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At Home in the World: A Memoir

Von Joyce Maynard

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AT HOME IN THE WORLD

A MEMOIR / WITH A NEW PREFACE



JOYCE MAYNARD

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LABOR DAY

"Riveting and disturbing." — *The New York Times Book Review*

"Dazzling." — *San Francisco Chronicle*

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Von Joyce Maynard : At Home in the World: A Memoir before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised At Home in the World: A Memoir:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Still playing the precocious childVon Michael J. EdelmanMaynard got her start nearly 27 years ago with her famous "young person looks at the world" essay that was really no different from the embarrassing sorts of essays about the world most of us write in our teens. I remember it well, being about the same age as Maynard and remembering how

puzzled I was at the time that she had been singled out for attention. She wasn't an outstandingly good writer, but she was cute and vulnerable looking, which was perhaps all Time and Newsweek were looking for. Problem is she hasn't developed much as a writer since then. Her novels aren't particularly distinctive or well crafted- at best they're run of the mill pulp- and her autobiographical writing is a never ending series of whines about how people mistreated such a gifted author while she hobnobs with the rich and famous. The unspoken message is always that she just hasn't been properly appreciated. With this book Maynard again portrays herself as the poor victim, this time blaming J.D. Salinger for her troubles, making him both the source of her suffering as well as a great marketing point for the book. There are better ways to spend your money. 1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Cherchez La Femme ... Von Kthe The book isn't at all bad as such, it's well-written, for an American, but I couldn't help being disgusted by the infantile manner in which the facts are displayed. It's not a very nice picture the author is painting of the beloved men in her life. In fact, these pictures could not be more devastating, especially the one she makes us believe depicts her 'one and only love', J. D. Salinger. What she writes about him may be true and it may not, but that's not the question. The question is: Did we need to know? Was it really necessary to besmirch the reputation of this brilliant writer by dragging his dark secrets into the open for everyone to see while at the same time hypocritically pretending the sole objective of this sad business was to 'try and understand what happened to me'? One thing at least seems to be as clear as the crucial morning at Daytona Beach: She never really loved the man. If she had, she would not, could not have exposed him in this childish, petulant way: 'So there! You hurt me and now I'm hurting you back the worst way I know how!' Ms Maynard could have built a life of her own after she left him, instead of marrying a lookalike of her father, making herself and him unhappy, and finally putting the brunt of the blame for her extensive troubles on poor old Jerry's shoulders. I expect, Ms Maynard, that your current house has no mirrors. For if it does, I'm sure you are having a dead fright each time you are looking into one and see what's staring back at you! 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A (Pleasant) Surprise After Reading the V-F Excerpt! Von Ein Kunde As an avid reader who has read and re-read all of J.D. Salinger's major works, I read the "Vanity Fair" excerpt of Joyce Maynard's new book ("At Home in the World") and elected to read Maynard's book, but with some skepticism in what I thought would be an attack on one of America's noted authors. Boy, was I SURPRISED -- and WRONG! The VF excerpt alone does the book no justice, and one is reminded of being too quick to judge. In her book, Maynard takes us on a journey, an emotional trek from her childhood to present which not only gives us insight into Maynard and Salinger, but more so ourselves. While some might suggest that she was born into a dysfunctional family, it is evident that her experience is familiar, not unique. After all, who among us have not known alcoholism in the lives of loved ones? or who has not witnessed women, such as Maynard's mother, living a frustrated existence as a repressed housewife/mother in the 50's and 60's? For sure, we can be happy for Maynard that she has surmounted her emotional mountain, but as well, we can be thankful that Maynard has written a book in which many of us can identify and find our own revelations from secrets we have buried deep in the recesses of our hearts. There's a wisdom we gain from understanding Maynard's life... and knowing that we are not alone in the world. Deeply surprising to me was the very compassionate manner in which Maynard tells the story of those people whose lives influenced her significantly. Her love for her parents and sister come through as one would expect. What is particularly unexpected, however, is how Maynard acknowledges with great sympathy the relationship she had 25 years ago with Salinger. Far from being an 'expose' of the recent "tell-all" type memoirs, we are given a respectful portrayal of Salinger, whose reclusiveness is legendary. If I was expecting a "victim" drama from Maynard, then I was to be let down. Instead, we can only feel great relief and satisfaction for Maynard's self-discovery... and still be able to walk away from the book with our respect for Salinger intact. This is a remarkable story told with great writing. To many, it will serve to reveal as much about the poignancy of our own relationships as those which Maynard has shared with us. Highly recommended!

Kurzbeschreibung New York Times bestselling author of Labor Day With a New Preface When it was first published in 1998, *At Home in the World* set off a furor in the literary world and beyond. Joyce Maynard's memoir broke a silence concerning her relationship at age eighteen with J.D. Salinger, the famously reclusive author of *The Catcher in the Rye*, then age fifty-three, who had read a story she wrote for *The New York Times* in her freshman year of college and sent her a letter that changed her life. *ers* called her book "shameless" and "powerful" and its author was simultaneously reviled and cheered. With what some have viewed as shocking honesty, Maynard explores her coming of age in an alcoholic family, her mother's dream to mold her into a writer, her self-imposed exile from the world of her peers when she left Yale to live with Salinger, and her struggle to reclaim her sense of self in the crushing aftermath of his dismissal of her not long after her nineteenth birthday. A quarter of a century later having become a writer, survived the end of her marriage and the deaths of her parents, and with an eighteen-year-old daughter of her own Maynard pays a visit to the man who broke her heart. The story she tells of the girl she was and the woman she became is at once devastating, inspiring, and triumphant. de Joyce Maynard's memoir, *At Home in the World*, is an attempt to make peace with herself. At times, however, it's hard not to see it as an act of war--on her parents and, most notably, on J.D.

Salinger. Maynard's account of her year-long relationship with the reclusive American writer is the centrepiece of the book and the publicity pivot on which it turns. And how not? She first encountered Salinger when he wrote her a fan letter following her world-weary but not necessarily wordly wise New York Times Magazine cover piece, "An Eighteen Year Old Looks Back on Life." He was then 53 and, as Maynard paraphrases, wanted her "to know that I could be a real writer, if I would just look out for myself, as no other person is likely to." By the time she was 19, she was living with the increasingly controlling Salinger and doing her best to adhere to his regimens, from homeopathy at any price to a mostly macrobiotic diet heavy on frozen peas. What's worse, he does his best to turn the hugely driven young woman into a mistrusting, publicity-shy prig, not to mention helping her perfect her already anorexic bent. Maynard is such a skilled writer that it's hard not to take her side as the relationship falters. In fact, even when it's going well, it's not easy to sympathise with a man whose idea of an endearment is: "I couldn't have made up a character of a girl I'd love better than you." But Maynard is as hard on her younger self as she is on the great man. Though she had published intimate essays since her early teens, and long been feted for her "honesty," it has taken the overachiever many years to realise that she had carefully left out her most personal burdens--her father's alcoholism, her mother's nighttime "snuggling" and overwhelming intrusions, the distance between her and her older sister. Still, *At Home in the World* is more than a clearing house for past parental and amorous wrongs. It's a cautionary tale about using language and the pretence of truth to obscure key realities. --Kerry Fried.co.uk

Joyce Maynard's memoir, *At Home in the World*, is an attempt to make peace with herself. At times, however, it's hard not to see it as an act of war--on her parents and, most notably, on J.D. Salinger. Maynard's account of her year-long relationship with the reclusive American writer is the centrepiece of the book and the publicity pivot on which it turns. And how not? She first encountered Salinger when he wrote her a fan letter following her world-weary but not necessarily wordly wise New York Times Magazine cover piece, "An Eighteen Year Old Looks Back on Life." He was then 53 and, as Maynard paraphrases, wanted her "to know that I could be a real writer, if I would just look out for myself, as no other person is likely to." By the time she was 19, she was living with the increasingly controlling Salinger and doing her best to adhere to his regimens, from homeopathy at any price to a mostly macrobiotic diet heavy on frozen peas. What's worse, he does his best to turn the hugely driven young woman into a mistrusting, publicity-shy prig, not to mention helping her perfect her already anorexic bent. Maynard is such a skilled writer that it's hard not to take her side as the relationship falters. In fact, even when it's going well, it's not easy to sympathise with a man whose idea of an endearment is: "I couldn't have made up a character of a girl I'd love better than you." But Maynard is as hard on her younger self as she is on the great man. Though she had published intimate essays since her early teens, and long been feted for her "honesty," it has taken the overachiever many years to realise that she had carefully left out her most personal burdens--her father's alcoholism, her mother's nighttime "snuggling" and overwhelming intrusions, the distance between her and her older sister. Still, *At Home in the World* is more than a clearing house for past parental and amorous wrongs. It's a cautionary tale about using language and the pretence of truth to obscure key realities. --Kerry Fried