

All the Love: Kel al-Hab

Douglas Schaper

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All the Love is a peaceful visual and linguistic exploration of the world's wonders, encouraging people to honor, preserve, and restore nature and communities.

Douglas Schaper's essay and photography collection *All the Love* covers the natural world, human foibles, politics, climate change, and shifts in thinking.

Opening with an argument that the connection between living beings and their environments can be represented by a tree—complemented by photographs of nesting birds, a child on a plane, and wildlife in Kenya, Baffin Island, and New England—the book functions as a sermon on human nature, with guidance on building a better world and saving the moment. Its anecdotes are often accompanied by photographs, though these have to be sought out sans references to plate numbers. Throughout, the book encourages choosing love over selfish coveting, letting go of a sense of dominion over the natural world, healing social rifts like sexism, and restructuring life to avoid becoming iconoclastic. More photographs follow these arguments.

The prose is quite poetic and defies conventions, as where it capitalizes its important concepts. Meditations on faith mix with descriptions of natural encounters, such as with a mongoose family, and with suggestions for restructuring the electrical grid. And love for the other is defined as acting from a place of care for all, contrasted with sharp insights into the political climate in the US. Suggestions that people are experiencing collective post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of continual wars and social upheaval, and that some handle this by embracing seeming rebels who promise better orders, charge the text. Inspiring suggestions are made for uplifting women, nationalizing fossil fuel companies, and natural highway systems for wildlife, if without specific guidance on their implementation.

Aiming to further inspire people to work for a better world, the candid, dreamy photographs capture fleeting subjects: a parade moves on, an antelope stands poised to flee, most of a young zebra is whited out to show that its stripes match its mother's, and a lone ostrich seems friendly. Some images are serious, and others lighthearted. An Australian memorial for those killed in the 9/11 attacks is depicted, as is a mother traveling with her happy child. Human inconsistencies are also revealed, as with a 1968 image of Robert F. Kennedy standing next to a Confederate flag, seemingly blind to the implied hypocrisy.

In the stirring book-length essay *All the Love*, calls to action are issued alongside striking photographs, encouraging people to treat one another and the world better.

M. W. MERRITT (January 30, 2025)

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