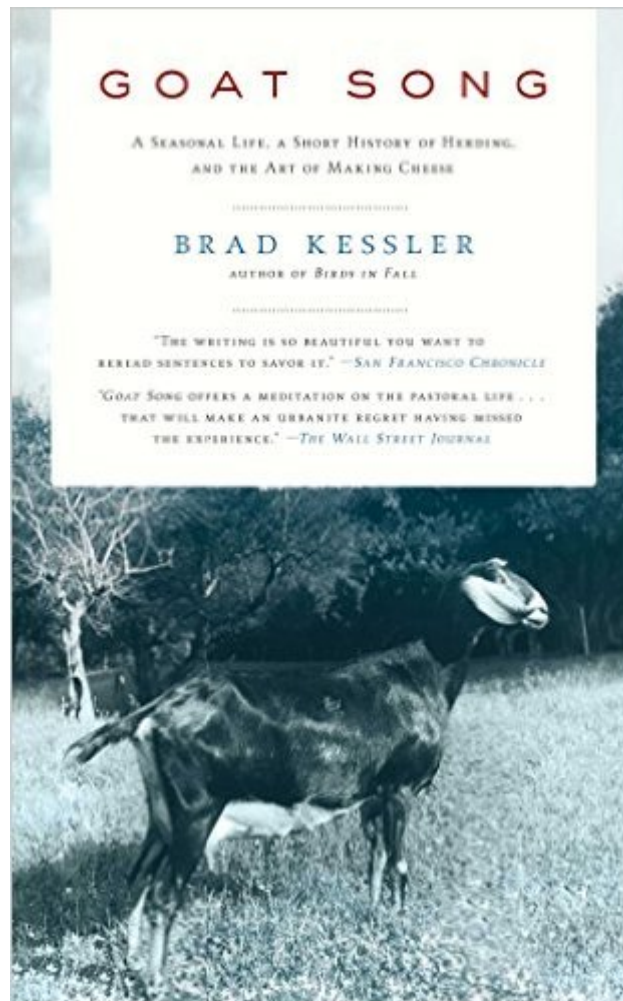


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Goat Song: A Seasonal Life, A Short History Of Herding, And The Art Of Making Cheese



Synopsis

Goat Song is the story of a year in the life of a couple who abandoned their one-bedroom apartment in New York City to live on seventy-five acres in Vermont and raise Nubian goats. In poetic, reverent detail, Brad Kessler explores our ancient relationship to the land and our gradual alienation from the animals that feed us. His fascinating account traces his journey of choosing the goats and learning how to breed, milk, and care for them. As Kessler begins to live the life of a herder, he encounters the pastoral roots of so many aspects of Western culture—how our diet, our alphabet, our religions, poetry, and economy all grew out of a pastoralist setting, a life lived among hoofed animals.

Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (80 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the many questions asked by Brad Kessler in this surprisingly poetic book. He provides the answer: "It starts out raw and unformed and tries to reform itself over time. It is constantly corrected and rebuffed, purged of blemishes and taints and sins". If you think Goat Song is just about goats, think again. Yes the goats are present and yes we learn much about them, but they are but a path, one that leads to a deep and romantic contemplation of life itself. The book is dedicated to Annie Dillard and something of her spirit seems to hover in its pages. Kessler revels in the use of esoteric vocabulary, as does Dillard, though not to the degree that he would invoke the word "thigmotropic" as she unfortunately has. Here are some examples of his wordsmith's art... "Thunder growled outside, the sky turned suddenly tenebrous". "The days were lovely then, cool and sere". "The rocks are green schist and round, both about ten pounds". "They gazed Talmudically

across the mountains while they chewed their cud"."Our milk is local and autochthonous"."I didn't recognize the dip or swale or glade mantled in its mattress of snow".The first two are beautiful; the third appropriately scientific; the fourth sketchy (how does a goat gaze "Talmudically" and what does this look like?); the fifth and sixth perhaps tautologies (local, autochthonous, dip, swale).But it doesn't really matter. As with Dillard (who also likes the word "swale" - "The swale drained the dunes like a vein" - The Maytrees) it all flows together in a poetic prose that engages even as it challenges.

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