



Field Notes: The Grace Note of the Canyon Wren

By Barry Lopez

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Field Notes: The Grace Note of the Canyon Wren By Barry Lopez

In this new collection of twelve stories, one of our most admired writers evokes the longing we feel for beauty in our relationships with one another, with the past, with nature. In these stories, we find men or women -- sometimes at odds with themselves, sometimes transcendently well grounded -- who have an experience that is profound, unsettling, and oddly liberating. In "Empira's Tapestry," a gravely ill woman begins to weave a luminous cloth in which is expressed all of the fervent desire she had for her life ... In "Homecoming," a botanist has become so caught up with his academic ambitions that he forgets the names of the wildflowers in his own woods until his young daughter re-teaches him ... And in "The Entreaty of the Wiideema," an anthropologist traveling with an aboriginal people finds that, because of his aggressive desire to understand them, they remain for him always disturbingly unknowable.

These spare, haunting fictions, building cumulatively on each other, are marked by those qualities we have found in all of Barry Lopez's writing: a sense of the magic and marvelous strangeness of the world, respect for disparate ways of knowing and being, compassion for the human predicament, and a vibrant hope that comes from being alert and attentive to the complex beauties of landscape.

Field Notes is the final book of a loosely connected trilogy that includes Desert Notes (1976) and River Notes (1979) and stands with the best of Barry Lopez's remarkably varied work.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Maria Casillas:

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