



A NOVEL BY THE AUTHOR OF
THE JUMP-OFF CREEK

Wild Life

OLLY GLOSS

Adventurous . . . suspenseful . . . Gloss's exhilarating tale cajoles us into asking what it means to be alive on this teeming sphere." — CHICAGO TRIBUNE

MARINER BOOKS

"Molly Gloss has accomplished something no less than extraordinary in her third novel, *Wild Life*." — *San Diego Union-Tribune*

"As Molly Gloss's unconventional heroine affirms herself as a feminist, natural historian, mythologist, parent, and adventure-seeker, she reminds us that opportunity exists inside the self as well as outside it."

— Abby Frucht, *New York Times Book Review*

"Adventurous in character, story, and thought, cannily constructed, epigrammatic, and beautifully written, Gloss's suspenseful novel and exhilarating tale cajoles us into asking what it means to be alive on this teeming sphere."

— *Chicago Tribune*

"[In] this exquisitely written novel . . . Gloss's characters, even the minor ones, are vividly imagined . . . In summoning that world back to life in all its mythic dimensions, Molly Gloss makes its loss all the more poignant."

— *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*

"In stunningly lyrical prose and a tone that exercises just the right degree of restraint, *Wild Life* is sure to mark a solid place for its author in the ranks of contemporary women who challenge the way the West has been written."

— *Denver Post*

"A brilliantly rendered evocation of life in an Oregon timber town at the turn of the century." — *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

"I have been asked why I write book reviews as if the people in a novel were real. The answer is simple: Authors like Molly Gloss make them real."

— *Detroit Free Press*

"Beautifully constructed, wonderfully written, this is a book to take to that deserted island you've always dreamed of and feared."

— *New Orleans Times-Picayune*

"[*Wild Life*] is a bold and inventive novel about how the stories we consume come to define us. It seeks to meld art and enchantment and fantasy, feminism and femininity." — *Minneapolis Star-Tribune*



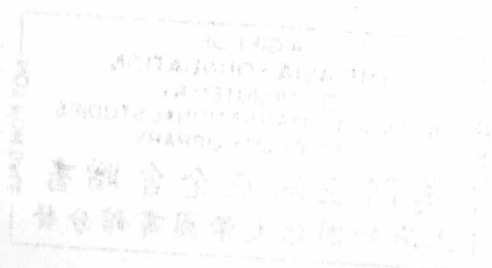
"Canny and spellbinding . . . Not only has Gloss created an irresistible heroine, she considers our conflictful relationship with nature, misogyny, and what it really means to be alive without once compromising the heady pleasure of her suspenseful tale; and her prose is positively ambrosial."

— *Booklist*

"Never has there been a more authentic, persuasive, or moving evocation of this elusive legend: a masterpiece." — *Kirkus Reviews*

"The writing of Miss Gloss is vibrant, her characters incisively drawn; she has a vivid ability to convey the sights and sounds of the natural world . . . All of this was displayed in her first book, *The Jump-Off Creek*, a novel that no one interested in the western experience would want to miss. Her craft is displayed in equal measure here." — *Washington Times*

"So deft is Gloss's fusing of the fantastic and the actual that by the end, the narrative transmogrifies once more into a profound and troubling meditation on wildness, nature, and human nature . . . the breadth and daring of Gloss's imagination really puts *Wild Life* in a class of its own . . . a fictional tour de force." — *Amazon.com*



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Wild Life

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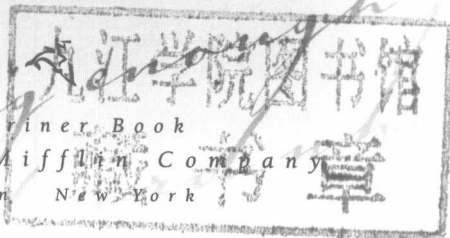
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M O L L Y G L O S S

Wild
Life

a novel

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Thanks to Irene Martin, who steered me toward a more accurate description of the terrain around Skamokawa (though, of course, any remaining errors are mine).

For helping this poor lost book find its way out of the woods, I am deeply grateful to the Truthful Trio, and also to my literary agent, Wendy Weil, and my editor at Simon & Schuster, Roz Siegel.

For my sister, Pat Zagelow



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N o t e

The events in this book are entirely fictional, all its people imaginary. Certain thoughts and attitudes shared by many turn-of-the-century women writers have been shamelessly placed in Charlotte's mouth or upon the pages of her journal without attribution to the actual women who thought and wrote them.

Though much diminished from their heyday at the turn of the century, Skamokawa and Yacolt, as well as other named towns of southwest Washington State, are yet living communities, to which, in both history and landscape, I have been largely faithful. Certain bits of gossip and anecdotal stories (dates and details often recast) have been gathered from a variety of local sources, including especially *Battleground . . . In and Around*, by Louise McKay Allworth, and *Skamokawa: Sad Years, Glad Years*, by Irene Martin.

I am indebted to Robert Michael Pyle for his nonfiction exploration of the mystery of wilderness, *Where Bigfoot Walks: Crossing the Dark Divide*, and to the poet Pattiann Rogers for "Rolling Naked in the Morning Dew," and to T. H. White for *The Bestiary: A Book of Beasts, Being a Translation from a Latin Bestiary of the Twelfth Century*.

There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that.

GENESIS 6:4

