



Maine

By J. Courtney Sullivan

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In her best-selling debut, *Commencement*, J. Courtney Sullivan explored the complicated and contradictory landscape of female friendship. Now, in her highly anticipated second novel, Sullivan takes us into even richer territory, introducing four unforgettable women who have nothing in common but the fact that, like it or not, they're family.

For the Kellehers, Maine is a place where children run in packs, showers are taken outdoors, and old Irish songs are sung around a piano. Their beachfront property, won on a barroom bet after the war, sits on three acres of sand and pine nestled between stretches of rocky coast, with one tree bearing the initials "A.H." At the cottage, built by Kelleher hands, cocktail hour follows morning mass, nosy grandchildren snoop in drawers, and decades-old grudges simmer beneath the surface.

As three generations of Kelleher women descend on the property one summer, each brings her own hopes and fears. Maggie is thirty-two and pregnant, waiting for the perfect moment to tell her imperfect boyfriend the news; Ann Marie, a Kelleher by marriage, is channeling her domestic frustration into a dollhouse obsession and an ill-advised crush; Kathleen, the black sheep, never wanted to set foot in the cottage again; and Alice, the matriarch at the center of it all, would trade every floorboard for a chance to undo the events of one night, long ago.

By turns wickedly funny and achingly sad, *Maine* unveils the sibling rivalry, alcoholism, social climbing, and Catholic guilt at the center of one family, along with the abiding, often irrational love that keeps them coming back, every summer, to Maine and to each other.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Guest Reviewer: Laura Dave on *Maine*



Laura Dave is the author of the acclaimed novels *The Divorce Party*, *London Is the Best City in America*, and *The First Husband*. Her writing has appeared in *The New York Times*, *Glamour*, *Redbook*, and *The New York Observer*. Dave graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, and was recently named as a "Fun and Fearless Phenom" of the year by *Cosmopolitan*. She lives in California.

Having spent my favorite childhood summers in Maine, I was so excited for J. Courtney Sullivan's new novel, *Maine*. Would her story of three generations of Kelleher women who find themselves back at their summer home--all facing their own secret hardships and challenges--deliver? It certainly did.

It is the final summer in Maine for the Kelleher family, and its four strong-willed women are dreaming of bare feet, cocktails at sunset, and that magical ocean air. Alice is the matriarch, a regular fixture at morning mass, and an equally regular fixture in the wicker chair on the sun porch where she spends all afternoon drinking manhattans and smoking cigarettes. Maggie is Alice's granddaughter, a thirty-two-year-old writer who has just realized she's pregnant, a fact she has yet to tell her off-again boyfriend. Maggie's mother, Kathleen, is the prodigal daughter, camped out in California, wishing desperately to avoid the annual Kelleher showdown. And Ann Marie, Alice's daughter-in-law, is the long-suffering martyr and avid dollhouse collector who is determined to keep this chaotic household in order.

Over the course of this summer, long-held secrets are revealed, embarrassing crushes bloom, and gallons of vodka are consumed. While Alice must face reminders of a devastating tragedy, Maggie has to decide what to do about Gabe and the baby, Kathleen comes face to face with the woman she most fears, and Ann Marie desperately tries to maintain the image of a perfect family.

Sullivan spins an unhurried and thoughtful tale that delves into familial love, romantic heartaches, tightly-held longings, and a lot of hope. I *loved* these women and felt grateful to join them as they returned to Maine--just in time to figure out where they needed to go next.

Review

"I have never stayed at this cottage in Maine, or any cottage in Maine, but no matter: I now feel I know what

it's like being in a family that comes to the same place summer after summer, unpacking their familiar longings, slights, shorthand conversation, and ways of being together. J. Courtney Sullivan's *Maine* is evocative, funny, close-quartered, and highly appealing." —Meg Wolitzer, author of *The Uncoupling*

"*Maine* by J. Courtney Sullivan is a powerful novel about the ties that bind families tight, no matter how dysfunctional. Sullivan has created in the Kelleher women a cast of flawed but lovable characters so real, with their shared history of guilt and heartache and secret resentments, that I'm sure I'll be thinking about them for a long time to come." —Amy Greene, author of *Bloodroot*

"Everyone has dark secrets. It's why God invented confession and booze, two balms frequently employed in Sullivan's well-wrought sophomore effort. Alice Brennan is Irish American through and through, the daughter of a cop, a good Catholic girl so outwardly pure that she's a candidate for the papacy. . . . As Sullivan's tale unfolds, there are plenty of reasons that Alice might wish to avoid taking too close a look at her life: There's tragedy and heartbreak around every corner, as there is in every life. . . . Sullivan spins a leisurely yarn that looks into why people do the things they do—particularly when it comes to drinking and churchgoing—and why the best-laid plans are always the ones the devil monkeys with the most thoroughly. The story will be particularly meaningful to Catholic women, though there are no barriers to entry for those who are not of that faith. Mature, thoughtful, even meditative at times—but also quite entertaining." —*Kirkus*

"At the heart of this compelling novel of three generations of women..."

About the Author

Julie Courtney Sullivan est une écrivaine et journaliste. Diplômée de Smith College à Northampton, Massachusetts, en 2003, elle est actuellement journaliste au New York Times. Elle est l'auteur de deux romans: *Commencement* (2010) (*Les débutantes*) et *Maine*, sorti en juin 2011. Elle vit à Park Slope, Brooklyn.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Willard Griffin:

The book *Maine* has a lot associated with it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of advantage. The book was compiled by the very famous author. Tom makes some research ahead of writing this book. This book is very easy to read you can obtain the point easily after reading this article book.

Eugene Barnum:

Beside that *Maine* in your phone, it could possibly give you a way to get more close to the new knowledge or info. The information and the knowledge you are going to get here is fresh from oven so don't become worried if you feel like an older people live in narrow commune. It is good thing to have *Maine* because this book offers to you personally readable information. Do you occasionally have book but you would not get what it's facts concerning. Oh come on, that will not end up to happen if you have this inside your hand. The Enjoyable arrangement here cannot be questionable, similar to treasuring beautiful island. So do you still want to miss the idea? Find this book along with read it from this point!

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Shelly Reder:

A number of people said that they feel weary when they reading a publication. They are directly felt the idea when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose the particular book Maine to make your own personal reading is interesting. Your skill of reading expertise is developing when you like reading. Try to choose basic book to make you enjoy to see it and mingle the sensation about book and reading through especially. It is to be first opinion for you to like to open up a book and examine it. Beside that the guide Maine can to be your brand-new friend when you're really feel alone and confuse with the information must you're doing of their time.

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