



Katrina's Sandcastles: New Hope From The Ruins of New Orleans Schools (Real World)

Kaycee Eckhardt

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“The first thing I need you to know is that becoming a teacher was the most important thing that ever happened to me.” With these words, Kaycee Eckhardt begins a journey both harrowing and hopeful: the story of becoming an effective teacher, and building a new school, in post-Katrina New Orleans. Beginning as a first year teacher, barely out of six weeks of training, the book follows her path from the New Orleans neighborhoods of Holly Grove, Algiers, Treme, and the 9th Ward. She takes us through four different schools, a destroyed bicycle, a half dead pit bull, a burlesque-dancer, spit and a concussion, broken light bulbs, a phonics lesson, and planting the seeds of literacy in the most dire of circumstances. With affection and brutal honesty, she relates the hilarity and tragedy of several children, the belief in all things possible, and finally, the most difficult decision of all. Filled with heartbreaking stories, teacher survival strategies, and an excess of heart, *Katrina's Sandcastles* is a story of sacrifice and struggle, belief and failure, despair and ultimate redemption in the heart of the Crescent City.

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