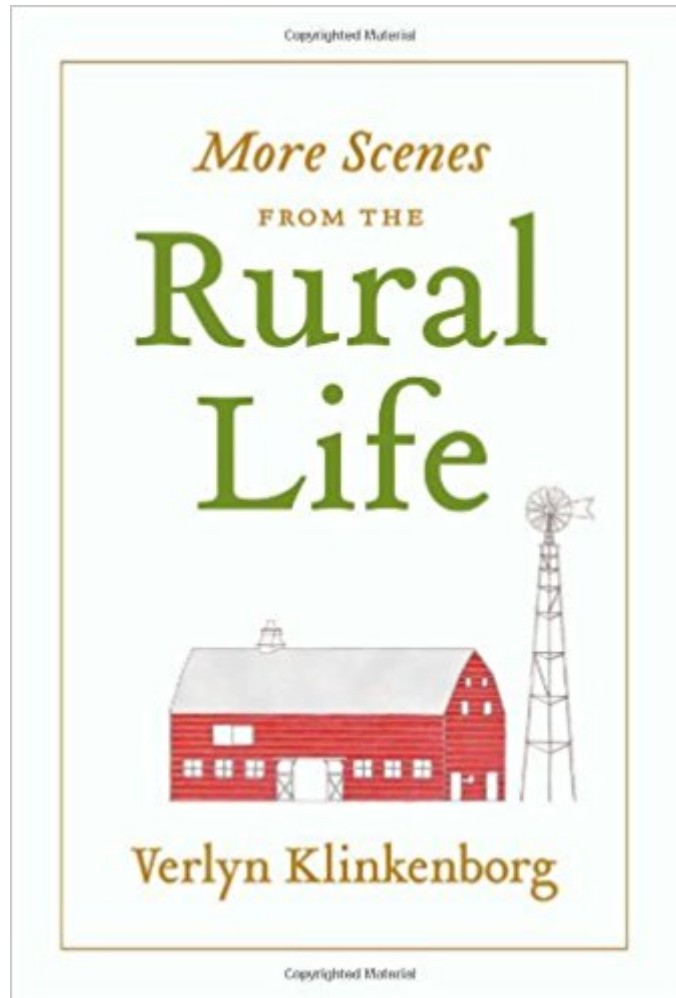




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More Scenes From The Rural Life



Synopsis

Verlyn Klinkenborg's regular column, *The Rural Life*, is one of the most read and beloved in the *New York Times*. Since 1997, he has written eloquently on every aspect, large and small, of life on his upstate New York farm, including his animals, the weather and landscape, and the trials and rewards of physical labor, as well as broader issues about agriculture and land use behind farming today. Klinkenborg's pieces are admired as much for their poetic writing as for their insight: peonies are "the sheepdog of flowers," dry snow "tumbles off the angled end of the plow-blade as if each crystal were completely independent, almost charged with static electricity," and land is most valuable "for its silence, its freedom from language." Klinkenborg writes with a grace and understanding that makes us more aware of the world around us, whether we live on a farm or in the middle of a city. *More Scenes from the Rural Life* gathers together 150 of his best pieces since his last collection, *The Rural Life*, was published a decade ago. For anybody with an appreciation of nature, language, or both, this book is certain to delight.

Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Princeton Architectural Press; 1 edition (May 14, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1616891564

ISBN-13: 978-1616891565

Product Dimensions: 6.5 x 1 x 9.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (40 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #242,866 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in Â Books > Humor &

Entertainment > Humor > Rural Life #56 in Â Books > Science & Math > Agricultural Sciences >

History #394 in Â Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Culinary

Customer Reviews

Verlyn Klinkenborg's "*More Scenes from the Rural Life*" is his second collection of essays from his regular "*New York Times*" editorial column. As the title indicates, the essays concentrate on Klinkenborg's life on his farm in upstate New York, although they also encompass his sojourns in places as far away as Los Angeles and Finland, his appreciation of various writers, his childhood and family reminiscences, and his thoughts on the general state of agriculture. As those who have read his columns already know, Klinkenborg is a fine stylist, part poet and part philosopher. Here is

how he describes watching fireflies on a summer night: "They rise from the grass, flickering higher and higher until one of them turns into the blinking lights of a jet flying eastward far above the horizon." And how he describes encountering a mangy, dying fox in his barn: "The fox and I looked at each other, only a few feet apart. If it had been a dog, I could have helped it. But even the pity in my eyes reminded it that it had come too close." Klinkenborg is a worthy heir to the long tradition of American rural and wilderness writers, who retreat from urbanity to examine the world and their place within it. For most modern readers, that tradition begins with Thoreau and continues through John Muir, Ernest Thompson Seton, Aldo Leopold, E.B. White, Henry Beston, John Haines, Donald Hall, Edward Abbey, and Wendell Berry, among many others. But the writer to whom Klinkenborg pays tribute, especially at the end of the book, is the earliest of them all: William Cobbett. Cobbett, a Redcoat who decided to settle in the United States, was both the greatest political writer and the greatest agricultural writer of his day.

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