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Mudbound



*Par Hillary Jordan
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurNOW A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE STARRING CAREY MULLIGAN, GARRETT HEDLUND MARY J. BLIGEWWhen Henry McAllan moves his city-bred wife, Laura, to a cotton farm in the Mississippi Delta in 1946, she finds herself in a place both foreign and frightening. Henry's love of rural life is not shared by Laura, who struggles to raise their two young children in an isolated shotgun shack under the eye of her hateful, racist father-in-law. When it rains, the waters rise up and swallow the bridge to town, stranding the family in a sea of mud.As the Second World War shudders to an end, two young men return from Europe to help work the farm. Jamie McAllan is everything his older brother Henry is not and is sensitive to Laura's plight, but also haunted by his memories of combat. Ronsel Jackson, eldest

son of the black sharecroppers who live on the farm, comes home from war with the shine of a hero, only to face far more dangerous battles against the ingrained bigotry of his own countrymen. These two unlikely friends become players in a tragedy on the grandest scale..com Jordan won the 2006 Bellwether Prize for *Mudbound*, her first novel. The prize was founded by Barbara Kingsolver to reward books of conscience, social responsibility, and literary merit. In addition to meeting all of the above qualifications, Jordan has written a story filled with characters as real and compelling as anyone we know. It is 1946 in the Mississippi Delta, where Memphis-bred Laura McAllan is struggling to adjust to farm life, rear her daughters with a modicum of manners and gentility, and be the wife her land-loving husband, Henry, wants her to be. It is an uphill battle every day. Things started badly when Henry's trusting nature resulted in the family being done out of a nice house in town, thus relegating them to a shack on their property. In addition, Henry's father, Pappy, a sour, mean-spirited devil of a man, moves in with them. The real heart of the story, however, is the friendship between Jamie, Henry's too-charming brother, and Ronsel Jackson, son of sharecroppers who live on the McAllan farm. They have both returned from the war changed men: Jamie has developed a deep love for alcohol and has recurring nightmares; Ronsel, after fighting valiantly for his country and being seen as a man by the world outside the South, is now back to being just another black "boy." Told in alternating chapters by Laura, Henry, Jamie, Ronsel, and his parents, Florence and Hap, the story unfolds with a chilling inevitability. Jordan's writing and perfect control of the material lift it from being another "ain't-it-awful" tale to a heart-rending story of deep, mindless prejudice and cruelty. This eminently readable and enjoyable story is a worthy recipient of Kingsolver's prize and others as well. --Valerie Ryan From Publishers

Weekly Jordan's beautiful debut (winner of the 2006 Bellwether Prize for literature of social responsibility) carries echoes of *As I Lay Dying*, complete with shifts in narrative voice, a body needing burial, flood and more. In 1946, Laura McAllan, a college-educated Memphis schoolteacher, becomes a reluctant farmer's wife when her husband, Henry, buys a farm on the Mississippi Delta, a farm she aptly nicknames *Mudbound*. Laura has difficulty adjusting to life without electricity, indoor plumbing, readily accessible medical care for her two children and, worst of all, life with her live-in misogynous, racist, father-in-law. Her days become easier after Florence, the wife of Hap Jackson, one of their black tenants, becomes more important to Laura as companion than as hired help. Catastrophe is inevitable when two young WWII veterans, Henry's brother, Jamie, and the Jacksons' son, Ronsel, arrive, both battling nightmares from horrors they've seen, and both unable to bow to Mississippi rules after eye-opening years in Europe. Jordan convincingly inhabits each of her narrators, though some descriptive passages can be overly florid, and the denouement is a bit maudlin. But these are minor blemishes on a superbly rendered depiction of the fury and terror wrought by racism. (Mar.) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.