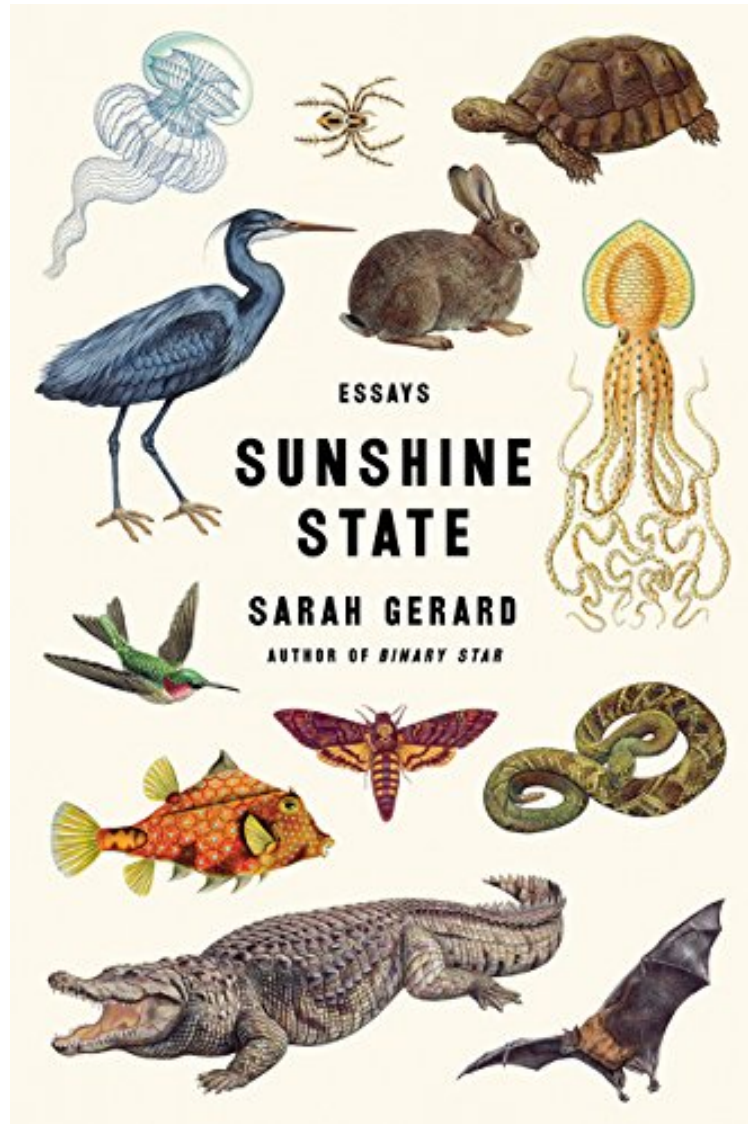


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Sunshine State: Essays

Sarah Gerard

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Sarah Gerard : Sunshine State: Essays before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sunshine State: Essays:

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A Poets Writers New and Noteworthy Selection A PW Top 10 Spring Pick in Essays Literary Criticism An Emma Straub recommendation on PBS One of the themes of *Sunshine State*, Sarah Gerards striking book of essays, is how Florida can unmoor you and make you reach for shoddy, off-the-shelf solutions to your psychic unease. The first essay is a knockout, a lurid red heart wrapped in barbed wire.... This essay draws blood. Dwight Garner, *New York Times* "Unflinchingly candid memoir bolstered by thoughtfully researched history. A nuanced and subtly intimate mosaic her writing, lucid yet atmospheric, takes on a timeless ebb and flow. Jason Heller, *NPR.org* "Stunning." *Rolling Stone* Gerards prose is unlabored, flatly observational, and the interwoven mini stories are at once tender and cold, exhilarating and regrettable each undermining the one that precedes it. Nicole Rudick, *Paris Review* Brave, keenly observational, and humanitarian. Gerards collection leaves an indelible impression. *Publishers Weekly*, starred review These large-hearted, meticulous essays offer an uncanny x-ray of our national psyche... showing us both the grand beauty of our American dreams and the heartbreaking devastation they wreak. Garth Greenwell, author of *What Belongs to You* Sarah Gerard follows her breakout novel, *Binary Star*, with the dynamic essay collection *Sunshine State*, which explores Florida as a microcosm of the most pressing economic and environmental perils haunting our society. In the collection's title essay, Gerard volunteers at the Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary, a world renowned bird refuge. There she meets its founder, who once modeled with a pelican on his arm for a Dewars Scotch campaign but has since declined into a pit of fraud and madness. He becomes our embezzling protagonist whose tales about the birds he rescues never quite add up. Gerards personal stories are no less eerie or poignant: An essay that begins as a look at Gerards first relationship becomes a heart-wrenching exploration of acquaintance rape and consent. An account of intimate female friendship pivots midway through, morphing into a meditation on jealousy and class. With the personal insight of *The Empathy Exams*, the societal exposé of *Nickel and Dimed*, and the stylistic innovation and intensity of her own break-out debut novel *Binary Star*, Sarah Gerards *Sunshine State* uses the intimately personal to unearth the deep reservoirs of humanity buried in the corners of our world often hardest to face.