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A perfect companion to *Evicted* and *Nickel and Dimed*, *Heartland* reveals one woman's experience of working-class poverty with a startlingly observed, eye-opening, and topical personal story. During Sarah Smarsh's turbulent childhood in Kansas in the 1980s and 1990s, the forces of cyclical poverty and the country's changing economic policies solidified her family's place among the working poor. By telling the story of her life and the lives of the people she loves, Smarsh challenges us to look more closely at the class divide in our country and examine the myths about people thought to be less because they earn less. Her personal history affirms the corrosive impact intergenerational poverty can have on individuals, families, and communities, and she explores this idea as lived experience, metaphor, and level of consciousness. Smarsh was born a fifth-generation Kansas wheat farmer on her paternal side and the product of generations of teen mothers on her maternal side. Through her experiences growing up as the daughter of a dissatisfied young mother and raised predominantly by her grandmother on a farm 30 miles west of Wichita, we are given a unique and essential look into the lives of poor and working-class Americans living in the heartland. Combining memoir with powerful analysis and cultural commentary, *Heartland* is an uncompromising look at class,

identity, and the particular perils of having less in a country known for its excess. "Sarah Smarsh - tough-minded and rough-hewn - draws us into the real lives of her family, barely making it out there on the American plains. There's not a false note. Smarsh, as a writer, is Authentic with a capital A... This is just what the world needs to hear." (George Hodgman, author of Bettyville)

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