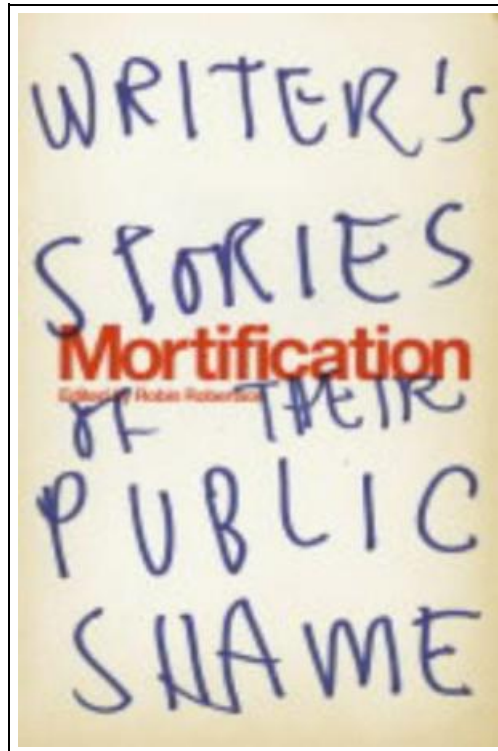


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HarperCollins Publishers, United Kingdom, 2004. Paperback. Condition: New. UK ed.. Language: English . Brand New Book. A collection of stories from some of the world's greatest writers about their own public humiliation. Humiliation is not, of course, unique to writers. However, the world of letters does seem to offer a near-perfect micro-climate for embarrassment and shame. There is something about the conjunction of high-mindedness and low income that is inherently comic; something about the very idea of deeply private thoughts - carefully worked and honed into art over the years - being presented to a public audience of dubious strangers, that strays perilously close to tragedy. Here, in over eighty contributions, are stories about the writer's audience, the fellow readers, the organiser, the venue, the `hospitality', or the often interminable journey there and back. Then there are the experiences of teaching and being taught, reviewing and being reviewed, of festivals and writers retreats, symposia, signing sessions, literary parties and prizes, the trips abroad, with all the attendant joys of translation and, finally, the bright worlds of television and radio that can bring so many more people to share in your shame. These are the best stories: those told against the teller. And for the reader, apart from the sheer schadenfreude of it all, there is admiration too: for that acknowledgement of human frailty, of punctured pride, but also of the seeming absurdity of trying to bring private art into the public space. Contributions from, amongst others: Simon Armitage, Margaret Atwood, Julian Barnes, Louis de Bernieres, Margaret Drabble, Roddy Doyle, AL Kennedy, John Lanchester, Patrick McCabe, Rick Moody, Andrew Motion, Andrew O Hagan, Colm Toibin, Irvine Welsh, James Wood.



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