



The Folded Clock: A Diary

Heidi Julavits

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A raucous, stunningly candid, deliriously smart diary of two years in the life of the incomparable Heidi Julavits

Like many young people, Heidi Julavits kept a diary. Decades later she found her old diaries in a storage bin, and hoped to discover the early evidence of the person (and writer) she'd since become. Instead, "The actual diaries revealed me to possess the mind of a paranoid tax auditor." The entries are daily chronicles of anxieties about grades, looks, boys, and popularity. After reading the confessions of her past self, writes Julavits, "I want to good-naturedly laugh at this person. I want to but I can't. What she wanted then is scarcely different from what I want today."

Thus was born a desire to try again, to chronicle her daily life as a forty-something woman, wife, mother, and writer. The dazzling result is *The Folded Clock*, in which the diary form becomes a meditation on time and self, youth and aging, betrayal and loyalty, friendship and romance, faith and fate, marriage and family, desire and death, gossip and secrets, art and ambition. Concealed beneath the minute obsession with "dailiness" are sharply observed moments of cultural criticism and emotionally driven philosophical queries. In keeping with the spirit of a diary, the tone is confessional, sometimes shockingly so, as the focus shifts from the woman she wants to be to the woman she may have become.

Julavits's spirited sense of humor about her foibles and misadventures, combined with her ceaseless intelligence and curiosity, explode the typically confessional diary form. *The Folded Clock* is as playful as it is brilliant, a tour de force by one of the most gifted prose stylists in American letters.

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