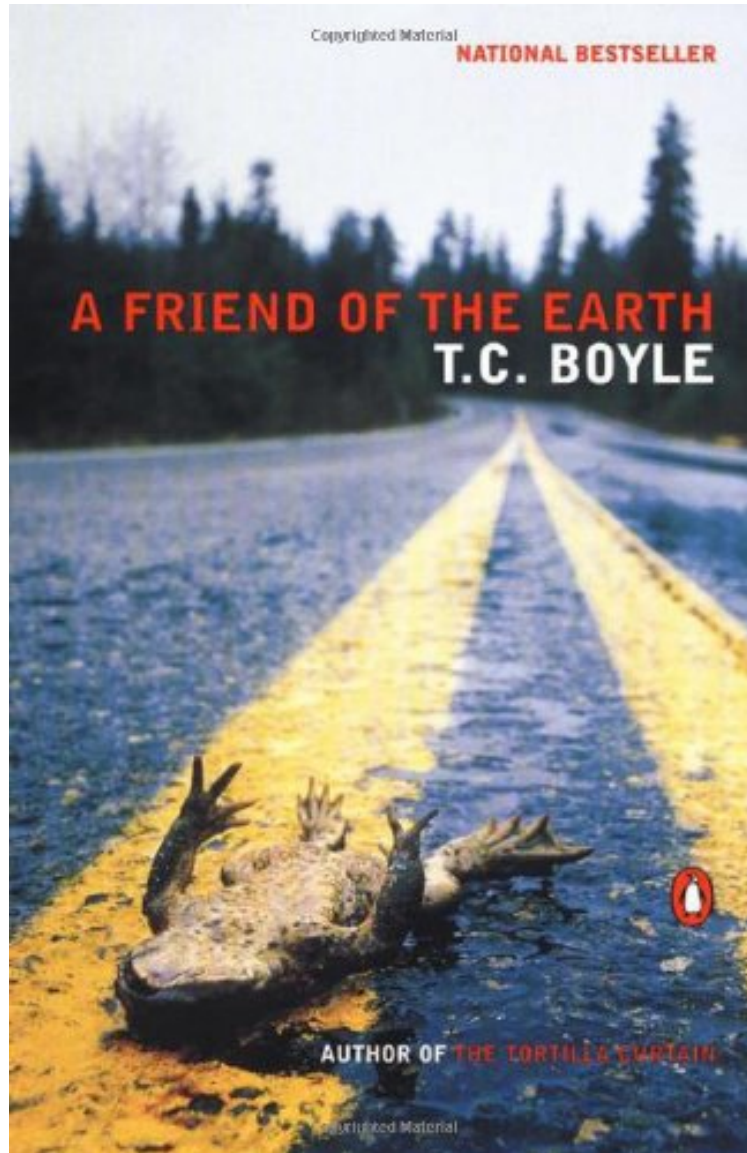


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A Friend of the Earth

T.C. Boyle

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#215420 in Books Boyle, T. Coraghessan 2001-09-01 2001-09-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.70 x .81 x 5.30l, .55 #File Name: 0141002050349 pages | File size: 32.Mb

T.C. Boyle : A Friend of the Earth before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Friend of the Earth:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. dystopia, usa. By bill katovsky the shifting chronology, from end-of-century environmentalism and monkeywrenching do-goodism, to a bleak future, a quarter of century later where the widening ozone hole and el nino have wreaked their vengeance on the earth and its inhabitants, has the effect of bracketing a spate of touchy eco-subjects. tc boyle is too gifted as a novelist and satirist to fall prey to didactic

posturing. this book is a heartfelt homage--told from the perspective of the elderly narrator whose job is taking care of a menagerie of endangered species for a mega rock star-- to an abused earth, and the people self-chosen to protect its natural treasures. the spirit of edward abbey, david brower and julia butterfly hill reside at the epicenter of this book that also questions the so called altruistic intentions of these anti-logging green activists.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Author, Weird TaleBy C. GarciaI really wanted to like this book but I just couldn't get into it and never finished it. That is very rare for me. The main issue I had with the story before abandoning it at 3/4 of the way through is I kept wondering what is the point. Where is this going.The author is definitely a top notch word smith, hence I did try really hard to finish the book but the characters while intriguing lacked a certain depth to me and the plot was plodding at best.Edited to add:Okay...I finally got in a space where I could focus on this book and slogged my way through it from the beginning. On second take I fell in love with this book. It is poignant in a way that when you get to the arc of the story you stop and read a sentence again just to let it resonate through you. Its not an easy read with the shifting time line, but when you give it your full attention it has a profound tale to tell.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Another excellent Boyle bookBy H. Blumberg-McKeeT. C. Boyle is a superb writer. I'd read anything he writes, except maybe his short stories, because I'm not much of a short-story fan. The only book of his, so far, that I haven't cared much for is Budding Prospects: A Pastoral. That was a very early book of his, and he hadn't yet hit his stride. But he certainly knows what he's doing in A Friend of the Earth. Superb. Thought-provoking. Grim. What are we doing to our planet?

In the tradition of *The Tortilla Curtain*, T.C. Boyle blends idealism and satire in a story that addresses the universal questions of human love and the survival of the species. In the year 2025 global warming is a reality, the biosphere has collapsed, and 75-year-old environmentalist Ty Tierwater is eking out a living as care-taker of a pop star's private zoo when his second ex-wife re-enters his life. Both gritty and surreal, *A Friend of the Earth* represents a high-water mark in Boyle's career-his deep streak of social concern is effortlessly blended here with genuine compassion for his characters and the spirit of sheer exhilarating playfulness readers have come to expect from his work.

.com If, as we are frequently cautioned, ecological collapse is imminent, the future might someday resemble T.C. Boyle's vision of Southern California, circa 2025: strafing wind, extortionate heat, vast species extinction, and a ramshackle, dispirited populace. A more bleak backdrop--part *Blade Runner*, part *Silent Spring*--for his eighth novel is difficult to imagine. But the ever-mischievous, ever-inventive Boyle is all too willing to disoblige; and so, in extended homage to early Vonnegut, his Sierra Club nightmare is rendered, well, comically. Toss in streaks of unabashed sentimentality, a scattershot satire, and several signature narrative ambushes, and *A Friend of the Earth* only further embellishes the already prodigious Boyle reputation. During the 1980s and '90s, Ty Tierwater had exchanged a sedately acquisitive existence--"the slow-rolling glacier of my old life, my criminal life, the life I led before I became a friend of the earth"--for a fairly ambivalent position on the front lines of an ecoterrorist posse called *Earth Forever!* The only complication is his dual penchant for empathy and ineptitude, exacerbated by a frustration that swells with accumulating incitements. After his daughter is taken from him, and his second wife, Andrea, becomes more committed to the cause than to their marriage, Ty finds solace in blind destruction. He serves his almost predictable terms in jail; he endures the eventual death--and martyrdom--of his activist daughter, Sierra. At 75, and a quarter of the way into the dismal and decayed 21st century, he unaccountably finds himself tending an eccentric rock star's private mini-zoo of ragged animals and wryly lamenting the collapse of his race. And then Andrea resurfaces--along with his long-fallow faith in love. Old Testament digression stalks Ty throughout *A Friend of the Earth*, from a publicity-stunt-cum-Edenic-retreat during his heady *Earth Forever!* days to a chaotic menagerie roundup amidst flooding rainfall. Boyle's future, however, is less apocalyptic than resigned, more drearily pragmatic than angst-ridden. It's a world Ty ultimately finds untenable: a constricted diversity, ecological or ideological, proves stultifying, a fact he only dimly recognized while awash in his earlier radicalism. "To be a friend of the earth," he avers in retrospect, "you have to be an enemy of the people." Boyle's spirited tale sustains the brashness of Ty's convictions. --Ben GutersonFrom Publishers WeeklyMordantly funny and inventive, this take-no-prisoners novel revolves around a few of Boyle's favorite themes: obsessive hygiene, compulsive consumerism, uneasiness in the natural world and fear of technology. As the Vonnegutishly named Tyrone "Ty" O'Shaughnessy Tierwater reminds readers, "to be a friend of the earth you have to be an enemy of the people." In the year 2025, Ty is 75, by contemporary standards a young-old man, and zookeeper for a private menagerie in Santa Ynez, Calif. Most mammals are extinct, and the environment as 20th-century humans knew it is destroyed. Besieged by floods, drought and Force 8 winds, people tramp through pestilential mud, eat farm-grown catfish and drink rice wine. In flashbacks from the frenetic 21st-century sections to Ty's past as a rabid environmentalist in the late '80s and early '90s, Boyle choreographs a syncopated dance, riffing on the mores and manias of environmental crusaders. To prove a point in their early campaign, Ty and wife Andrea spend 30 days naked and unprovisioned in the wilderness, emerging triumphant. But otherwise, Ty is subjected to a lifelong series of humiliations, and his forthrightness about them makes him sympathetic, while eco-warriors in general are skewered as relentlessly as the bulldozer-driven corporations. A bad time is had by all, most notably by Ty's daughter,

the tree-sitting Sierra, who, unlike Julia Butterfly Hill (the real-life tree-sitter who surely influenced Boyle), does not descend from her perch to publishing contracts and public radio interviews. Boyle (*The Tortilla Curtain*) allows for a hint of redemption in the end, but his depiction of the cruel fate of humankind—the fate of monkey wrenchers, lumber companies, the not-quite-engaged and the engaged, too—is as unflinching as it is satirical. Major ad/promo; first serial to *Outside* magazine; 8-city author tour. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From *Library Journal* The year is 2025, and global warming is a catastrophic reality; most mammalian species are extinct. Tyrone Tierwater looks back to the late 1980s, when he first predicted that disaster would happen. Although it was his activist wife, Andrea, who initially goaded him into joining the ecoterrorist group Earth Forever!, Tyrone and his daughter Sierra quickly surpassed Andrea in their commitment to monkeywrenching. Tyrone was repeatedly arrested for criminal trespass and the destruction of property and ended up spending years in prison. Meanwhile, Andrea advanced in the movement's leadership council, and when her husband's antics threatened her position, she quickly divorced him. In retrospect, Tyrone realizes that history's having proven him right offers little solace for a wasted life. In his new work, Boyle (*Riven Rock*) mercilessly skewers developers and environmentalists alike; clearly, developers have trashed the planet, but Boyle also shows that Tierwater's monkeywrenching is partly destruction for its own sake, and Earth Forever! is more interested in protecting its own bureaucracy than the environment. Even Mother Nature comes in for a drubbing, as when a wealthy rock star is eaten by one of the animals in his private zoo. What results is powerful satire that rethinks the basic premises of Edward Abbey's classic *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, arguing that there are no quick and easy solutions. This book shows Boyle maturing from a glib comedic talent to a more serious novelist. Recommended for most fiction collections.—Edward B. St. John, Loyola Law Sch. Lib., Los Angeles Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.