



Right as Rain: A Novel (Ballantine Reader's Circle)

Bev Marshall

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In the tradition of *Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe* and *The Secret Life of Bees*, this luminous, heartfelt novel explores the tragedies and triumphs, the pleasures and sorrows of two women, Tee Wee and Icey, their families, and the white family that employs them as cook and housekeeper on a tenant farm in rural Mississippi.

Though the women are as different as water and wine—Icey is feisty, hot-tempered, and impulsive, while Tee Wee is more submissive and disciplined—both are driven by a passionate determination to give their children a better life. Through trying times, they are the pillars, fierce and resilient; yet they celebrate life with a love of food, music, and family that makes even the most traumatic moments endurable. The illicit love between Tee Wee's daughter Crow and the white landowner's son Browder; the heartbreaking death of one of Icey's children, for which she will blame herself; the murder trial of Tee Wee's youngest son which threatens to tear apart not just their family but the entire town—all these events are interwoven with occasions of joy, including Crow's fulfillment of her lifelong dream and Tee Wee's own hard-fought success.

A richly emotional epic spanning two decades in the Deep South, the story of Tee Wee and Icey and their families are a prism through which we view the universal—racial strife, dysfunctional families, secrets and redemption. Illuminated by a resonant storytelling voice and dialogue that rings loud and true, *Right as Rain* provides indelible portraits of indomitable characters and an almost tangible sense of place, while revealing a deep understanding of race in mid-century America's rural south.

From the Hardcover edition.

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