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Gone Tomorrow: The Hidden Life of Garbage (Hardcover)

-Heather Rogers-

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From waste basket to landfill, a vertiginous descent into the mysteriously hellish world of trash. • The average American discards almost seven pounds of trash per day. • With only 5 percent of the global population, the U.S. consumes 30 percent of the planet's resources and churns out 30 percent of its wastes. • Garbage production in the United States has doubled in the last thirty years. • About 80 percent of U.S. products are used once, then thrown away. • 95 percent of all plastic, two-thirds of all glass containers, and 50 percent of all aluminum beverage cans are never recycled; instead they just get burned or buried. Every day a phantasmagoric rush of spent, used, and broken riches flows through our homes, offices, and cars. The United States is the planet's number-one producer of trash; each American discards over 2,600 pounds annually. But where does all that garbage go? In Gone Tomorrow, journalist Heather Rogers guides us through the grisly, oddly fascinating world of trash. Excavating the history of rubbish handling from the 1800s-an era of garbage-grazing urban hogs and dump-dwelling rag pickers-to the present, with its brutally violent mob-controlled cartels and high-tech rural "mega-fills" operated by billion-dollar garbage corporations, Rogers investigates the roots of America's waste-addicted culture. Gone Tomorrow also explores the politics of recycling, a popular but limited solution that, as Rogers points out, should only be seen as a first step toward much greater reform. Part exposé, part social commentary, this work traces the connections between modern industrial production, consumer culture, and our disposable lifestyle.

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