



Glass, Paper, Beans: Revelations on the Nature and Value of Ordinary Things

Leah Hager Cohen

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Once upon a time we knew the origins of things: what piece of earth the potato on our dinner plate came from, which well our water was dipped from, who cobbled our shoes, and whose cow provided the leather. In many parts of the world, that information is still readily available. But in our society, even as technology makes certain kinds of information more accessible than ever, other connections are irrevocably lost.

In *Glass, Paper, Beans*, Leah Cohen traces three simple commodities on their geographic and semantic journey from her rickety table at the Someday Café to their various points of origin. As Cohen draws the reader Oz-like across time and continents, she brings to life three unforgettable characters whose labor provides the glass for her mug, the pulp for her newspaper and the beans for her cup of coffee. In prose as sophisticated as it is simple, she braids the myths, lore, and history of these three simple staples and conjures an unseen world where economics, fetishization, and manufacture meet.

An elegant and inspired inquiry into the true nature of things, *Glass, Paper, Beans* is a classic work on the economy of everyday life.

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