



The Shepherd's Life: Modern Dispatches from an Ancient Landscape

James Rebanks

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The *New York Times* bestseller and International Phenomenon

"It's bloody marvelous." - Helen Macdonald, New York Times bestselling author of H IS FOR HAWK

"Captivating... A book about continuity and roots and a sense of belonging in an age that's increasingly about mobility and self-invention. Hugely compelling." - Michiko Kakutani, *The New York Times*

Some people's lives are entirely their own creations. James Rebanks' isn't. The first son of a shepherd, who was the first son of a shepherd himself, his family have lived and worked in the Lake District of Northern England for generations, further back than recorded history. It's a part of the world known mainly for its romantic descriptions by Wordsworth and the much loved illustrated children's books of Beatrix Potter. But James' world is quite different. His way of life is ordered by the seasons and the work they demand. It hasn't changed for hundreds of years: sending the sheep to the fells in the summer and making the hay; the autumn fairs where the flocks are replenished; the grueling toil of winter when the sheep must be kept alive, and the light-headedness that comes with spring, as the lambs are born and the sheep get ready to return to the hills and valleys.

The Shepherd's Life the story of a deep-rooted attachment to place, modern dispatches from an ancient landscape that describe a way of life that is little noticed and yet has profoundly shaped the landscape over time. In evocative and lucid prose, James Rebanks takes us through a shepherd's year, offering a unique account of rural life and a fundamental connection with the land that most of us have lost. It is a story of working lives, the people around him, his childhood, his parents and grandparents, a people who exist and endure even as the culture - of the Lake District, and of farming - changes around them.

Many memoirs are of people working desperately hard to leave a place. This is the story of someone trying desperately hard to stay.

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