



Why We Fly: The Meaning of Travel in a Hyperconnected Age (Kindle Single)

Evan Rail

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It was supposed to be a routine road trip: a pleasant drive through Hungary's Tokaj wine region on an assignment for Condé Nast Traveler magazine. But there was a small problem: the car, an old Skoda 120 L from the communist era, often simply would not start. The second problem: instead of a bridge across the muddy Tisza river, they were unexpectedly forced to take a ferry, getting to the other side of the river with a dead engine at the front of a long line of Hungarian cars.

Thus begins "Why We Fly," a thoughtful meditation on the meaning of the voyage by the travel writer Evan Rail, the author of more than 70 travel articles for the New York Times. In it, Rail questions the meaning of travel from the perspective of a travel insider, finding unexpected pleasures in the worst moments on the road and asking serious questions about what travel means. When just about everything is available everywhere, what is the point of packing ourselves into aluminum tubes and shipping ourselves to the other side of the earth? Why, in fact, do so many of us fly and drive and ride? And just what kind of jerk was Petrarch, anyway?

A 30-page lyric essay, "Why We Fly" is a humorous and erudite investigation into the point of going anywhere at all, and a moving and personal reflection on the nature of journeys, love and family.

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