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The Way Out: A True Story Of Ruin And Survival
Synopsis

- A breakout book from a writer increasingly celebrated as the 21st-century bard of the American Southwest--a writer in the tradition of Barry Lopez, Peter Matthiessen, Terry Tempest Williams, among others. - In March 2003, Craig Childs received the Spirit of the West Literary Achievement Award, given to a writer whose body of work captures the unique spirit of the American West. - As a chronicle of adventure, as emotionally charged human drama, as confessional memoir, The Way Out is a transcendent book, a work destined to earn a lasting place in the literature of extremes. - Not since John Krakauer’s bestselling Into the Wild has a book so compellingly explored the boundary between wilderness adventure and madness.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages
Publisher: Back Bay Books (March 8, 2006)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 0316107034
Product Dimensions:  5.5 x 0.8 x 8.2 inches
Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)
Average Customer Review:  4.2 out of 5 stars  See all reviews (29 customer reviews)
Best Sellers Rank: #210,737 in Books (See Top 100 in Books)  #14 in Books > Science & Math > Nature & Ecology > Ecosystems > Deserts  #83 in Books > Sports & Outdoors > Survival Skills  #139 in Books > Travel > United States > West > General

Customer Reviews

I really liked Craig Childs’ House of Rain, partly because it offered interesting observations and reflections on the Anasazi (Ancestral Puebloans), a culture I have studied a great deal, and partly because of the author’s skill at descriptive writing. That book left me wanting to know about the writer, an unusual person who spends weeks at a time walking across the southwest, even in the middle of winter. Hence, I was drawn to read The Way Out, which, in part, is a reflection on Childs’ relationship with his father. In The Way Out, Childs’ memories of his father, and the stories of Dirk Vaughn’s former life as a cop, which were woven in and out of the tale of their hiking expedition, were interesting. Both of the companions had tortured pasts that, in a way, were mirrored in the torturous piece of nature they had to navigate. But I did not see much of a parallel between the “The Way Out” of their physical trek and “the way out” of their past experiences related to a “disturbed,
raging, alcoholic father" and the very difficult, violent, and painful, life of a police officer. (Perhaps
the book's title was not supposed to apply to their life stories, which were such a prominent part of
the reader's experience???) Dirk's "way out" of his past was to retire from police work (after a
horrid car accident that caused a death prompted him to quit) and become involved in the rugged
outdoors, which does not really relate well to the book's title. As for Childs' past related to his father,
I now have pictures of the father from Childs' eyes, and pictures of some of Childs' experiences with
him, but I have no idea how those experiences affected Childs' or how (or if) he found a "way out" of
his father-son relationship. Or a "way through?"

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