Raising Wild: Dispatches from a Home in the Wilderness

Michael Branch

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Raising Wild: Dispatches from a Home in the Wilderness Michael Branch Combining natural history, humor, and personal narrative, *Raising Wild* is an intimate exploration of Nevada's Great Basin Desert, the wild and extreme land of high desert caliche and juniper, of pronghorn antelope and mountain lions, where wildfires and snowstorms threaten in equal measure.

Within this remote, high desert landscape sits the home of Michael Branch, where he, his wife, and their two curious little girls brazenly live among the packrats and ground squirrels, rattlesnakes and scorpions.

In Branch's hands, this exceedingly barren and stark landscape becomes a place teeming with energy, surprise, and an endless web of connections that ultimately includes his family and home. It is in this desert setting where, in building a ladder to the stars, one can find a connection to the past and to the heavens; where his children's first garden becomes not the quaint blossoming of seed to flower and fruit but a smoke bomb—drenched exhibit of futility in the face of the inhospitable desert environment; where the surprise of fire acts as a reminder all too real of the unknowable that awaits us and for which we can never fully prepare.

In this exhilarating, lyrical, and humorous exploration of natural history, Branch reveals a desert wilderness in which our ideas about nature and ourselves are challenged and transformed.



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