



The Morning and the Evening: A Novel

Joan Williams

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Finalist for the National Book Award: Joan Williams's unforgettable first novel is the story of a small Southern town struggling to care for one of its own

In a rundown farmhouse in Mississippi, Jake Darby wakes up one morning to find his world forever changed. His long-suffering mother has died overnight, abandoning forty-year-old Jake, who is mute and, according to his neighbors, not quite right in the head. With no family to take him in, it is up to the townspeople of Marigold to take care of Jake, a grave responsibility that brings out the best—and the worst—of a community in which painful truths are usually hidden from sight. In such a place, even the kindest of acts can lead to the most tragic of outcomes.

Heralded as the debut of a major new talent when it was first published in 1961, *The Morning and the Evening* won the John P. Marquand First Novel Award from the Book-of-the-Month Club and established Joan Williams as a leading voice in Southern literature. Elegant, compassionate, and deeply unsettling, it is a portrait of the human spirit in all of its flawed and intricate beauty, and a tale firmly grounded in reality yet told with all the power of myth.

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