



Mudbound

By Hillary Jordan

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In Jordan's prize-winning debut, prejudice takes many forms, both subtle and brutal. It is 1946, and city-bred Laura McAllan is trying to raise her children on her husband's Mississippi Delta farm—a place she finds foreign and frightening. In the midst of the family's struggles, two young men return from the war to work the land. Jamie McAllan, Laura's brother-in-law, is everything her husband is not—charming, handsome, and haunted by his memories of combat. Ronsel Jackson, eldest son of the black sharecroppers who live on the McAllan farm, has come home with the shine of a war hero. But no matter his bravery in defense of his country, he is still considered less than a man in the Jim Crow South. It is the unlikely friendship of these brothers-in-arms that drives this powerful novel to its inexorable conclusion.

The men and women of each family relate their versions of events and we are drawn into their lives as they become players in a tragedy on the grandest scale. As Kingsolver says of Hillary Jordan, "Her characters walked straight out of 1940s Mississippi and into the part of my brain where sympathy and anger and love reside, leaving my heart racing. They are with me still."

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Mudbound By Hillary Jordan Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

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.)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Winner of Barbara Kingsolver's Bellwether Prize (2006), which recognizes an unpublished manuscript promoting social responsibility, Jordan's debut novel exposes the racism and sexism of the Jim Crow South. Most critics embraced this topic, even while recognizing its heavy-handedness; the *Washington Post* noted that "the book doesn't challenge our prejudices so much as give us the easy satisfaction of feeling superior to these evil Southerners." Reviewers disagreed somewhat on the complexity of character development, with a

few complaining of unclear motives. They agreed, however, on the power of Jordan's plain, earthy writing (reminiscent of Flannery O'Connor's prose, to some) and the compelling plot. If it's too early to say that "after just one book ... here's a voice that will echo for years to come," as the *San Antonio Express-News* claims, Jordan is a new author worth watching.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jean Fuller:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yeah, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a go walking, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or read a book titled *Mudbound*? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You already know beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have some other opinion?

Sonia Shipley:

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book you just read? May be the book with the title *Mudbound* suitable to you? The particular book was written by famous writer in this era. Typically the book untitled *Mudbound* is the main one of several books this everyone read now. This book was inspired a number of people in the world. When you read this e-book you will enter the new dimension that you ever know ahead of. The author explained their plan in the simple way, therefore all of people can easily to comprehend the core of this publication. This book will give you a lots of information about this world now. So you can see the represented of the world with this book.

Eddie Barber:

People live in this new morning of lifestyle always try to and must have the free time or they will get wide range of stress from both daily life and work. So , when we ask do people have time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not only a robot. Then we inquire again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to you actually of course your answer may unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading publications. It can be your alternative with spending your spare time, the particular book you have read is usually *Mudbound*.

Eulalia Perry:

You may spend your free time to learn this book this reserve. This *Mudbound* is simple bringing you can read it in the area, in the beach, train and also soon. If you did not have got much space to bring the particular printed book, you can buy the particular e-book. It is make you much easier to read it. You can save typically the book in your smart phone. Therefore there are a lot of benefits that you will get when you buy this book.

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