



Hunting Mister Heartbreak: A Discovery of America (Vintage Departures)

Jonathan Raban

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A New York Times Notable Book

"In an era of jet tourism, [Jonathan Raban] remains a traveler-adventurer in the tradition of . . . Robert Louis Stevenson."
--The New York Times Book Review

In 1782 an immigrant with the high-toned name J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur--"Heartbreak" in English--wrote a pioneering account of one European's transformation into an American. Some two hundred years later Jonathan Raban, winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, arrived in Crèvecoeur's wake to see how America has paid off for succeeding generations of newcomers. The result is an exhilarating, often deliciously funny book that is at once a travelogue, a social history, and a love letter to the United States.

In the course of Hunting Mr. Heartbreak, Raban passes for homeless in New York and tries to pass for a good ol' boy in Alabama (which entails "renting" an elderly black lab). He sees the Protestant work ethic perfected by Korean immigrants in Seattle--one of whom celebrates her new home as "So big! So green! So wide-wide-wide!"--and repudiated by the lowlife of Key West. And on every page of this peerlessly observant work, Raban makes us experience America with wonder, humor, and an unblinking eye for its contradictions.

"Raban delivers himself of some of the most memorable prose ever written about urban America." --Henry Kisor, Chicago Sun-Times

"When Raban describes America and Americans, he is unfailingly witty and entertaining." --Salman Rushdie

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