Bios short, medium, and long

Erin Van Rheenen

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SHORT BIO

Erin Van Rheenen writes fiction and nonfiction that explores family dynamics, cultural difference, and the power of place. *You Could Be Happy Here* is her first novel.

MEDIUM BIO (about 100 words)

Erin Van Rheenen is a science, travel, and fiction writer with work in publications like *BBC Travel,* *Bellevue Literary Review*, and *Best Women’s Travel Writing*. After earning a BA from UC Santa Cruz and a Masters from City College of New York, she left the US to see the world. She ended up in Costa Rica, where she lived for several years, soaking up the green and researching her relocation guide, *Living Abroad in Costa Rica* and her children’s book, *The Manatee’s Big Day*. For ten years she was Senior Writer at The Exploratorium, a science museum. Erin now lives in San Francisco.

LONG BIO (about 350 words)

Erin Van Rheenen, MA, writes fiction and nonfiction that explores family dynamics, cultural difference, and the power of place. Her work has been anthologized and published in *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Atlas Obscura*, *BBC Travel*, *Fiction*, *The Sun*, and *Best Women’s Travel Writing*. She won the Pirates Alley Faulkner Society prize for best novel in manuscript, judged by novelist Oscar Hijuelos. Her work has been supported by Cottages at Hedgebrook, Community of Writers, and Hippocamp.

*You Could Be Happy Here* is inspired by Erin’s connection to Latin America. Born in Oregon, schooled in Santa Cruz and New York City, her passion for place really took hold in the Southern reaches of the Americas. She learned Spanish as a child in Guatemala, lived for years as an adult in Ecuador and Mexico, and was married to a Mexico City artist. After they divorced, she moved to Costa Rica, where she lived and traveled by herself while researching her best-selling relocation guide, *Living Abroad in Costa Rica* (Avalon Travel Publishing). She has contributed to many travel and live-abroad guides, and has been interviewed on radio and television as an expert on Costa Rica and relocating abroad.

Erin was drawn to Costa Rica for its commitment to conservation and its remarkable biodiversity, which inspired her to write a bilingual children’s book, *The* *Manatee’s Big Day*. Although she very much enjoyed writing her relocation guide and her children’s book, Erin says that *You Could Be Happy Here* allows her to tell a different—perhaps deeper—story of a remarkable place.

The list of other jobs she’s endured over the years includes stall mucker, waitress, art mover, aerobics teacher, and unskilled laborer. Erin has also worked as a staff writer at many mission-driven nonprofits, including ten years as Senior Writer at a science museum, The Exploratorium. She has taught writing in universities, high schools, and a women’s jail. Erin now lives in San Francisco, where she writes in cafes and birds in the parks.