



The Second Body

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Awards

The White Review Books of the Year 2018



Daisy Hildyard

The Second Body

Every living thing has two bodies. To be an animal is to be in possession of a physical body, a body which can eat, drink and sleep; it is also to be embedded in a worldwide network of ecosystems. When every human body has an uncanny global presence, how do we live with ourselves? In this timely and elegant essay, Daisy Hildyard captures the second body by exploring how the human is a part of animal life. She meets Richard, a butcher in Yorkshire, and sees pigs turned into boiled ham; and Gina, an environmental criminologist, who tells her about leopards and silver foxes kept as pets in luxury apartments. She speaks to Luis, a biologist, about the origins of life; and talks to Nadezhda about fungi in an effort to understand how we define animal life. Eventually, her second body comes to visit her first body when the river flooded her home last year. *The Second Body* is a brilliantly lucid account of the dissolving boundaries between all life on earth.

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Gavin Francis, Guardian

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*“Another creature’s experience is different, and we do not know how it is different”, writes Daisy Hildyard in *The Second Body*. This playful and original essay touches on the limits of our ability to imagine that experience. Hildyard, a novelist who was trained as a historian of science, tries to find the ways we intuit boundaries between our bodies and our ecosystems, between ourselves and other animals.’*

Jennie Erin Smith, Times Literary Supplement

Daisy Hildyard

Daisy Hildyard’s first novel, *Hunters in the Snow*, received the Somerset Maugham Award and a ‘5 under 35’ honorarium at the USA National Book Awards. Her essay *The Second Body*, a brilliantly lucid account of the dissolving boundaries between all life on earth, was published by Fitzcarraldo Editions in 2017. Her novel *Emergency* won the RSL Encore Award in 2023. She lives with her family in North Yorkshire, where she was born.