



Driving Home: An American Journey

Jonathan Raban

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For more than thirty years, Jonathan Raban has written with infectious fascination about people and places in transition or on the margins, about journeys undertaken and destinations never quite reached, and, as an Englishman transplanted in Seattle, about what it means to feel rooted in America. Spanning two decades, *Driving Home* charts a course through the Pacific Northwest, American history, and current events as witnessed by “a super-sensitive, all-seeing eye. Raban spots things we might otherwise miss; he calls up the apt metaphors that transform things into phenomena. He is one of our most gifted observers” (*Newsday*).

Stops en route include a Missoula bar, a Tea Party convention in Nashville hosted by Sarah Palin, the Mississippi in full flood, a trip to Hawaii with his daughter, a steelhead river in the Cascades, and the hidden corners of his adopted hometown, Seattle. He deftly explores public and personal spaces, poetry and politics, geography and catastrophe, art and economy, and the shifts in various arenas that define our society. Whether the topic is Robert Lowell or Barack Obama, or how various painters, explorers, and homesteaders have engaged with our mythical and actual landscape, he has an outsider’s eye for the absurd, and his tone is intimate, never nostalgic, and always fresh.

Frank, witty, and provocative, *Driving Home* is part essay collection, part diary—and irresistibly insightful about America’s character, contradictions, and idiosyncrasies.

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