
High Tide in Tucson by Barbara Kingsolver

From Publishers Weekly

Novelist Kingsolver (*Pigs in Heaven*) is not one to let her miscellany stagnate; she has revised or expanded many of the 25 essays included here, most of which have previously been published, and yes, there are thematic links in her view of family, writing, politics and places. The strongest link is Kingsolver's wise and spirited voice, animated by poetic and precise language. A Kentucky transplant to Arizona, Kingsolver recounts the triumph and pathos of her return home as a novelist; she also delights in recollecting her role in the notorious Rock Bottom Remainders, the band of writers famous for their ABA performances. "Raising children is a patient alchemy," she declares; indeed, her self-imposed exile during the Gulf War led her to Spain's Canary Islands and an atmosphere of much greater affection for kids. Reports from Benin and Hawaii, even her aquarium, show the author to be a curious and sensitive observer. Most telling perhaps are Kingsolver's reflections on her mission: because it aims to convey truths we know but can't feel, "[g]ood art is political, whether it means to be or not." Illustrations.

Literary Guild alternate.

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From Library Journal

Twenty-five essays from the author of *Pigs in Heaven* (LJ 6/15/93) grace this collection; some have been previously published, and all have been revised for this book. The title essay uses the metaphor of a hermit crab displaced from the Bahamas to Tucson to express an analogous situation in the author's life; this creature reappears in the final essay, "Reprise," representing the cyclic and rhythmic nature of life. In between, there are musings on life in the desert, feral pigs, libraries, fidelity, childrearing, and the like, all written with a keen sensitivity to Kingsolver's surroundings and often bringing an unusual perspective on seemingly mundane subjects. One can skip around or read the pieces consecutively. Essential for humanities collections in public and academic libraries.

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From Booklist

Admirers of Kingsolver's novels, such as *Pigs in Heaven* (1993) and *Animal Dreams* (1990), will relish the vibrant self-portrait these frank, bright, funny, and generous essays present. An ecologist as well as a writer, Kingsolver is deeply enamored of the world. Her empathy extends to plants and animals of all kinds, including a hermit crab who stowed away in her luggage when she returned from a trip to the Bahamas. The curious behavior of her unusual houseguest inspires Kingsolver to ponder the mystery of internal rhythms, just as her accommodation of the rapacious appetite of the javelinas (wild, woolly pigs) who devour her desert garden leads her to consider the concept of personal property and the hoarding of "more stuff than we need." Wry and to-the-point, Kingsolver recounts some traumatic times, including her "rocky school years" in Kentucky and the gratifying experience of her triumphant return to her hometown to celebrate the publication of her first novel. The place of honor that books and writing have always held in Kingsolver's life is the theme of "How Mr. Dewey Decimal Saved My Life," which is based on her address at the ALA Annual Convention in New Orleans in 1993. Kingsolver also writes with great verve, honesty, and humor about motherhood, housework, fashion, sports, and travel to Africa, Hawaii, and the Canary Islands.

Donna Seaman --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.