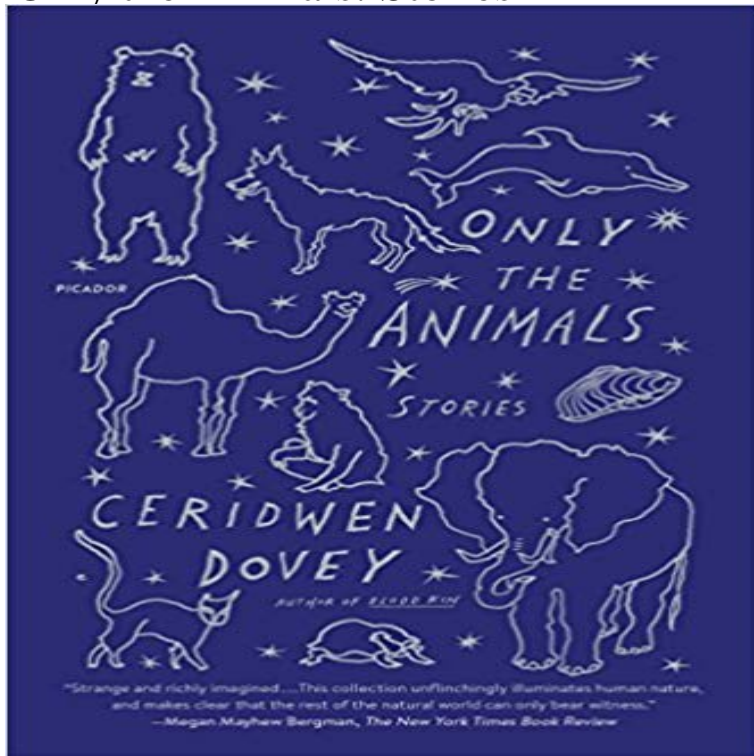


Only the Animals: Stories



Perhaps only the animals can tell us what it is to be human. The souls of ten animals caught up in human conflicts over the last century and connected to both famous and little-known writers in surprising ways tell their astonishing stories of life and death. In a trench on the Western Front, a cat recalls her owner Colette's theatrical antics in Paris. In Nazi Germany, a dog seeks enlightenment. A Russian tortoise once owned by the Tolstoys drifts in space during the Cold War. During the Siege of Sarajevo, a starving bear tells a fairy tale. And a dolphin sent to Iraq by the U.S. Navy writes a letter to Sylvia Plath. Exquisitely written, playful, and poignant, *Only the Animals* is a remarkable literary achievement by one of our brightest young writers. An animals-eye-view of humans at our brutal, violent worst and our creative, imaginative best, it asks us to find our way back to empathy not only for animals but for other people, and to believe again in the redemptive power of reading and writing fiction.

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