

A Thousand Acres Jane Smiley

An offbeat, often hilarious crime novel set in the sleepy Alaskan town of Cold Storage from the Shamus Award winning author of the Cecil Younger series. Cold Storage, Alaska, is a remote fishing outpost where salmonberries sparkle in the morning frost and where you just might catch a King Salmon if you're zen enough to wait for it. Settled in 1935 by Norse fishermen who liked to skinny dip in its natural hot springs, the town enjoyed prosperity at the height of the frozen fish boom. But now the cold storage plant is all but abandoned and the town is withering. Clive "The Milkman" McCahon returns to his tiny Alaska hometown after a seven-year jail stint for dealing coke. He has a lot to make up to his younger brother, Miles, who has dutifully been taking care of their ailing mother. But Clive doesn't realize the trouble he's bringing home. His vengeful old business partner is hot on his heels, a stick-in-the-mud State Trooper is dying to bust Clive for narcotics, and, to complicate everything, Clive might be going insane—lately, he's been hearing animals talking to him. Will his arrival in Cold Storage be a breath of fresh air for the sleepy, depopulated town? Or will Clive's arrival turn the whole place upside down? When eighth grader Abby Lovitt looks out at those pure-gold rolling hills, she knows there's no place she'd rather be than her family's ranch—even with all the hard work of tending to nine horses. But some chores are no work at all, like grooming young Jack. At eight months, his rough foal coat has shed out, leaving a smooth, rich silk, like chocolate. As for Black George, such a good horse, it turns out he's a natural jumper. When he and Abby clear four feet easy as pie, heads start to turn at the ring—buyers' heads—and Abby knows Daddy won't turn down a good offer. Then a letter arrives from a private investigator, and suddenly Abby stands to lose not one horse but two. The letter states that Jack's mare may have been sold to the Lovitts as stolen goods. A mystery unfolds, more surprising than Abby could ever expect. Will she lose her beloved Jack to his rightful owners? Pulitzer Prize winner Jane Smiley raises horses of her own, and her affection and expertise shine through in this inviting horse novel for young readers, set in 1960s California horse country and featuring characters from *The Georges* and *The Jewels*.

Welcome to Q Road, in Greenland Township, where the old way of life is colliding with the new. On the same acres where farmers once displaced Potawatomi Indians, suburban developers now supplant farmers and Q road (or "Queer Road," as the locals call it) has become home to an unlikely mix of people. The neighbors include a sixth-generation farmer and his rifle-toting child bride, and evangelical bartender, a tabloid-reading agoraphobe, a philandering window salesman, and an asthmatic boy who longs for the love of a good father. These folks all smell the pig manure from the Whitby farm and share the same grand views of the Kalamazoo River and the oldest barn in the township -- until one disastrous October afternoon. Bonnie Jo Campbell's first novel combines offbeat humor, eccentric characters, and unique insights into modern rural America, where family traditions have flown the coop and only the cycle of the seasons remains. At the heart of this tale are three characters so integrally connected and devoted to the Harland farm that they might not survive anywhere else; their lives, their livelihoods, and their sometimes violent love for one another are all rooted in the soil of this square mile. As *The Village Voice* said of Campbell's story collection, she "crystallizes those moments when benumbed everyday routine is briefly jolted by dizzy instants of lucidity." It may take a spring tornado or a lightning bolt in the garden to get the folks of Q Road to pause in their work, but when they lift their gaze collectively, it can be life-altering. Brilliant autumn foliage creates the backdrop for the rich and ragged human landscape of rural southwestern Michigan, a place Campbell has explored in her award-winning short stories. In this passionate and funny novel she digs even deeper, to reveal the beauty and strangeness of her ferocious women, confused men, and hungry children.

While seventy-seven-year-old Ike Robison is on his deathbed, three generations of women--his wife, Anna, three middle-aged daughters, and granddaughter--reconcile their personal and family histories and claim their birthrights

Seminar paper from the year 2005 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, Christian-Albrechts-University of Kiel (Englisches Seminar), 8 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: This work deals with concepts of ownership in terms of land in the novel "A Thousand Acres" written by Jane Smiley. The novel was written in 1991 and was rewarded a Pulitzer Prize. Jane Smiley rewrote the Shakespearean play King Lear by narrating the story from the eldest daughter's point of view. However, A Thousand Acres is not only a rewriting of Shakespeare's work, it also comments on the social and agricultural circumstances in the United States of the 1960s and 70s, where the novel is set. Her critique in this novel points towards industrialised farming and the exploitation of land and its resources. The aim of the paper is to find out how agriculture and farming are represented in "A Thousand Acres." How does Jane Smiley describe the results of industrialised farming? Is there any return? How do people cope with agribusiness and its consequences? What is the structure of the society that lives for agribusiness? In the course of answering these questions I will try to draw relating problems between Smiley's "A Thousand Acres" and Shakespeare's "King Lear" and will try to point out the differences between the novel and the play in matters pertaining to concepts of land-ownership.

This powerful twentieth-century reimagining of Shakespeare's King Lear centers on a wealthy Iowa farmer who decides to divide his farm between his three daughters. When the youngest objects, she is cut out of his will. This sets off a chain of events that brings dark truths to light and explodes long-suppressed emotions. Ambitiously conceived and stunningly written, A Thousand Acres takes on themes of truth, justice, love, and pride—and reveals the beautiful yet treacherous topography of humanity.

From the winner of the Pulitzer Prize: the much-anticipated final volume, following *Some Luck* and *Early Warning*, of her acclaimed American trilogy—a richly absorbing new novel that brings the remarkable Langdon family into our present times and beyond. A lot can happen in one hundred years, as Jane Smiley shows to dazzling effect in her *Last Hundred Years* trilogy. But as *Golden Age*, its final installment, opens in 1987, the next generation of Langdons face economic, social, political—and personal—challenges unlike anything their ancestors have encountered before. Michael and Richie, the rivalrous twin sons of World War II hero Frank, work in the high-stakes world of government and finance in Washington and New York, but they soon realize that one's fiercest enemies can be closest to home; Charlie, the charming, recently found scion, struggles with whether he wishes to make a mark on the world; and Guthrie, once poised to take over the Langdons' Iowa farm, is instead deployed to Iraq, leaving the land—ever the heart of this compelling saga—in the capable hands of his younger sister. Determined to evade disaster, for the planet and her family, Felicity worries that the farm's once-bountiful soil may be permanently imperiled, by more than the extremes of climate change. And as they enter deeper into the twenty-first century, all the Langdon women—wives, mothers, daughters—find themselves charged with carrying their storied past into an uncertain future. Combining intimate drama, emotional suspense, and a full command of history, *Golden Age* brings to a magnificent conclusion the century-spanning portrait of this unforgettable family—and the dynamic times in which they've loved, lived, and died: a crowning literary achievement from a beloved master of American storytelling.

Continuum Contemporaries will be a wonderful source of ideas and inspiration for members of book clubs and readings groups, as well as for literature students. The aim of the series is to give readers accessible and informative introductions to 30 of the most popular, most acclaimed, and most influential novels of recent years. A team of contemporary fiction scholars from both sides of the Atlantic has been assembled to provide a thorough and readable analysis of each of the novels in question. The books in the series will all follow the same structure: a biography of the novelist, including other works, influences, and, in some cases, an interview; a full-length study of the novel, drawing out the most important themes and ideas; a summary of how the novel was received upon publication; a summary of how the novel has performed since publication, including film or TV adaptations, literary prizes, etc.; a wide range of suggestions for further reading, including websites and discussion forums; and a list of

questions for reading groups to discuss.

In this darkly satirical send-up of academia and the Midwest, we are introduced to Moo University, a distinguished institution devoted to the study of agriculture. Amid cow pastures and waving fields of grain, Moo's campus churns with devious plots, mischievous intrigue, lusty liaisons, and academic one-upmanship, Chairman X of the Horticulture Department harbors a secret fantasy to kill the dean; Mrs. Walker, the provost's right hand and campus information queen, knows where all the bodies are buried; Timothy Monahan, associate professor of English, advocates eavesdropping for his creative writing assignments; and Bob Carlson, a sophomore, feeds and maintains his only friend: a hog named Earl Butz. Wonderfully written and masterfully plotted, Moo gives us a wickedly funny slice of life.

Sense of Place and Sense of Planet analyzes the relationship between the imagination of the global and the ethical commitment to the local in environmentalist thought and writing from the 1960s to the present. Part One critically examines the emphasis on local identities and communities in North American environmentalism by establishing conceptual connections between environmentalism and ecocriticism, on one hand, and theories of globalization, transnationalism and cosmopolitanism, on the other. It proposes the concept of "eco-cosmopolitanism" as a shorthand for envisioning these connections and the cultural and aesthetic forms into which they translate. Part Two focuses on conceptualizations of environmental danger and connects environmentalist and ecocritical thought with the interdisciplinary field of risk theory in the social sciences, arguing that environmental justice theory and ecocriticism stand to benefit from closer consideration of the theories of cosmopolitanism that have arisen in this field from the analysis of transnational communities at risk. Both parts of the book combine in-depth theoretical discussion with detailed analyses of novels, poems, films, computer software and installation artworks from the US and abroad that translate new connections between global, national and local forms of awareness into innovative aesthetic forms combining allegory, epic, and views of the planet as a whole with modernist and postmodernist strategies of fragmentation, montage, collage, and zooming.

An essential guide for writers and readers alike, here is Smiley's great celebration of the novel. As she embarks on an exhilarating tour through one hundred titles—from classics such as the thousand-year-old Tale of Genji to recent fiction by Zadie Smith and Alice Munro—she explores the power of the form, looking at its history and variety, its cultural impact, and just how it works its magic. She invites us behind the scenes of novel-writing, sharing her own habits and spilling the secrets of her craft, and offering priceless advice to aspiring authors. Every page infects us anew with the passion for reading that is the governing spirit of this gift to book lovers everywhere.

Greed. Envy. Sex. Property. In her subversively funny and genuinely moving new novel, Jane Smiley nails down several American obsessions with the expertise of a master carpenter. Forthright, likable Joe Stratford is the kind of local businessman everybody trusts, for good reason. But it's 1982, and even in Joe's small town, values are in upheaval: not just property values, either. Enter Marcus Burns, a would-be master of the universe whose years with the IRS have taught him which rules are meant to be broken. Before long he and Joe are new best friends—and partners in an investment venture so complex that no one may ever understand it. Add to this Joe's roller coaster affair with his mentor's married daughter. The result is as suspenseful and entertaining as any of Jane Smiley's fiction.

A Pulitzer Prize winner makes her debut for young readers. Jane Smiley makes her debut for young readers in this stirring novel set on a California horse ranch in the 1960s. Seventh-grader Abby Lovitt has always been more at ease with horses than with people. Her father insists they call all the mares "Jewel" and all the geldings "George" and warns Abby not to get attached: the horses are there to be sold. But with all the stress at school (the Big Four have turned against Abby and her friends) and home (her brother Danny is gone—for good, it seems—and now Daddy won't speak his name), Abby seeks refuge with the Georges and the Jewels. But there's one gelding on her family's farm that gives her no end of trouble: the horse who won't meet her gaze, the horse who bucks her right off every chance he gets, the horse her father makes her ride and train, every day. She calls him the Orner George.

From the Pulitzer Prize-winner: the second installment, following *Some Luck*, of her widely acclaimed, best-selling American trilogy, which brings the journey of a remarkable family with roots in the Iowa heartland into mid-century America. *Early Warning* opens in 1953 with the Langdon family at a crossroads. Their stalwart patriarch, Walter, who with his wife, Rosanna, sustained their farm for three decades, has suddenly died, leaving their five children, now adults, looking to the future. Only one will remain in Iowa to work the land, while the others scatter to Washington, D.C., California, and everywhere in between. As the country moves out of post-World War II optimism through the darker landscape of the Cold War and the social and sexual revolutions of the 1960s and '70s, and then into the unprecedented wealth—for some—of the early 1980s, the Langdon children each follow a different path in a rapidly changing world. And they now have children of their own: twin boys who are best friends and vicious rivals; a girl whose rebellious spirit takes her to the notorious Peoples Temple in San Francisco; and a golden boy who drops out of college to fight in Vietnam—leaving behind a secret legacy that will send shock waves through the Langdon family into the next generation. Capturing a transformative period through richly drawn characters we come to know and care deeply for, *Early Warning* continues Smiley's extraordinary epic trilogy, a gorgeously told saga that began with *Some Luck* and will span a century in America. But it also stands entirely on its own as an engrossing story of the challenges—and rewards—of family and home, even in the most turbulent of times, all while showcasing a beloved writer at the height of her considerable powers.

When a billionaire hotelier and political operator attempts to pit his three daughters against one another, a brutal struggle for primacy begins in this modern-day take on Shakespeare's *King Lear*. Set in contemporary India, where rich men are gods while farmers starve and water is fast running out, *We That Are Young* is a story about power, status, and the love of a megalomaniac father. A searing exploration of human fallibility, Preti Taneja's remarkable novel reveals the fragility of the human heart—and its inevitable breaking point.

Between 1932 and 1953, a fleet of ordinary cargo ships was pressed into extraordinary service. The fleet's task was to relocate approximately one-million forced laborers to the Soviet Gulag in Kolyma, located along the Arctic Circle in far northeastern Siberia. Bollinger presents the often-horrific stories of the Gulag fleet and its passengers and reveals the unwitting role of the United States government in the operation.

Soon after her yearling, Jack, begins working with professional trainers at a nearby ranch, Abby Lovitt takes responsibility for a very large, very smart, and very curious retired racehorse named Gee Whiz.

On a prosperous Iowa farm in the 1970s, wealthy farmer Lawrence Cook announces his intentions to divide the farm among his daughters, setting off a family crisis reminiscent of Shakespeare's *"King Lear."* Reader's Guide available. Reprint. 12,500 first printing.

A novel set in the world of thoroughbred racing follows a group of trainers, jockeys, and "track brats" on a two-year journey through the racing cycle.

Longlisted for the 2014 National Book Award From the winner of the Pulitzer Prize: a powerful, engrossing new novel—the life and times of a remarkable family over three transformative decades in America. On their farm in Denby, Iowa, Rosanna and Walter Langdon abide by time-honored values that they pass on to their five wildly different children: from Frank, the handsome, willful first born, and Joe, whose love of animals and the land sustains him, to Claire, who earns a special place in her father's heart. Each chapter in *Some Luck* covers a single

year, beginning in 1920, as American soldiers like Walter return home from World War I, and going up through the early 1950s, with the country on the cusp of enormous social and economic change. As the Langdons branch out from Iowa to both coasts of America, the personal and the historical merge seamlessly: one moment electricity is just beginning to power the farm, and the next a son is volunteering to fight the Nazis; later still, a girl you'd seen growing up now has a little girl of her own, and you discover that your laughter and your admiration for all these lives are mixing with tears. *Some Luck* delivers on everything we look for in a work of fiction. Taking us through cycles of births and deaths, passions and betrayals, among characters we come to know inside and out, it is a tour de force that stands wholly on its own. But it is also the first part of a dazzling epic trilogy—a literary adventure that will span a century in America: an astonishing feat of storytelling by a beloved writer at the height of her powers.

When Ellen's family moves to a new town, she has a hard time keeping her mind off of Ned.

In 1960s California, Abby Lovitt has trouble with True Blue, the newest horse on her family's ranch, a beautiful dappled gray who is so often spooked, making Abby wonder if he is haunted by the ghost of his deceased former owner.

Alice Ellis is a Midwestern refugee living in Manhattan. Still recovering from a painful divorce, she depends on the companionship and camaraderie of tightly knit circle of friends. At the center of this circle is a rock band struggling to navigate New York's erratic music scene, and an apartment/practice space with approximately fifty key-holders. One sunny day, Alice enters the apartment and finds two of the band members shot dead. As the double-murder sends waves of shock through their lives, this group of friends begins to unravel, and dangerous secrets are revealed one by one. When Alice begins to notice things amiss in her own apartment, the tension breaks out as it occurs to her that she is not the only person with a key, and she may not get a chance to change the locks. Jane Smiley applies her distinctive rendering of time, place, and the enigmatic intricacies of personal relationships to the twists and turns of suspense. The result is a brilliant literary thriller that will keep readers guessing up to its final, shocking conclusion.

Traces physics professor John Vincent Atanasoff's role in the invention of the computer, describing his innovative construction of an unpatented electronic device that eased the lives of burdened scientists by performing calculations using binary numbers.

This slyly funny, moving novel about a blue-collar town in upstate New York—and in the life of Sully, of one of its unluckiest citizens, who has been doing the wrong thing triumphantly for fifty years—is a classic American story. Divorced from his own wife and carrying on halfheartedly with another man's, saddled with a bum knee and friends who make enemies redundant, Sully now has one new problem to cope with: a long-estranged son who is in imminent danger of following in his father's footsteps. With its uproarious humor and a heart that embraces humanity's follies as well as its triumphs, *Nobody's Fool*, from Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Richard Russo, is storytelling at its most generous. *Nobody's Fool* was made into a movie starring Paul Newman, Bruce Willis, Jessica Tandy, and Melody Griffith.

A “funny, heart-hammering, wise” (The New York Times) best-selling portrait of a family that will remind you why “to read a novel by Anne Tyler is to fall in love” (PEOPLE). Abandoned by her wanderlusting husband, stoic Pearl raised her three children on her own. Now grown, the siblings are inextricably linked by their memories—some painful—which hold them together despite their differences. Hardened by life's disappointments, wealthy, charismatic Cody has turned cruel and envious. Thrice-married Jenny is errant and passionate. And Ezra, the flawed saint of the family, who stayed at home to look after his mother, runs a restaurant where he cooks what other people are homesick for, stubbornly yearning for the perfect family he never had. Now gathered during a time of loss, they will reluctantly unlock the shared secrets of their past and discover if what binds them together is stronger than what tears them apart. “[In *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* Tyler] has arrived at a new level of power.” —John Updike, The New Yorker “Marvelous, astringent, hilarious, [and] strewn with the banana peels of love.” —Cosmopolitan

Up on the North Yorkshire moors, the Hartle family is about to have a life-changing year. Ann and Joe, with more than thirty years of marriage between them, are torn between giving up or pressing on with their struggling farm. Max, their elder son, is set to inherit the farm, and his wife Primrose has news to share, but is he ready for these new responsibilities? The younger son, Bartholomew, escaped to the south as soon as he could, building a new life for himself with his girlfriend Ruby. But when tragedy strikes, he is forced to return home - and come to terms with his past, in order to create a future.

In this brilliant collection of five short stories and a novella, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jane Smiley presents six unforgettable portraits exploring the perils of domestic life. I am thirty-five years old, and it seems to me that I have reached the age of grief. Others arrive there sooner. Almost no one arrives much later . . . In the title novella, a man who has reached the 'age of grief' slowly realizes that his wife is in love with someone else. Unsure whether his marriage is best protected by confronting her or by feigning ignorance, he struggles to repress his anguish and to prevent his wife discovering that he is aware of her infidelity . . . Accompanying this novella are five short stories, including *The Pleasure of Her Company*, in which a lonely, single woman befriends the married couple next door, hoping to learn the secret to their happiness. And *Long Distance*, in which a man finds himself relieved of the obligation to continue an affair that is no longer compelling to him, only to be waylaid by the guilt he feels at his easy escape. Set in the fourteenth century in Europe's most far-flung outpost, a land of glittering fjords, blasting winds, sun-warmed meadows, and high, dark, mountains, *The Greenlanders* is the story of one family - proud landowner Asgeir Gunnarsson; his daughter Margret, whose wilful independence leads her into passionate adultery and exile; and his son, Gunnar, whose quest for knowledge is at the compelling centre of this unforgettable book. Jane Smiley takes us into this world of farmers, priests, and lawspeakers, of hunts and feasts and long-standing feuds, and by an act of literary magic, makes a remote time, place, and people not only real, but dear to us.

This powerful twentieth-century reimagining of Shakespeare's *King Lear* centers on a wealthy Iowa farmer who decides to divide his farm among his three daughters. When the youngest objects, she is cut out of his will, which sets in motion a chain of events that brings dark truths to light. Ambitiously conceived and stunningly written, *A Thousand Acres* spins the most fundamental themes of truth, justice, love, and pride into a universally acclaimed masterpiece.

A Thousand Acres A Novel Random House Digital, Inc.

A New York Times Best Seller A New York Times Book Review Editors' Choice Betty Weissmann has just been dumped by her husband of forty-eight years. Exiled from her elegant New York apartment by her husband's mistress, she and her two middle-aged daughters, Miranda and Annie, regroup in a run-down Westport, Connecticut, beach cottage. In Schine's playful and devoted homage to Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, the impulsive sister is Miranda, a literary agent entangled in a series of scandals, and the more pragmatic sister is Annie, a library director, who feels compelled to move in and watch over her capricious mother and sister. Schine's witty, wonderful novel *The Three Weissmanns of Westport* "is simply full of pleasure: the pleasure of reading, the pleasure of Austen, and the pleasure that the characters so rightly and humorously pursue....An absolute triumph" (The Cleveland Plain Dealer).

These exquisite twin novellas chronicle the difficult choices that reshape the lives of two very different families. In *Ordinary Love*, Smiley focuses on a woman's infidelity and the lasting, indelible effects it leaves on her children long after her departure. *Good Will* portrays a father who realizes how his son has been affected by his decision to lead a counterculture life and move his family to a farm. As both stories unfold, Smiley gracefully raises the questions that confront all families with the characteristic style and insight that has marked all of her work.

'Sunshine in book form' – Daily Mail 'A joyfully escapist celebration of friendship and freedom' – Mail on Sunday 'Delightful, heartwarming . . . An especially welcome reminder of the bright spots even in dark times' – NPR *Paras* is a spirited young racehorse living in a stable in the French countryside. That is until one afternoon when she pushes open the gate of her stall and, travelling through the night, arrives quite by chance in the dazzling streets of Paris. She soon meets a German shorthaired pointer named Frida, two irrepressible ducks and an opinionated crow, and life amongst the animals in the city's lush green spaces is enjoyable for a time. But everything changes when *Paras* meets a human boy, Étienne, and discovers a new, otherworldly part of Paris: the secluded, ivy-walled house where the boy and his nearly one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother live quietly and keep to themselves. As the cold weather of Christmas nears, the unlikeliest of friendships blooms between human and animals. But how long can a runaway horse live undiscovered in Paris? And how long can one boy keep her all to himself? Charming and beguiling in equal measure, Jane Smiley's novel celebrates the intrinsic need for friendship, love and freedom, whoever you may be . . . From Jane Smiley, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*, *The Strays of Paris* is a captivating story of a group of extraordinary animals – and one little boy – whose lives cross paths in Paris.

As her husband's obsessions with science take a darker turn on the eve of World War II, Margaret Mayfield is forced to consider the life she has so carefully constructed. By the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Thousand Acres*.

NATIONAL BEST SELLER * From the Pulitzer Prize-winning and best-selling author: a captivating, brilliantly imaginative story of three extraordinary animals--and a young boy--whose lives intersect in Paris in this "feel-good escape" (The New York Times). *Paras*, short for "Perestroika," is a spirited racehorse at a racetrack west of Paris. One afternoon at dusk, she finds the door of her stall open and--she's a curious filly--wanders all the way to the City of Light. She's dazzled and often mystified by the sights, sounds, and smells around her, but she isn't afraid. Soon she meets an elegant dog, a German shorthaired pointer named Frida, who knows how to get by without attracting the attention of suspicious Parisians. *Paras* and Frida coexist for a time in the city's lush green spaces, nourished by Frida's strategic trips to the vegetable market. They keep company with two irrepressible ducks and an opinionated raven. But then *Paras* meets a human boy, Etienne, and discovers a new, otherworldly part of Paris: the ivy-walled house where the boy and his nearly-one-hundred-year-old great-grandmother live in seclusion. As the cold weather nears, the unlikeliest of friendships bloom. But how long can a runaway horse stay undiscovered in Paris? How long can a boy keep her hidden and all to himself? Jane Smiley's beguiling new novel is itself an adventure that celebrates curiosity, ingenuity, and the desire of all creatures for true love and freedom.

In the aftermath of the 2003 Academy Awards, Max and Elena-- he's an Oscar-winning writer/director--open their Hollywood Hills home to a group of friends and neighbors, industry insiders and hangers-on, eager to escape the outside world and dissect the latest news, gossip, and secrets of the business. Over the next ten days, old lovers collide, new relationships form, and sparks fly, all with Smiley's signature sparkling wit and characterization. With its breathtaking passion and sexy irreverence, *Ten Days in the Hills* is a glowing addition to the work of one of our most beloved novelists.

See the difference, read #1 bestselling author Jane Smiley in Large Print * About Large Print All Random House Large Print editions are published in a 16-point typeface Six years after her Pulitzer Prize-winning best-seller, *A Thousand Acres*, and three years after her witty, acclaimed, and best-selling novel of academe, *Moo*, Jane Smiley once again demonstrates her extraordinary range and brilliance. Her new novel, set in the 1850s, speaks to us in a splendidly quirky voice--the strong, wry, no-nonsense voice of Lidie Harkness of Quincy, Illinois, a young woman of courage, good sense, and good heart. It carries us into an America so violently torn apart by the question of slavery that it makes our current political battlegrounds seem a peaceable kingdom. Lidie is hard to scare. She is almost shockingly alive--a tall, plain girl who rides and shoots and speaks her mind, and whose straightforward ways paradoxically amount to a kind of glamour. We see her at twenty, making a good marriage--to Thomas Newton, a steady, sweet-tempered Yankee who passes through her hometown on a dangerous mission. He belongs to a group of rashly brave New England abolitionists who dedicate themselves to settling the Kansas Territory with like-minded folk to ensure its entering the Union as a Free State. Lidie packs up and goes with him. And the novel races alongside them into the Territory, into the maelstrom of "Bloody Kansas," where slaveholding Missourians constantly and viciously clash with Free Staters, where wandering youths kill you as soon as look at you--where Lidie becomes even more fervently abolitionist than her husband as the young couple again and again barely escape entrapment in webs of atrocity on both sides of the great question. And when, suddenly, cold-blooded murder invades her own intimate circle, Lidie doesn't falter. She cuts off her hair, disguises herself as a boy, and rides into Missouri in search of the killers--a woman in a fiercely male world, an abolitionist spy in slave territory. On the run, her life threatened, her wits sharpened, she takes on yet another identity--and, in the very midst of her masquerade, discovers herself. Lidie grows increasingly important to us as we follow her travels and adventures on the feverish eve of the War Between the States. With its crackling portrayal of a totally individual and wonderfully articulate woman, its storytelling drive, and its powerful recapturing of an almost forgotten part of the American story, this is Jane Smiley at her enthralling and enriching best.

Longlisted for the Women's Prize for Fiction When Marilyn Connolly and David Sorenson fall in love in the 1970s, they are blithely ignorant of all that awaits them. By 2016, their four radically different daughters are in a state of unrest. Wendy, widowed young, soothes herself with booze and younger men; Violet, a litigator turned stay-at-home-mom, battles anxiety and self-doubt; Liza, a neurotic and newly tenured professor, finds herself pregnant with a baby she's not sure she wants by a man she's not sure she loves; and Grace, the dawdling youngest daughter, begins living a lie that no one in her family even suspects. With the arrival of Jonah Bendt--a child placed for adoption by one of the daughters fifteen years before--the Sorensens will be forced to reckon with the rich and varied tapestry of their past: years marred by adolescent angst, infidelity, and resentment, but also the transcendent moments of joy that make everything else worthwhile.

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