



Nature's Nightmare: Analyzing David Foster Wallace's Oblivion

Greg Carlisle

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From the author of *Elegant Complexity* comes a cogent analysis of David Foster Wallace's *Oblivion*. *Nature's Nightmare* is the first book of criticism devoted to Wallace's masterful story collection. Carlisle gives an in-depth narrative analysis of each story: "Mr. Squishy," "The Soul is Not a Smithy," "Incarnations of Burned Children," "Another Pioneer," "Good Old Neon," "Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature," "Oblivion," and "The Suffering Channel." Carlisle's methodical approach walks readers through Wallace's thematic interests and situates *Oblivion* in the broader arc of Wallace's career. Every passage of each story is analyzed in terms of 1) interrelation of narrative form and content, 2) relation of story to the theme of oblivion, 3) recurring thematic motifs in Wallace's work, and 4) assessment of content in relation to *Infinite Jest* and *The Pale King*. The book includes nine charts that illustrate narrative devices Wallace employs throughout the stories. Jason Kottke called *Elegant Complexity* the reference book for *Infinite Jest* and now *Nature's Nightmare* is the primary reference work for *Oblivion*.

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