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BY RACHEL CARSON

Under the Sea-Wind

The Sea Around Us

The Edge of the Sea

Silent Spring



FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

RACHEL CARSON

Introduction by Linda Lear

Afterword by Edward O. Wilson



A MARINER BOOK HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY Boston New York

towns in America? This book is an attempt to explain. What has already silenced the voices of spring in countless

essily become a stark reality we all shall know. crept upon us almost unnoticed, and this imagined tragedy may suffered a substantial number of them. A grim specter has happened somewhere, and many real communities have already tunes I describe. Yet every one of these disasters has actually I know of no community that has experienced all the misfora thousand counterparts in America or elsewhere in the world. This town does not actually exist, but it might easily have

new life in this stricken world. The people had done it them-No witchcraft, no enemy action had silenced the rebirth of the lawns, the fields and streams.

some weeks before it had fallen like snow upon the roofs and the roofs, a white granular powder still showed a few parches; In the gutters under the caves and between the shingles of all the fish had died.

streams were now lifeless. Anglers no longer visited them, for These, too, were silent, deserted by all living things. Even the browned and withered vegetation as though swept by fire. The roadsides, once so attractive, were now lined with

would be no fruit. among the blossoms, so there was no pollination and there

A FABLE FOR TOMORROW

The apple trees were coming into bloom but no bees droned the litters were small and the young survived only a few days. farmers complained that they were unable to raise any pigs -On the farms the hens brooded, but no chicks hatched, The

over the fields and woods and marsh. other bird voices there was now no sound; only silence lay chorus of robins, carbirds, doves, jays, wrens, and scores of voices. On the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn trembled violently and could not fly. It was a spring without sected. The tew birds seen anywhere were moribund; they and disturbed. The feeding stations in the backyards were dewhere had they gone? Many people spoke of them, puzzled There was a strange stillness. The birds, for example -

denly while at play and die within a tew hours. new kinds of sickness appearing among their parients. There had been several sudden and unexplained deaths, not only among adults but even among children, who would be stricken sudden that the several sudden sudden the several sudden sudden with the several sudden sud the town the doctors had become more and more puzzled by The farmers spoke of much illness among their families. In sheep sickened and died. Everywhere was a shadow of death. mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens, the cattle and began to change. Some evil spell had settled on the community: Then a strange blight crept over the area and everything

the first settlers raised their houses, sank their wells, and built crout lay. So it had been from the days many years ago when clear and cold out of the hills and contained shady pools where to observe them. Others came to fish the streams, which flowed through in spring and fall people traveled from great distances of its bird life, and when the flood of migrants was pouring countryside was, in fact, famous for the abundance and variety seed heads of the dried weeds rising above the snow. The where countless birds came to feed on the berries and on the year. Even in winter the roadsides were places of beauty,

SITENT SPRING



I. A Fable for Tomorrow

THERE WAS ONCE a town in the heart of America where all life seemed to live in harmony with its surroundings. The town lay in the midst of a checkerboard of prosperous farms, with fields of grain and hillsides of orchards where, in spring, white clouds of bloom drifted above the green fields. In autumn, oak and maple and birch set up a blaze of color that flamed and flickered across a backdrop of pines. Then foxes barked in the hills and deer silently crossed the fields, half hidden in the mists of the fall mornings.

Along the roads, laurel, viburnum and alder, great ferns and wildflowers delighted the traveler's eye through much of the

