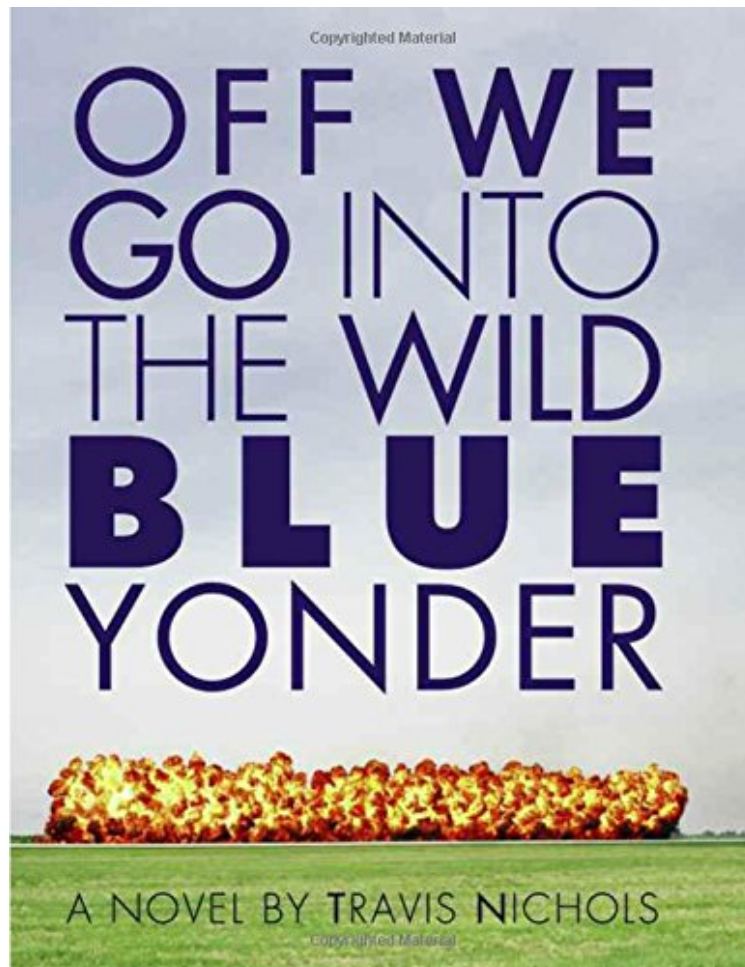


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Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder

Travis Nichols

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#6710069 in Books Coffee House Press 2010-05-01 Original language: English PDF # 1 7.75 x .59 x 6.001, .75 #File Name: 1566892414260 pages | File size: 31.Mb

Travis Nichols : Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GreatBy Tessa RiversI read this book for a class at school, and although I'm usually opposed to mandatory reading for class, I really enjoyed this book. It's written as a series of letters from a grandson to the woman who saved his grandfather's life during WWII in Poland. It's a great read.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Book!By samurai succotashThis novel is gorgeous. Rich and rhythmic in music and image. And the way history courses through it is uncanny and moving.

Titled after the US Air Force song, this engaging debut explores the legacy of the Greatest Generation from the perspective of Generation Y, the fallout of war through the eyes of a pacifist, and the enduring human desire for love, adventure, truth, and understanding.Pensive in the wake of 9/11, a young man—our “correspondent between the past

and the present”—launches a mission to reunite his beloved grandfather, an American bombardier, with Luddie, the woman who saved him during WWII. Armed only with the address on the back of an old photograph and his grandfather’s memories, the young man begins writing letters to Luddie. Undaunted by her lack of response, the narrator travels to Poland with his girlfriend and grandfather. As they come closer to finding the site where the bombardier was shot down, the letters to Luddie become more personal and the saga of a family with a long and storied history emerges. Beautifully orchestrated and eloquently original, each sentence slowly builds upon the next in a charming style both poetic and engrossing. A tale of soldiers and saviors, of burning and bombing, of fathers and sons and brothers and lovers, this is also the story of what we find when we dare to revisit the past. Born in Iowa in 1979, Travis Nichols now lives in Chicago. An editor at the Poetry Foundation, his writing has appeared in *The Village Voice*, *The Believer*, *Details*, *Paste*, *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, and *The Stranger*. *Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder* is his first novel.

From Publishers Weekly Nichols takes the simple plot of a road trip and turns it upside down and sideways, with the structure more inter-esting than the content. The unnamed narrator writes a series of letters to a Polish woman named Luddie as the nar-rator takes his girlfriend and his grandfather back to the Polish village where The Bombardier as his grandfather was called was shot down during WWII, and where Luddie helped him survive. The three continually tell each other stories the narrator retells to Luddie. Nichols handles beautifully the hidden meanings in old family tales heard a hundred times, but suddenly seen in the light of the casual racism and sexism prevalent in the decades after the war. It's as though a set of nesting dolls exploded into thousands of puzzle pieces that won't quite fit together anymore. One way it seems like the truth and then another detail comes up in another story that changes that truth. Tightly structured, with many repetitive phrases serving as a choral backdrop to the action, the novel often reads like a piece of music that is wonderfully original. (May) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. “A rewarding experience. [Nichols’] sentences repeat and sit inside each other as a sort of Greek chorus that resonates through the book.”—Chicago Sun-Times “Nichols pulls the readers in . . . with breathtaking immediacy. . . . *Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder* is both original and haunting.”—Minneapolis Star Tribune “Nichols handles beautifully the hidden meanings in old family tales heard a hundred times . . . the novel often reads like a piece of music that is wonderfully original.”—Publishers Weekly “A dramatically off-kilter debut novel about wars and the men who fight them . . . We see the Bombardier, an elderly Rotarian and former mayor of a small Midwestern town, rediscovering his youthful memories. His grandson's bewilderment over what to do about the 9/11 attacks highlights the differences between then and now. There's a lot of meaty material here.”—Kirkus “Travis Nichols locates the story in history, the pistol in epistolary. This is crushingly great, altogether original debut that reads like an incantation. I dare you to stop reading.”—Ed Park “This is a beautiful crackpot’s history of America. Travis Nichols takes us on a godly road trip through tobacco, love, and Boom Boom, landing us profoundly still at the world’s loneliest tourist trap. It’s a curious animal version of all those ‘I was looking for’ books because here the animal (the writing) actually changes when it reaches its destination. And happily *Off We Go* is also a book about a man loving women: ‘A toast,’ I say finally, ‘to the mother's side.’”—Eileen Myles