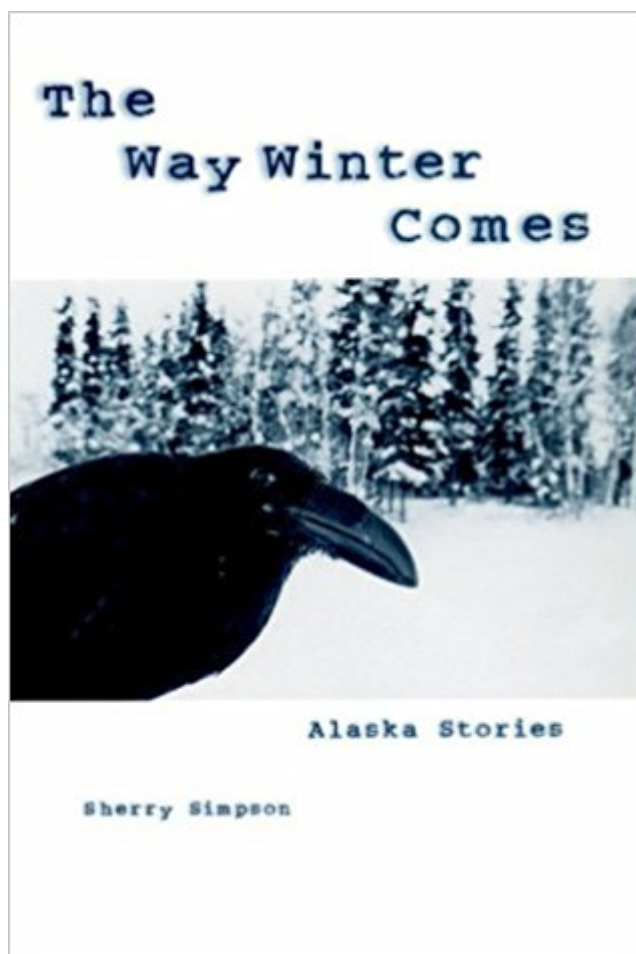


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The Way Winter Comes: Alaska Stories



Synopsis

Book by Simpson, Sherry

Book Information

Hardcover: 176 pages

Publisher: Sasquatch Books (September 1998)

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Customer Reviews

Simpson's debut collection of essays about Alaska, winner of the 1997 Chinook Literary Prize, combines a refreshing voice and vision in a work that is part adventure, part meditation and part natural history lesson. With her distinctive brand of descriptive journalism, she's informative and captivating, lyrical without ever being maudlin, and philosophic without being preachy. Readers will trust the voice immediately because she speaks the language of the Alaskan landscape. Simpson blurs the line between spectator and participant by living the experiences she writes about, and brings readers with her as she tracks the myths and realities of ravens, moose, bears, wolves and winter itself: "Summer carries you away, but winter inhabits you." She goes beyond symbolism to probe the mystery of Alaska while acknowledging that it's a mystery that can never be solved. She doesn't gloss over vulnerabilities and contradictions of the landscape and animal natureAhumanity and her own included. Ultimately, she wants readers to know that the landscape, although frozen, is alive with activity. "Everything is going somewhere," she writes. In irresistible language, she bewitches the reader just as the Alaskan landscape has bewitched her. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

As she explains, "end-of-the-roader" is a term for those in Alaska who have decided to abandon society and venture into the wilderness seeking peace or oblivion or sometimes even violence. The

term might also well describe where Simpson takes her readers in this collection of stories. Once "the road" is left behind, we set off on an unforgettable journey into a hostile yet compelling world where peace may be just over the next mountain and violence can be lurking behind the next bush -- The Monterey Country Post, Dec. 17, 1998

Once in a great while, even this foreigner gets an inkling that she is reading something truly Western, truly indigenous. These are the books that could be read anywhere, because their roots go so deep into Western soil that they join the other strong, place-inspired literatures at the molten canon at the Earth's core. Read these stories in New York and you can still be stung by the wind off the tundra -- Los Angeles Times Book Review, Oct. 25, 1998

Readers will trust the voice immediately because she speaks the language of the Alaskan landscape. Simpson blurs the line between spectator and participant by living the experiences she writes about....Ultimately, she wants readers to know that the landscape, although frozen, is alive with activity. "Everything is going somewhere," she writes. In irresistible language, she bewitches the reader just as the Alaskan landscape has bewitched her (Publisher's Weekly, Sept. 14, 1998).

REVIEW: ...a journalist's objectivity combined with a poet's love of words... -- Juneau Empire, Sept. 24, 1998

it's Sherry Simpson, Alaska writer, poet and teacher. what's not to love? she's a talented writer who captures Alaska and its people. her work is always a good read.

Very satisfied with quality and arrived in good time

Calling this book nature writing, or Alaska writing, or wilderness writing is to box it into a space that is too small. This is just damn GOOD writing by someone who knows how to take the reader places without heavy-handedness. In many ways, I find Simpson's essay to be better than the oft-mentioned names like McPhee, Muir, Gutkind, etc.

Sherry Simpson's prose is fantastic. Her thoughts are insightful and interesting. The author uses the native animals of Alaska to describe the Alaska Experience and her own personal experiences. Each page was a revelation of what I love about Alaska as well as why. Sherry has the ability to write from any perspective, and to show reality by combining factual references with her own experiences and exposing two sides to every question. She obviously has a passion and it shows in her work. Very "personally" thought provoking.

Simpson is a brilliant writer with the uncanny ability to construct paragraphs that capture the essence of Alaska in only a few words. She's amusing, moving and informative in a voice that is instantly familiar and enjoyable. I often recommend "The Way Winter Comes" as a must-read contemporary book on life in Alaska. Her latest book "The Accidental Explorer," is also excellent.

Simpson takes the reader on a literary tour of Alaska. From her upbringing here in Juneau to her excursions in the deep Arctic, we are given an open window to peer into some of the mysteries of the many faces of Alaska. Her journalistic past affords her some true objectivity in dealing with controversial topics like wolf trapping.

Fantastic Book! Sherry Simpson's brilliant style and insight mark her as one of the best writers of our time. This book is sure to become a classic that will be read and studied for generations to come. You will enjoy this book on many, many levels. If you don't own a copy of "The Way Winter Comes", buy it now. You won't be disappointed!

I lucked onto this book when it came out in 1998 and have found myself returning to it over and over throughout the years. I can't say that I've ever tired of rereading the same stories. If you want to feel yourself in Alaska, this is one book that takes you there. Great fireside reading!

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