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The Year We Left Home: A Novel

By Jean Thompson



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The Year We Left Home: A Novel By Jean Thompson

A *New York Times* bestseller in hardcover, *The Year We Left Home* is National Book Award finalist Jean Thompson's mesmerizing, decades-spanning saga of one ordinary American family that captures the turbulent history of the country at large.

Named a *New York Times* Editors' Choice, a *People* magazine "Pick of the Week," and an Indie Next and Midwest Connections selection, *The Year We Left Home* is the career-defining novel that Jean Thompson's admirers have been waiting for: a sweeping and emotionally powerful story of a single American family during the tumultuous final decades of the twentieth century.

Stretching from the early 1970s in the Iowa farmlands to suburban Chicago and across the map of contemporary America, *The Year We Left Home* follows the Erickson siblings as they confront prosperity and heartbreak, setbacks and triumphs, and seek their place in a country whose only constant seems to be breathtaking change. Ambitious and richly told, this is a vivid and moving meditation on our continual pursuit of happiness and an incisive exploration of the national character.



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The Year We Left Home: A Novel By Jean Thompson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Bookended by two wars—Vietnam and Iraq—Thompson's third novel (after the collection *Do Not Deny Me*) sketches the travails of an Iowa family over three decades. Matriarch Audrey neatly sums up the episodic novel's grand theme: "she'd been born into one world, hopeful and normal, and now she lived in another, full of sadness and failure." The novel opens as oldest daughter Anita, the beauty of the family, celebrates her marriage. Over the years, however, Anita confronts dissatisfaction with herself and disillusionment with her pompous husband. Her younger brother, Ryan, a high school senior as the novel opens, longs to escape his rural roots, dating a hippie poet and majoring in political science before realizing that the farmers who came before him might hold more relevance than he'd imagined. Cousin Chip comes back from Vietnam troubled and aimless, his wanderings from Seattle to Reno, Nev., to Veracruz, Mexico, offering a parallel to the spiritual restlessness all the other characters feel. Told from the point of view of more than a half-dozen characters, the vignettes that make up the narrative are generally powerful in isolation, but as a whole fail to develop into anything more than a series of snapshots of a family touched by time and tragedy. (May)
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Review

"Wise and absorbing, this is one not to miss." —*People*

"An extraordinarily warm-hearted novel." —**Jonathan Dee**, *The New York Times Book Review*

"*The Year We Left Home* plumbs the American heart with rigor and intensity, seamlessly connecting one family's fortunes to those of the larger national community." —**Liza Nelson**, *O: The Oprah Magazine*

"Startlingly good . . . You may forget that the characters don't really exist, that the Iowa farm family so expertly drawn by the author never drew breath themselves." —**Julia Keller**, *Chicago Tribune*

"Fantastic . . . Enormously satisfying . . . Thompson has a light, exquisite touch. . . . Rich, detailed, resonant, emotionally spot-on." —**Bill Eichenberger**, *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

"Enlightening and quietly brilliant . . . Thompson is a master at mining the most ridiculous of human foibles while never losing compassion for her flawed characters." —**Connie Ogle**, *The Miami Herald*

"Wry and tender . . . Such is Thompson's artistry that moments of everyday sorrow and nobility made me weep." —**John Repp**, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*

"Told with extraordinary grace . . . The clan at the center of Jean Thompson's spare, startlingly resonant new novel remain inextricably linked to the place that made them, even as they reach for lives richer in both geography and purpose." —**Leah Greenblatt**, *Entertainment Weekly*

"A smart, resonant novel." —*Boston Globe*

"Powerful and darkly humorous . . . Thompson's characters are sharply drawn and deeply familiar. Her dialogue is pitch-perfect." —**Laurie Hertz**, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

About the Author

Jean Thompson is the author of the short story collections *Do Not Deny Me*, *Throw Like a Girl*, and *Who Do You Love*, a 1999 National Book Award finalist for fiction, and the novels *City Boy* and *Wide Blue Yonder*, a *New York Times* Notable Book and *Chicago Tribune* Best Fiction selection. Visit her at JeanThompsonOnline.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Scott Peters:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive at this point, people have to do something to make these survive, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yeah, by reading a book your ability to survive raise then having chance to stand up than other is high. For you personally who want to start reading a new book, we give you that *The Year We Left Home: A Novel* book as starter and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is usually more than just a book.

Carrie Hunter:

A lot of people always spent their very own free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent these people free time just watching TV, as well as playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a guide. The book *The Year We Left Home: A Novel* it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of people who recommended this book. These folks were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can more easily to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not to cover but this book has high quality.

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