

Stranger on a Train: Daydreaming and Smoking Around America with Interruptions

Jenny Diski



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The book about America de Tocqueville might have written had he spent some time in the nation's smoking sections

Using two cross-country trips on Amtrak as her narrative vehicles, British writer Jenny Diski connects the humming rails taking her into the heart of America with the track-like scars leading back to her own past. As she did in the highly acclaimed Skating to Antarctica, Diski has created a seamless and seemingly effortless amalgam of reflection and revelation. Stranger on a Train is a combination of travelogue and memoir, a penetrating portrait of America and Americans that is at the same time an unsparing look in the mirror. Traveling and remembering both involve confronting strangers—those we have just met and those we once were—and acknowledging the play of proximity and separation. Diski has written a moving, courageous, and deeply rewarding book about who we are, and the landscapes through which we have passed to get there.



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