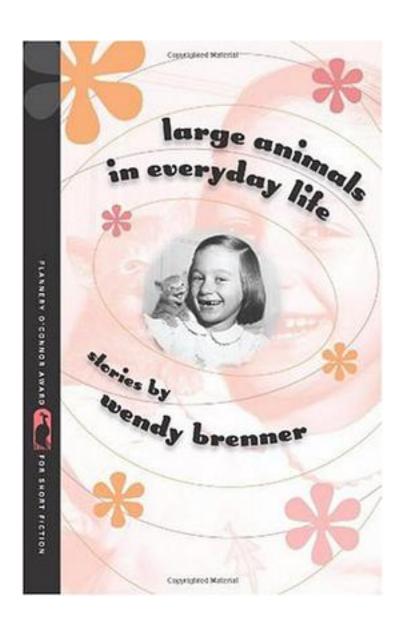
## Large Animals in Everyday Life



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The eleven stories in Wendy Brenner's debut story collection concern people who are alone or feel themselves to be alone: survivors negotiating between logic and faith who look for mysterious messages and connections in everyday life, those sudden transformations and small miracles that occur in mundane, even absurd settings. Brenner's stories range in setting from the rural and southern (a rotating country music bar, a dog track/jai alai compound, a grocery store, a natural cold springs sinkhole) to the urban and high-tech (absurdly bureaucratic companies and academic departments and a food irradiation plant). Often young and tough women seeking to hone their survival sensibilities, Brenner's characters are a mix of the everyday and the fantastic: frustrated secretaries and scientists, a young supermodel, precocious children, fierce plumbers and mechanics, a psychic grandmother, an unhappy lottery winner, a desperate grocery-store mascot in an animal suit. And then there are the animals--real ones of all kinds who turn up at unlikely moments and often seem to be trying to help.

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