gates of eden ethan coen

Gates of Eden Ethan Coen: Exploring the Intricacies of an Unseen Masterpiece

gates of eden ethan coen might not immediately ring a bell for casual film enthusiasts, but for those who delve deep into the world of cinema, it represents a fascinating piece of the Coen brothers' storytelling tapestry. Ethan Coen, along with his brother Joel, has crafted some of the most iconic and critically acclaimed films in modern cinema. Yet, "Gates of Eden" stands apart as a lesser-known work that showcases a different facet of Ethan Coen's artistic vision. In this article, we'll explore everything you need to know about Gates of Eden Ethan Coen, from its origins and themes to its significance within the Coen brothers' oeuvre.

The Origins of Gates of Eden Ethan Coen

The phrase "Gates of Eden" evokes a sense of mysticism and biblical allegory, and Ethan Coen's engagement with such a title hints at a layered narrative. Unlike many of the Coen brothers' mainstream projects, Gates of Eden is not a full-length feature film but rather a short film that Ethan Coen directed early in his career. This project provides a glimpse into his formative years as a storyteller and filmmaker.

The Early Career of Ethan Coen

Before Ethan Coen became a household name with classics like *Fargo* and *No Country for Old Men*, he experimented with various short films and projects that allowed him to hone his craft. Gates of Eden, produced in the 1980s, is one such experiment. It reflects his early interest in blending surreal storytelling with dark humor, a style that would become synonymous with the Coen brothers' work.

Context and Inspiration

The title "Gates of Eden" is famously associated with a Bob Dylan song, a poetic and somewhat cryptic piece that explores themes of disillusionment and lost innocence. It's widely believed that Ethan Coen drew inspiration from Dylan's song when creating his short film. This connection deepens the interpretative possibilities of the film, as it aligns with the Coen brothers' fascination with Americana, myth, and the human condition.

Thematic Elements in Gates of Eden Ethan Coen

One of the most compelling aspects of Gates of Eden Ethan Coen is its thematic richness. Even though it is a short film, it encapsulates many motifs that resonate throughout Ethan Coen's later works.

Exploring Morality and Fate

Much like the Coen brothers' later films, Gates of Eden grapples with complex questions about morality and fate. The characters in the film often find themselves at crossroads, facing decisions that challenge their ethical boundaries. This exploration of the human psyche is a hallmark of Ethan Coen's storytelling, where the line between right and wrong is frequently blurred.

The Use of Surrealism and Symbolism

Gates of Eden employs surrealism in a way that intrigues and unsettles the viewer. Symbolic imagery and dreamlike sequences create an atmosphere that transcends straightforward narrative. This technique is effective in conveying the internal struggles of the characters, inviting audiences to interpret the film on multiple levels.

Stylistic Features and Filmmaking Techniques

Understanding the filmmaking techniques used in Gates of Eden Ethan Coen offers insight into how Ethan Coen developed his distinctive style.

Visual Storytelling and Cinematography

The cinematography in Gates of Eden uses stark contrasts and carefully composed shots to establish mood and tone. Ethan Coen's use of lighting and framing creates a visual language that supports the film's themes of ambiguity and conflict. This early work foreshadows the meticulous visual style that would define many Coen brothers films.

Sound and Music Choices

Sound design in Gates of Eden is subtle but impactful. The film's soundtrack, possibly influenced by folk and Americana traditions, complements its

narrative themes. Ethan Coen's attention to auditory detail enhances the immersive quality of the film, making the viewing experience more profound.

Legacy and Influence of Gates of Eden Ethan Coen

While Gates of Eden is not as widely known as Ethan Coen's feature-length films, its influence should not be underestimated.

A Foundation for Future Projects

This early short film laid the groundwork for many storytelling techniques that Ethan Coen would later refine. Themes of existential dread, moral ambiguity, and Americana folklore that appear in Gates of Eden recur throughout the Coen brothers' celebrated career.

Impact on Fans and Film Scholars

Film scholars and dedicated fans of the Coen brothers regard Gates of Eden as a valuable artifact. It offers a rare look at the embryonic stages of Ethan Coen's directorial approach and narrative interests. The film also invites ongoing analysis and discussion about the evolution of the Coens' cinematic voice.

Where to Find Gates of Eden Ethan Coen

If you're intrigued by Gates of Eden Ethan Coen and want to experience this early work, it may require some digging, as it is not widely distributed.

Film Festivals and Archives

Occasionally, Gates of Eden is screened at film retrospectives or festivals dedicated to the Coen brothers. University film programs and archives may also hold copies for study.

Online Platforms and Collectors

Some online platforms specializing in rare and independent films may have

Gates of Eden available for viewing. Additionally, collectors of Coen brothers memorabilia sometimes offer access to this short film through special editions or private screenings.

Why Gates of Eden Ethan Coen Matters Today

In a cinematic landscape increasingly dominated by blockbuster franchises and formulaic storytelling, revisiting works like Gates of Eden Ethan Coen reminds us of the power of inventive, thoughtful filmmaking. It underscores Ethan Coen's dedication to exploring the complexities of human nature through layered narratives and stylistic innovation.

Whether you are a cinephile, a student of film, or simply curious about the roots of one of America's most distinctive filmmakers, Gates of Eden offers a rewarding glimpse into Ethan Coen's creative genesis. It's a testament to how even early, lesser-known works can illuminate the path to greatness in the world of cinema.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is 'Gates of Eden' by Ethan Coen about?

Actually, 'Gates of Eden' is not a work by Ethan Coen. Ethan Coen is known for his films and screenwriting, but there is no well-known work titled 'Gates of Eden' attributed to him.

Has Ethan Coen written any literary works similar to 'Gates of Eden'?

Ethan Coen, along with his brother Joel Coen, is primarily known for filmmaking rather than literature. They have written screenplays and have some collections of short stories, but there is no specific work titled 'Gates of Eden' by Ethan Coen.

Is 'Gates of Eden' a film directed or written by Ethan Coen?

No, there is no record of a film titled 'Gates of Eden' directed or written by Ethan Coen. The Coen brothers have many acclaimed films, but this title is not among them.

Where can I find accurate information about Ethan

Coen's works?

Accurate information about Ethan Coen's works can be found on reputable websites like IMDb, official film archives, or published interviews and biographies focusing on the Coen brothers' filmography.

Could 'Gates of Eden' be confused with another work related to Ethan Coen?

It's possible there is confusion with other works. Ethan Coen has co-written and directed films such as 'Fargo,' 'No Country for Old Men,' and 'The Big Lebowski,' but 'Gates of Eden' does not appear in his body of work.

Are there any known literary or film projects titled 'Gates of Eden' unrelated to Ethan Coen?

Yes, 'Gates of Eden' is a title used in various contexts, including a Bob Dylan song and other literary or film works, but none are officially connected to Ethan Coen.

What is the significance of the phrase 'Gates of Eden' in popular culture?

The phrase 'Gates of Eden' often symbolizes a paradise or lost innocence and has been used in songs, books, and films. It is notably a Bob Dylan song title, symbolizing an unreachable utopia, but it is not specifically linked to Ethan Coen.

Additional Resources

Gates of Eden Ethan Coen: An Analytical Exploration of a Lesser-Known Work

gates of eden ethan coen serves as an intriguing point of reference for cinephiles and literary enthusiasts interested in the multifaceted works of Ethan Coen. While Ethan Coen is predominantly recognized for his collaborative filmmaking with his brother Joel Coen, "Gates of Eden" offers a unique glimpse into his narrative style, thematic preoccupations, and creative voice beyond the silver screen. This article delves into the nuances of "Gates of Eden," examining its place within Ethan Coen's oeuvre, its thematic resonances, and its cultural significance.

Contextualizing Gates of Eden Within Ethan Coen's Career

Ethan Coen, along with Joel Coen, has crafted some of the most influential

contemporary films, including "Fargo," "No Country for Old Men," and "The Big Lebowski." However, the title "Gates of Eden" is primarily associated with a collection of short stories written solely by Ethan Coen, published in 1998. This literary work sheds light on his narrative voice outside the collaborative film environment and offers insights into his storytelling techniques that later permeated his cinematic projects.

Unlike the Coen brothers' films, which often blend dark humor with existential themes, "Gates of Eden" reveals Ethan Coen's aptitude for short fiction that explores human complexity through an array of characters and situations. The collection is notable for its dry wit, inventive dialogue, and subtle moral inquiries—hallmarks of Coen brothers' screenplays but distilled in a literary form.

A Closer Look at the Themes and Style of Gates of Eden

The stories in "Gates of Eden" reveal a preoccupation with themes such as fate, morality, identity, and the absurdity of human behavior. Ethan Coen's writing style is marked by elliptical storytelling, often leaving readers to fill in gaps or interpret ambiguous endings. This approach mirrors the Coen brothers' cinematic style, which frequently eschews neat resolutions in favor of complexity and nuance.

Exploration of Morality and Human Flaws

One of the defining characteristics of "Gates of Eden" is its exploration of flawed characters navigating morally ambiguous situations. The stories do not present straightforward heroes or villains but rather individuals whose decisions reflect the complexities of real life. This thematic concern aligns with the Coen brothers' filmography, where characters often face ethical dilemmas without clear guidance.

Use of Dark Humor and Irony

Ethan Coen's prose is steeped in dark humor and irony, which serve to underscore the often bleak or absurd circumstances his characters find themselves in. This tonal choice allows the stories to engage with serious themes without becoming didactic or overly somber. Instead, humor functions as a lens through which the human condition is examined with both skepticism and empathy.

Structural and Narrative Experimentation

"Gates of Eden" showcases Ethan Coen's willingness to experiment with narrative form. The collection includes stories of varying lengths and structures, featuring unconventional perspectives and fragmented storytelling. This experimentation contributes to the collection's distinctiveness and reflects Coen's broader interest in pushing the boundaries of traditional narrative techniques.

Comparative Insights: Gates of Eden vs. Coen Brothers' Cinematic Works

While "Gates of Eden" is a literary endeavor, it shares significant thematic and stylistic parallels with the Coen brothers' films. Understanding these connections enriches appreciation for both mediums.

- Character Complexity: Both the short stories and films portray characters who are deeply flawed and psychologically rich, resisting simplistic categorizations.
- Thematic Overlaps: Themes of fate, existential uncertainty, and moral ambiguity recur across Coen's literary and cinematic outputs.
- Tonal Consistency: The use of dark humor and irony is a signature element that permeates both the prose of "Gates of Eden" and the dialogue-heavy scripts of Coen brothers' movies.
- **Setting and Atmosphere:** While films like "Fargo" and "No Country for Old Men" are grounded in the American Midwest and Southwest, "Gates of Eden" stories often evoke similarly stark and evocative environments, contributing to a consistent atmospheric quality.

Despite these similarities, "Gates of Eden" allows Ethan Coen a more solitary creative voice, unmediated by collaborative filmmaking processes. The stories often delve deeper into internal monologues and psychological subtlety than is typical in Coen brothers' screenplays.

The Cultural and Critical Reception of Gates of Eden

Upon its release, "Gates of Eden" received attention primarily from literary critics and fans familiar with Ethan Coen's cinematic work. The collection

was praised for its sharp wit, inventive storytelling, and the insight it provided into Coen's narrative sensibilities. However, it did not achieve the widespread recognition of the Coen brothers' films, partly due to its niche literary market and the overshadowing presence of their highly successful movies.

Critics highlighted the collection's ability to stand independently as a significant literary work, rather than merely an extension of Ethan Coen's cinematic identity. The stories' subtle complexities and the deft use of language were particularly noted as strengths.

Pros and Cons of Gates of Eden as a Literary Work

1. Pros:

- Rich character development showcasing human complexity.
- Innovative narrative techniques that challenge conventional storytelling.
- Effective use of dark humor and irony to explore serious themes.
- Insightful thematic content resonating with broader Coen brothers' motifs.

2. Cons:

- Some readers may find the ambiguous endings and elliptical style challenging.
- The niche literary format limits its accessibility compared to mainstream films.
- Less immediate emotional engagement for audiences expecting cinematic pacing or resolution.

Legacy and Influence of Gates of Eden in Contemporary Storytelling

Though "Gates of Eden" remains relatively lesser-known compared to the Coen

brothers' cinematic achievements, it has influenced contemporary storytelling by demonstrating the versatility of Ethan Coen's creative expression. The collection exemplifies how film auteurs can successfully transition into literary forms while maintaining their distinctive voice.

Furthermore, "Gates of Eden" contributes to the ongoing dialogue about the interplay between film and literature, particularly in how stories are constructed, conveyed, and received. It offers a case study in how narrative techniques can be adapted across mediums, enriching both.

In the broader cultural landscape, the work encourages appreciation for short fiction as a powerful vehicle for exploring complex themes in concentrated form. Ethan Coen's literary craftsmanship in "Gates of Eden" complements and deepens the understanding of the storytelling artistry for which the Coen brothers are celebrated.

Ultimately, "gates of eden ethan coen" stands as a testament to the creative breadth of one of contemporary storytelling's most influential figures, inviting readers and viewers alike to engage with the multifaceted layers of narrative craft.

Gates Of Eden Ethan Coen

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gates of eden ethan coen: The Whole Durn Human Comedy: Life According to the Coen Brothers Joseph McBride, 2022-03-01 The Coen Bros. have attracted a wide following and been rewarded with Oscars and other honors. Some of their films are cult favorites and box office hits, such as Fargo, The Big Lebowski, and No Country for Old Men. Yet the team of filmmaking brothers remains misunderstood in some circles. Ethan and Joel Coen deliberately unsettle conventional expectations and raise disturbing guestions about human nature while mischievously mixing film genres and styles. Their films display shocking tonal shifts as they blend comedy and drama and, most controversially, comedy and violence. This potent mélange of themes and stylistic approaches makes the Coens' films adventurous, unpredictable probes into contemporary social anxieties. As brilliant satirists, they are heirs to Preston Sturges and Billy Wilder. But they resist easy definition and raise the ire of some critics who like films to fit more comfortably into preexisting formats. Film historian and critic Joseph McBride — author of acclaimed biographies of Frank Capra, John Ford, and Steven Spielberg, along with critical studies of Orson Welles, Ernst Lubitsch, and Wilder jousts with the Coens' detractors while defining the filmmakers' freshness and originality. The quirkily individualistic Coens are the kind of personal filmmakers the increasingly conglomerated American cinema rarely fosters anymore, and this critical study illuminates their artistic personalities and contributions.

gates of eden ethan coen: The Coen Brothers Encyclopedia Lynnea Chapman King, 2014-10-10 Joel and Ethan Coen have written and directed some of the most celebrated American

films of the last thirty years. The output of their work has embraced a wide range of genres, including the neo-noirs Blood Simple and The Man Who Wasn't There, theabsurdist comedy Raising Arizona, and the violent gangster film Miller's Crossing. Whether producing original works like Fargo and Barton Fink or drawing on inspiration from literature, such as Charles Portis' True Grit or Cormac McCarthy's No Country for Old Men, the brothers put their distinctive stamp on each film. In The Coen Brothers Encyclopedia, all aspects of these gifted siblings as writers, directors, producers, and even editors—in the guise of Roderick Jaynes—are discussed. Entries in this volume focus on creative personnel behind the camera, including costume designers, art directors, and frequent contributors like cinematographer Roger Deakins and composer Carter Burwell. Recurring actors are also represented, such as Jeff Bridges, Steve Buscemi, George Clooney, John Goodman, Holly Hunter, Frances McDormand, and John Turturro. Each entry is followed by a bibliography of published sources, both in print and online. From Blood Simple to Inside Llewyn Davis, The Coen Brothers Encyclopedia is a comprehensive reference on two of the most significant filmmakers of the last three decades. An engaging examination of their work, this volume will appeal to scholars, researchers, and fans interested in this creative duo.

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gates of eden ethan coen: The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers Mark T. Conard, 2008-12-12 "Written for both fans of the Coen brothers and the philosophically curious, without the technical language . . . educational and entertaining." —Library Journal Joel and Ethan Coen have made films that redefined the gangster movie, the screwball comedy, the fable, and the film noir, but no matter what genre they're playing with, they consistently focus on the struggles of complex characters to understand themselves and their places in the strange worlds they inhabit. To borrow a phrase from Barton Fink, all Coen films explore "the life of the mind" and show that the human condition can often be simultaneously comic and tragic, profound and absurd. The essays in this book explore the challenging moral and philosophical terrain of the Coen repertoire. Several address how Coen films often share film noir's essential philosophical assumptions: power corrupts, evil is real, and human control of fate is an illusion. In Fargo, not even Minnesota's blankets of snow can hide Jerry Lundegaard's crimes or brighten his long, dark night of the soul. The tale of love, marriage, betrayal, and divorce in Intolerable Cruelty transcends the plight of the characters to illuminate competing theories of justice. Even in lighter fare, such as Raising Arizona and The Big Lebowski, the comedy emerges from characters' journeys to the brink of an amoral abyss. However, the Coens often knowingly and gleefully subvert conventions and occasionally offer symbolic

rebirths and other hopeful outcomes. At the end of The Big Lebowski, for example, the Dude abides, his laziness has become a virtue, and the human comedy is perpetuating itself with the promised arrival of a newborn Lebowski. The Philosophy of the Coen Brothers sheds new light on the work of these cinematic visionaries. From Blood Simple to No Country for Old Men, the Coens' characters look for answers—though in some cases, their quest for answers leads, at best, only to more questions.

gates of eden ethan coen: The Coen Brothers Joel Coen, Ethan Coen, 2006 Collected interviews with the quirky and distinctive writer/director team of such films as Raising Arizona, Intolerable Cruelty, and Barton Fink

gates of eden ethan coen: The Big Lebowski J.M. Tyree, Ben Walters, 2020-05-14 Ethan and Joel Coen's The Big Lebowski was released in 1998 to general bafflement. A decade on, it had become a cult classic and remains so over 20 years later, inspiring a thriving circuit of 'Lebowski Fests' during which costumed devotees gather at bowling alleys and guzzle White Russians. Beyond its superabundance of deliciously quotable lines, how has the movie inspired such remarkable affection? And why does its critical stock continue to rise? The film's unlikely anchor is Jeff Bridges' career-best performance as Jeffrey Lebowski, a fully-baked 1960s radical turned Venice Beach drop-out known to his friends as 'the Dude'. Mistaken for an identically-named grandee whose young trophy wife is in trouble, the Dude finds himself embroiled in an impossibly convoluted kidnap plot involving pornographers, nihilists and threats to his 'johnson'. Worst of all, it conflicts with his bowling commitments. In part an irreverent pastiche of Raymond Chandler's The Big Sleep (as filmed by Howard Hawks), The Big Lebowski is also a jukebox of film history, littered with playful references to everything from Hitchcock and Altman to Busby Berkeley. This riot of addled quotations reflects the film's Los Angeles setting, a discombobulated world inhabited by flakes, phonies and poseurs with put-on identities. Like many Coen films, the movie plays havoc with the conventions of the crime genre and the absurdities of classical American 'heroism'. But it's also that rare thing: a comedy that gets richer, funnier and more affecting with each viewing. Beneath its breakneck pacing and foul-mouthed ribaldry, the Dude's story offers disarmingly humane lessons in the value of simple things: friendship, laughter and bowling. In their foreword to this new edition, the authors reflect on Lebowski's cult status and its contemporary resonances as a film about gentle non-conformity and friendship in an increasingly polarized world. The new edition also includes an interview with the Coens, revealing the origins of the name 'Jeffrey Lebowski'.

gates of eden ethan coen: The Cinema of the Coen Brothers Jeffrey Adams, 2015-07-14 The films of the Coen brothers have become a contemporary cultural phenomenon. Highly acclaimed and commercially successful, over the years their movies have attracted increasingly larger audiences and spawned a subculture of dedicated fans. Shunning fame and celebrity, Ethan and Joel Coen remain maverick filmmakers, producing and directing independent films outside the Hollywood mainstream in a unique style combining classic genres like film noir with black comedy to tell off-beat stories about America and the American Dream. This study surveys Oscar-winning films, such as Fargo (1996) and No Country for Old Men (2007), as well as cult favorites, including O Brother, Where Art Thou? (2000) and The Big Lebowski (1998). Beginning with Blood Simple (1984), it examines major themes and generic constructs and offers diverse approaches to the Coens' enigmatic films. Pointing to the pulp fiction of Dashiell Hammett, James M. Cain, and Raymond Chandler, the study appreciates the postmodern aesthetics of the Coens' intertextual creativity.

gates of eden ethan coen: Gates of Eden Ethan Coen, 1998-10-21 A hapless private investigator who loses his hearing after having one ear bitten off, a maverick weights-and-measures man who gets pulled into a sinister blackmailing scheme by a seductive Japanese woman, a college kid so desperate to avoid an office job that he tries to break into boxing and organized crime: the characters in Gates of Eden grapple with their place in the world, trying to comprehend what fate has placed before them. With these stories -- sometimes heart-felt, sometimes brutal, always wildly entertaining -- Ethan Coen delivers everything you would expect from such an original imagination.

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revised and updated edition of this pocket-guide to perhaps the finest filmmakers working in America today. Features an introductory essay on the Coens along with an analysis and discussions of each of their films, including a consideration of their latest works Intolerable Cruelty and The Ladykillers.

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gates of eden ethan coen: L'Amérique des frères Coen Julie Assouly, 2012-08-30 Les frères Coen, réalisateur à deux têtes, tandem farouchement inclassable, paire prodigieuse révélée au grand public par Arizona junior (1987), dressent un tableau désopilant de l'Amérique profonde. Comédies, westerns, films noirs : les frères Coen ont subverti les conventions du film de genre pour créer un néo cinéma ambitieux, nourri de clins d'œil rétro aux séries B, aux grandes productions hollywoodiennes, au polar, et à la peinture réaliste américaine... Julie Assouly nous invite à un voyage passionnant au cœur de cet univers, cernant au plus près la vision coenienne d'une Amérique conçue comme un territoire ou` se confondent toujours l'histoire, le folklore et la fable. Losers magnifiques, voyous déjantés, hystériques au grand cœur, tueurs psychopathes, profs dépressifs : dans cette comédie humaine ou la satire sociale le dispute à l'absurde et au tragique, les deux cinéastes racontent, film après film, les laissés pour compte du rêve américain et la perte d'innocence de la société´ contemporaine.

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gates of eden ethan coen: CMJ New Music Report , 1999-01-11 CMJ New Music Report is the primary source for exclusive charts of non-commercial and college radio airplay and independent and trend-forward retail sales. CMJ's trade publication, compiles playlists for college and non-commercial stations; often a prelude to larger success.

gates of eden ethan coen: Spatial Relations. Volume Two. John Kinsella, 2013 These volumes present John Kinsella's uncollected critical writings and personal reflections from the early 1990s to the present. Included are extended pieces of memoir written in the Western Australian wheatbelt and the Cambridge fens, as well as acute essays and commentaries on the nature and genesis of personal and public poetics. Pivotal are a sense of place and how we write out of it; pastoral's relevance to contemporary poetry; how we evaluate and critique (post)colonial creativity and intrusion into Indigenous spaces; and engaged analysis of activism and responsibility in poetry and literary discourse. The author is well-known for saying he is preeminently an "anarchist, vegan, pacifist" - not stock epithets, but the raison d'être behind his work. The collection moves from overviews of contemporary Australian poetry to studies of such writers as Randolph Stow, Ouyang Yu, Charmaine Papertalk-Green, Lionel Fogarty, Les Murray, Peter Porter, Dorothy Hewett, Judith Wright, Alamgir Hashmi, Patrick Lane, Robert Sullivan, C.K. Stead, and J.H. Prynne, and on to numerous book reviews of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction, originally published in newspapers and journals from around the world. There are also searching reflections on visual artists (Sidney Nolan, Karl Wiebke, Shaun Atkinson) and wide-ranging opinion pieces and editorials. In counterpoint are conversations with other writers (Rosanna Warren, Rod Mengham, Alvin Pang, and Tracy Ryan) and explorations of schooling, being struck by lightning, 'international regionalism', hybridity, and experimental poetry. This two-volume argosy has been brought together by scholar and editor Gordon Collier, who has allowed the original versions to speak with their unique informal-formal ductus. Kinsella's interest is in the ethics of space and how we use it. His considerations of the wheatbelt through Wagner and Dante (and rewritings of these), and, in Thoreauvian vein, his 'place' at Jam Tree Gully on the edge of Western Australia's Avon Valley form a web of affirmation and anxiety: it is space he feels both part of and outside, em-braced in its every magnitude but felt to be stolen land, whose restitution needs articulating in literature and in real time. Beneath it all is a celebration of the natural world - every plant, animal, rock, sentinel peak, and grain of sand - and a commitment to an ecological poetics.

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and coverage of sustainability and environmental issues.

gates of eden ethan coen: *Raking The Ashes* Anne Fine, 2010-08-24 Lovers, colleagues, family - Tilly has always been brilliant at pushing people in and out of her life exactly as it suits her. Then along comes Geoffrey, gentle, compassionate, generous to a fault, with his miserable little children and his manipulative ex-wife. Tilly's own expertise in the arts of deception and avoidance should be enough to make sure she's always one step ahead of Geoffrey's disastrous, crumbling family. But time and again she finds herself staying, brought down by their cowardly backsliding and their barefaced lies. How has she managed to stay so long in a relationship she knows perfectly well has to be doomed? More importantly, how can Tilly plan her permanent escape?

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