



No Place Like Home: Notes from a Western Life

Linda M. Hasselstrom

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In *No Place Like Home*, Linda Hasselstrom ponders the changing nature of community in the modern West, where old family ranches are being turned into subdivisions and historic towns are evolving into mean, congested cities. Her scrutiny, like her life, moves back and forth between her ranch on the South Dakota prairie and her house in an old neighborhood at the edge of downtown Cheyenne, Wyoming. The vignettes that form the foundation of her consideration are drawn from the communities she has known during her life in the West, reflecting on how they have grown, thrived, failed, and changed, and highlighting the people and decisions that shaped them. Hasselstrom's ruminations are both intensely personal and universal. She laments the disappearance of the old prairie ranches and the rural sense of community and mutual responsibility that sustained them, but she also discovers that a spirit of community can be found in unlikely places and among unlikely people. The book defines her idea of how a true community should work, and the kind of place she wants to live in. Her voice is unique and honest, both compassionate and cranky, full of love for the harsh, hauntingly beautiful short-grass prairie that is her home, and rich in understanding of the intricacies of the natural world around her and the infinite potentials of human commitment, hope, and greed. For anyone curious about the state of the contemporary West, Hasselstrom offers a report from the front, where nature and human aspirations are often at odds, and where the concepts of community and mutual responsibility are being redefined.

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