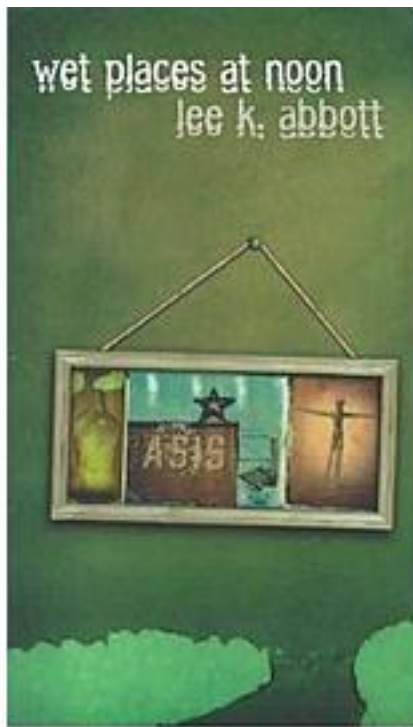


# Wet Places At Noon



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著者:Abbott, Lee K.

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The New York Times Book Review, Tom Drury In his sixth collection, the often-anthologized writer draws on our cultural standards--our wars, our divorces, our suppressed alien crash-landings--to create a mythology all his own, rising from a landscape of "scrub and chamisa and creosote and snakeweed and gnarled-up yuccas and, like set directions from the cruel genius of Rod Serling himself, ugly mountains left and right of you across a desert, flat and depressing and trackless as a nightmare." From Kirkus Reviews More salty, exuberant tales of modern men

struggling to make sense of their lives, fighting the temptation to make self-destructive gestures `` of the spectacular and dreadful kind, " by a writer with one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary fiction. Abbott's sixth collection of short stories (Living After Midnight, 1991, etc.) doesn't stray far from the terrain of his previous volumes. The eight pieces are set largely in the Southwest, and focus on baffled, essentially decent middle-aged men (many of them veterans of the Vietnam war) suffering from several kinds of severe internal turbulence. In `` Wet Places At Noon, " Eddie, a refugee from the middle class, is struggling, with the help of his lover, to construct firewalls in his life to hold back the madness that keeps threatening to erupt. In `` On Tuesday Nothing, On Wednesday Walls, " Harry, reluctant to start over, maneuvers desperately (and ingeniously) to remain a part of his bemused ex-wife's life. Women in these stories spend their time reacting to the frenzied hijinks of their husbands or lovers, sometimes, as in `` Wet Places At Noon, " being drawn into the contests their men are absorbed in, and at other times, as in `` On Tuesday Nothing, " good-humoredly keeping themselves at arm's length from the action. In some tales they are largely absent: Billy, the protagonist of `` The Human Use of Inhuman Beings, " despite a serene marriage, discovers that the most intimate relationship in his life remains his longstanding acquaintance with an angel--who only appears to Billy to announce the deaths of loved ones. All of these stories are narrated in the invigorating prose that has become Abbott's trademark, mingling the tang and vigor of regional speech with sly humor and a jaunty, startling cadence. Too rich, perhaps, for some tastes, but fiction with a vigor, intelligence, and rueful wit sorely lacking from the work of many of Abbott's contemporaries. -- Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.

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