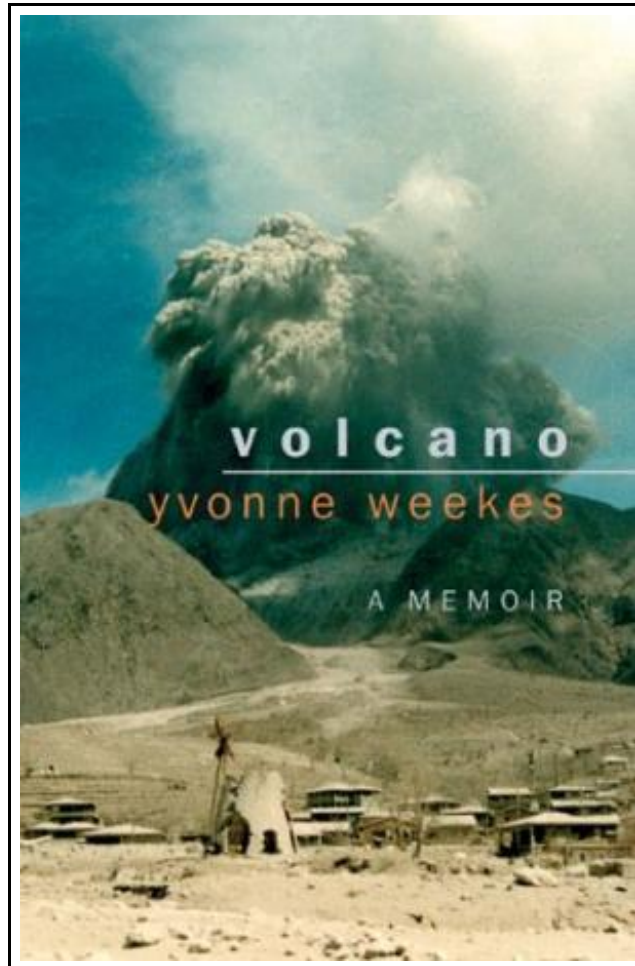


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Reviews

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Peepal Tree Press Ltd. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Volcano: A Memoir, Yvonne Weekes, Yvonne Weekes' memoir of eight years dominated by the awakening, eruption and still grumbling aftermath of Montserrat's Soufriere is a remarkable document at many levels. It is an acutely written account of the impact of the eruption on the life and viability of this small Caribbean island, with a quizzical eye for the undertones of the experience - the way, for instance, the awakened mountain becomes a favoured place for car-bourne lovers' trysts - as well as for the more public manifestations of the way her people responded to disaster. As Director of Culture who organised a theatrical review that was taken round the refugees in the temporary shelters, she was well-placed to observe and listen; one of the qualities of the book is the way it brings the voices of Montserratians so vividly to life. She captures a world split between the new scientific vocabulary of seismology and pyroclastic flows and the Old Testament talk of Sodom and Gomorrah and sins punished. But 'Volcano' is above all a personal and intimate account of the processes of stress, loss, grieving emptiness and the rebuilding of heart and sense of self; of confronting the 'nothingness that hollows me', when everything by which she has known herself - home, family, friends, landscape - is taken from her, when faith is tested to the core. But it is the quality of Yvonne Weekes' writing that makes 'Volcano' a work of art as well as a record. Her prose is always alive, conversational and clear, rising to memorable heights when she describes the terrible moments of blackness against which all life demands to be reviewed.

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