

mid # with
2004
ForeWord

ical order, they come alive in a way that is real, often painful, and enduring in a style that is as gut-wrenching as the writings of Pat Conroy. (January)
John R. Selig



What Else But Home

Sharon Rolens
Bridge Works
312 pages
Hardcover \$23.95
1-882593-75-8

East of Eden and south-south-west of Chicago, Old Kane, Illinois in 1948 is a

tiny yet teeming crossroads of family strife, populated by amiable prodigal sons, practical-sounding patriarchs, and the women who love them. Its denizens' various sins (incest, sodomy, adultery, murder, euthanasia, robbery, atheism, mild profanity, and the inability to last beyond chapter five because it's too vividly naked), are mingled with such genteel aplomb that the novel itself might be taken as a tribute to the redemptive power of nostalgia over the lure of yellow journalism.

Drayton Hunt, forty-eight, unemployed, and newly sprung from prison for a crime (of his many crimes) he didn't commit, wants to talk to his resentful illegitimate son, Cappy Giberson. Cappy, twenty-three, newly graduated from journalism school and semi-employed as a *St. Louis-Dispatch* freelancer, is too tongue-tied to talk to the spunky co-ed Oleeta Hetzel, who serves at the local diner and ponders her future outside Old Kane.

Meanwhile, Cappy's custodial father is technically his grandfather: the seventy-three-year-old widower, Worthy Giberson (Worthy's sole daughter Chastity spent an afternoon in the hayloft with Drayton and died giving birth to Cappy). Worthy is still keeping an eye out for his own runaway son, Tick Giberson, a thirty-three-year-old bleached blond reformed speaker of tongues on the shilling evangelical tent circuit. (That the three bachelors don't come to blows vying for the common sense salvation of Oleeta merely means that profane reading habits die hard.)

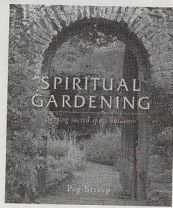
It will take the confession of an Amish-turned-Baptist minister who cries easily, a murder trial, and the promise of a publishing contract to put old Worthy's stories in a book to set the record straight.

The author is resourceful enough to entertain her readers with a well-built window on a vanishing world. A sequel to the Literary Guild selection *Worthy's Town*, a look at Worthy's days in 1920 Old Kane, *What Else But Home* is Rolens's second novel, and the graceful entrances and exits of her various story arcs create a pleasant rhythmic flow of local scenery, much like the well-preserved 1924 Moon Chevy that Drayton coaxes back to running form. By the final page, when Old Kane's newest bride and groom light out for Kingdom City, Missouri, that town's parishioners are going

powerful tall-tale testament of a love
omption by one reformed safe-cracking
(January)

Leeta Taylor

GARDENING



**Spiritual Gardening:
Creating Sacred Space
Outdoors**

Peg Streep
Inner Ocean
Color photographs
192 pages
234 color photographs
Softcover \$29.95
1-930722-24-9

"The Latin word for sacred gives us the word sanctuary," explains the author, "denoting not only a sacred space, but also a place for refuge and protection." Streep believes that the tasks of planting and tending a garden, which connect the gardener to the cycles of growth, are effective therapeutic tools. Ten types of gardens described and pictured here, drawn from all over the world, represent different religious and spiritual traditions.

The Aromatherapy garden, for example, focuses on the use of floral fragrance to affect mood and promote health, to heal and revive both body and spirit. Zen gardens, which emerged from Japan and China, teach readers that enlightenment can be attained through meditation and self-contemplation. The Healing garden demonstrates that physical and spiritual balance can be restored by being outdoors; Streep explains that even the work of weeding and raking has repetitive aspects similar to prayer and meditation.

The Celtic garden "encourages us to see all things as animate with spirit, whether they are living or not." In the Biblical garden, writes Streep, the spiritual landscape takes on a form that links readers' present-day lives in both literal and symbolic ways to the events and people in the Bible.

The Gaia garden is a sanctuary that honors the earth as a Mother, a place to celebrate the divine feminine in nature. The Feng Shui garden is concerned with how the energy of natural surroundings affects human well-being, aspirations, and achievements. The Saint's garden should be a place of peace "where a vision of God reveals itself in the details of nature." The Labyrinth garden takes on a specific geometric form; its landscape is shaped to create what Streep calls "a tool for spiritual awakening and transformation." In the Tranquillity garden, planting the right mix of flowers will bring the gardener a feeling of calmness and order.

Streep, who holds advanced degrees from the University of Pennsylvania and Columbia University, has written, edited, and illustrated several previous books with spiritual themes, including *Altars Made Easy* and *Girl in the Mirror*. The photographer, whose superb pictures complement Streep's text, is a graduate of the Slade School of

Fine Art in London. His work has appeared in *Garden Design* and *Gardens Illustrated*.

Streep recommends a variety of plants and trees for each of the gardens, some of which will attract birds and butterflies. She views gardening as a vehicle for spiritual and emotional connection, concluding that "gardening is, for most of us, as close as we will ever get to witnessing a miracle firsthand." (January)

George Cohen

GRAPHIC NOVEL



**Buddha, Volume One:
Kapilavastu**

Osamu Tezuka
Illustrated
Vertical
400 pages
Hardcover \$24.95
1-932234-43-8

While Westerners watched Disney cartoons, the author watched too—and created his own. The "godfather" of Japanese manga and anime (comics and animation), originally trained as a medical doctor, went on to shape the Japanese animation industry as few others could.

Readers of manga already know Tezuka. If they haven't yet discovered his rendering of the story of Buddha, originally published in Japan in 1987, now is the time to explore this five-volume edition. The original artwork "has been produced as a mirror-image," says a note on the copyright page, "in order to conform with the English language." Japanese comics, of course, are read back to front.

Tezuka has created two characters, the young boys Tatta, a pariah, and Chapra, a slave, who introduce the reader to the caste system and the harshness of life for those at its bottom. Chapra, delivering some fabric, is set upon by Tatta, who steals the goods. Chapra returns empty-handed to his master, and is whipped and told that if he fails to recover the fabric within three days, his mother will be sold.

Chapra fights Tatta and his gang; outnumbered, he loses. But when he tells Tatta about his mother, the pariah decides to free her, and he exchanges consciousness with a tiger. The tiger attacks the slave procession and drags Chapra's mother to freedom. Tatta becomes himself again, and tells Chapra that he is able to get inside animals' minds because, as a pariah, he has been regarded as less than human: "I bet you have to hit rock bottom and start wondering if you aren't just a beast after all."

The charm of the cleanly drawn pictures is just one of the wonders of this book. The skill evident in every drawing, the emotions visible in every character—from animal to human—and the smooth progression of the story mark the hand of a master. Although Tezuka was heavily influenced by Disney, his work remained fresh and original,

and his love for and respect of nature and animals is evident throughout.

The three characters stay together, later assisted by a Brahmin monk, and they experience miraculous happenings and acts of selflessness, accompanied by death, destruction, and war. They find themselves challenged at every turn. The monk learns a lot from the two boys, as the child Siddhartha is born nearby.

It is a grand beginning to a grand story; readers will be eager to see what comes next. (December)

Marlene Y. Satter



Dame Darcy's Meat Cake Compilation

Dame Darcy
Fantagraphics Books
150 pages
Hardcover \$22.95
1-56097-532-6

Take a Victorian mansion, strange women clad in striped stockings and flowing garments, a mermaid, a wolf walking upright and dressed like a man, and a banjo-playing doll. Throw in knives, gore, dismemberment, and death. Mix well. Enclose in a pink binding, tip the pages in silver, and put a richly-colored piece of artwork on the front cover. The result is a somewhat dangerous confection—an eerie concoction of tales that seem more like dreams, or nightmares, than actual stories.

Underground comics challenge the status quo of their readers' minds, and there are plenty of challenges within these pages. The author is rather like Edward Gorey run mad. The strange inhabitants of the pages of this volume include Friend the Girl, the most "normal" of the characters (at least on the surface); Richard Dirt, who, contrary to her name, is female; a mermaid named Efflulia, who uses a car and a wheelchair to get to a restaurant on land; a family who goes to a "cake walk" to win a charge from a device reminiscent of an electric chair; and Strega Pez, the girl who dispenses Pez tablets through her cut throat in lieu of speaking. A recurring theme is the appearance of characters with two heads, beginning with Hindrance and Perfidia, a two-headed girl; there is even a story about an egg with two yolks.

The author studied film and animation at the San Francisco Art Institute. Her art has been exhibited in galleries around the country; her illustrations and comics have appeared in publications like *The Village Voice*, *L.A. Weekly*, and *D.C. Comics*. She also writes interview articles for the New York-based *Index Magazine*, and her theatrical work, *Meat Cake the Play*, has been produced on the East Coast.

Her tales in this collection of the first seven issues of the *Meat Cake* comic books feature strange and disturbing plots. Most are wickedly satiric, but the poignancy of the story "Stained Glass" mixes grotesquerie with grief in the story

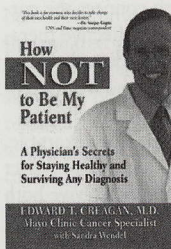
of a man who built his bride a home of stained glass. When he goes away on business, she abandons their newborn son to starve in his cradle; on his return, the man goes mad, makes a new body for the dead baby out of stained glass, and then cuts the throat of his wife.

The artwork is detail-rich, maintaining a Victorian flavor, and there are lots of macabre and even gruesome drawings to relate the various cautionary tales. There's also a strong erotic element throughout, with the most graphic depiction occurring in the front endpapers. Even the title, says Darcy, is "what I thought to be the most decadent of all food, a combination of Meat and Cake."

Decadence is the byword here: *Meat Cake* is not for the faint of heart or the easily offended. (January)

Marlene Y. Satter

HEALTH



How Not to Be My Patient: A Physician's Secrets for Staying Healthy and Surviving Any Diagnosis

Edward T. Creagan
with Sandra Wendel
Health Communications
310 pages
Softcover \$12.95
0-7573-0110-X

"At least half of all people die early because of illnesses caused by lifestyle choices, dietary factors and behavioral patterns," states the author, adding that it is never too late to make a change.

Cancer is a frightening topic and Creagan does not sidestep that fear. He works with it, telling readers why they need to take responsibility for their own health, and he explains how. The facts are mingled with real-life stories and details that consistently remind the reader that cancer can happen to anyone. It is a book that stays on the mind long after the last page has been read.

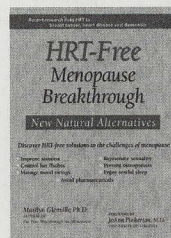
Creagan is a cancer specialist at Mayo Clinic. He joined the Mayo staff more than thirty years ago, after completing his medical training at New York Medical College and earning his graduate degree in internal medicine and oncology at University of Michigan and the National Cancer Institute. He is board certified in internal medicine, medical oncology, and hospice medicine and palliative care.

He shares his "8 Commandments for Living Long and Living Well," which include eating a plant-based diet and finding meaning and purpose in life. He outlines the risks of smoking and drinking and suggests ways to terminate those habits. Stressing the need for better nutrition, Creagan takes readers on a virtual tour of a grocery store. He "walks" right down the aisles with readers, helping to select the foods

that will bring better health. Creagan asserts that: "Every time you sit down to a meal, you may increase or decrease your risk of getting cancer." He lists the different health screening tests that people should undergo—and tells which tests are not necessary. He suggests specific ways to approach a doctor's appointment, and ways to deal with a cancer diagnosis.

This book should be required reading for everyone who is ready to take responsibility and do something about their own health. Providing techniques as well as facts, Creagan expertly lays out a "floor plan" for good health, offering readers the best shot at a healthy life. (January)

Denise Mallas



HRT-Free Menopause Breakthrough: The New Natural Alternatives

Marilyn Glenville
Ulysses Press
300 pages
Softcover \$14.95
1-56975-357-1

"Too many doctors see women as a collection of hormones," writes the author, "and thus regard the menopause as a deficiency disease that needs to be corrected by replenishing declining levels of oestrogen. Always bear in mind, however, that it is not an illness requiring treatment but a natural event in a woman's life."

That little jewel is tucked onto the end of this book's foreword, but perhaps it should have been in bold type on its own page. For the thousands of women who are confused about treating the symptoms of menopause, just those words of clarification could make a big difference in the choices they make, and that is the purpose of this book: to help women make good choices about health care.

Expanding on the information that was in her previous book, Glenville, a nutritionist and psychologist with a PhD from Cambridge, incorporates new research on the benefits and drawbacks of Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). In recent years there have been conflicting reports from the medical field, and Glenville includes the latest studies that show little benefit for HRT and some serious side effects, including a greater risk of breast cancer.

In the chapter "Your Breasts at the Menopause," she questions the benefits of mammograms in screening for breast cancer. "Results of a ten-year study of 600,000 Swedish women were published in *The Lancet* in 2001 that concluded that 'screening for breast cancer with mammography is unjustified' and for every breast cancer death avoided, the total number of deaths increased by six." According to this study, the problem of yearly mammograms is the exposure to radiation, which has long been known to increase the risk of cancer. Women are encouraged to seek alternatives such as ultra-sound for screen-