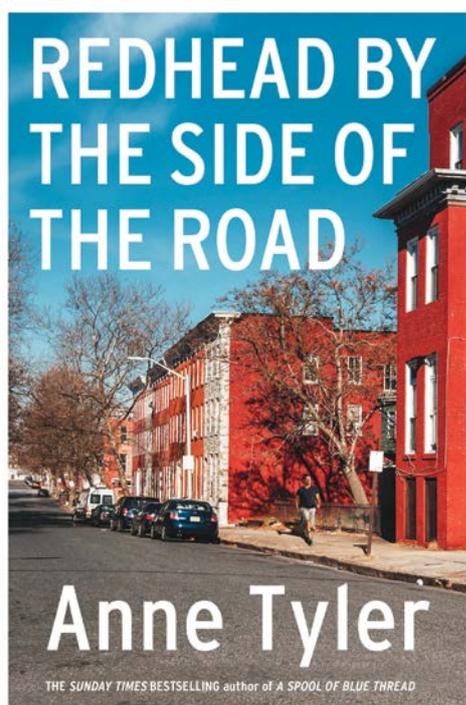




Readers' Guide



Redhead by the Side of the Road

Anne Tyler

Chatto & Windus

Other novels by Anne Tyler

Celestial Navigation (1974)

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant (1982)

Breathing Lessons (1988)

Saint Maybe (1991)

Digging to America (2006)

A Spool of Blue Thread (2015)

Clock Dance (2018)

thebookerprizes.com

About the author

Anne Tyler was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1941 and grew up in Raleigh, North Carolina. Her bestselling novels include *Breathing Lessons*, *The Accidental Tourist*, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant*, *Ladder of Years*, *Back When We Were Grownups*, *A Patchwork Planet*, *The Amateur Marriage*, *Digging to America*, *A Spool of Blue Thread*, *Vinegar Girl* and *Clock Dance*. In 1989 she won the Pulitzer Prize for *Breathing Lessons*; in 1994 she was nominated by Roddy Doyle and Nick Hornby as 'the greatest novelist writing in English'; in 2012 she received the Sunday Times Award for Literary Excellence; and in 2015 *A Spool of Blue Thread* was a *Sunday Times* bestseller and was shortlisted for the Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction and the Man Booker Prize. She lives in Baltimore, USA.

About the book

Micah Mortimer isn't the most polished person you'll ever meet. His numerous sisters and in-laws regard him oddly and very fondly, but he has his ways and means of navigating the world. He measures out his days running errands for work – his TEC H HERMIT sign cheerily displayed on the roof of his car – maintaining an impeccable cleaning regime and going for runs.

But then the order of things starts to tilt. His woman friend Cassia tells him she's facing eviction because of a cat. And when a teenager shows up at Micah's door claiming to be his son, Micah is confronted with another surprise he seems poorly equipped to handle.

Redhead by the Side of the Road is an intimate look into the heart and mind of a man who sometimes finds those around him just out of reach – and a love story about the differences that make us all unique.

What the judges thought

'Anne Tyler's beautifully written story unfolds a very human tale of redemption. Her benevolent eye makes even an unattractive character like Micah Mortimer a sympathetic protagonist.'

Discussion points

The novel opens describing Micah as a very ordinary, unremarkable man. Does this image of him continue throughout the novel?

How does the arrival of Brink disrupt Micah's life?

How do Micah's family members differ to him?

What do you think about the way Micah lives his life?

Themed reading

All Adults Here by Emma Straub

The Most Fun We Ever Had by Claire Lombardo

Stoner by John Edward Williams

Useful links

<http://www.annetyler.com/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/apr/02/redhead-by-the-side-of-the-road-by-anne-tyler-review-quietly-profound>

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/mar/30/anne-tyler-redhead-by-the-side-of-the-road-review>

<https://www.oprahmag.com/entertainment/books/a32082515/anne-tyler-redhead-by-the-side-of-the-road-review/>

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