

SWELL

Son Bo-mi, translated from Korean by Janet Hong

1. *Swell* references many genres, including documentary, journalism, translation, film, fiction, and non-fiction. How does each story relate to the genres it engages with?
2. What literary strategies does the author use to develop connections between the stories in the collection? What impact do these connections have on each individual story, as well as the larger universe they inhabit?
3. Identify the boundaries these stories explore, such as the fictional and the real, life and death, or comedy and tragedy. How does each story explore and challenge boundaries?
4. What is *Swell's* relationship to historical facts or people such as Gordon Gould or Babe Ruth?
5. What is the stories' perspective on work? What role do identities and pressures generated by being a worker play in the characters' lives?
6. Who is Son Bo-mi? What role does her character play in these stories, especially in "Give Them the Lindy Hop" and "The Love of a Scientist"?
7. In the collection's view, what choices are pivotal to shaping everyday life and relationships? Is it possible to go back and change choices we've made or those made for us?
8. In "Blanket," the story's narrator complains about their struggle to write, reflecting that "[at] night in bed, my body would fade while what was left of me swelled like a balloon" (pg. 13). How does this image inform the collection's title? What insight does it shed on *Swell's* exploration of self-perception and self-delusion, the figure of the writer, and narrative (un)reliability?



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