



That Old Ace in the Hole

Annie Proulx

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Pulitzer Prize and National Book Award winner Annie Proulx's *That Old Ace in the Hole* is told through the eyes of Bob Dollar, a young Denver man trying to make good in a bad world. Dollar is out of college but aimless, when he takes a job with Global Pork Rind -- his task to locate big spreads of land in the Texas and Oklahoma panhandles that can be purchased by the corporation and converted to hog farms.

Dollar finds himself in a Texas town called Woolybucket, whose idiosyncratic inhabitants have ridden out all manner of seismic shifts in panhandle country. These are tough men and women who witnessed first hand tornadoes, dust storms, and the demise of the great cattle ranches. Now it's feed lots, hog farms, and ever-expanding drylands.

Dollar settles into LaVon Fronk's old bunkhouse for fifty dollars a month, helps out at Cy Frease's Old Dog Café, targets Ace and Tater Crouch's ranch for Global Pork, and learns the hard way how vigorously the old owners will hold on to their land, even though their children want no part of it.

Robust, often bawdy, strikingly original and intimate, *The Old Ace in the Hole* tracks the vast waves of change that have shaped the American landscape and the character over the past century. In Bob Dollar, Proulx has created one of the most irresistible characters in contemporary fiction.

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