

The Farm in the Green Mountains: An NYRB Classics Review

Alice McDermott's *The Farm in the Green Mountains* is a lyrical and moving novel about a young woman's coming-of-age in rural Vermont. First published in 1982, the novel has been reissued as an NYRB Classic, with an afterword by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Richard Russo.



The Farm in the Green Mountains (NYRB Classics)

by Alice Herdan-Zuckmayer

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 1582 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
X-Ray : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 257 pages



The novel tells the story of Maureen Coughlin, a bright and ambitious young woman who grows up on a dairy farm in the Green Mountains of Vermont. Maureen is the eldest of seven children, and she helps her parents with the farm work from a young age. Despite her hard work, Maureen dreams of a different life for herself. She wants to go to college and become a writer.

Maureen's parents are Irish immigrants, and they have strong traditional values. They believe that Maureen's place is on the farm, and they discourage her from pursuing her education. However, Maureen is determined to follow her dreams. She secretly applies to college and is accepted to a small liberal arts school in Massachusetts.

Maureen's decision to leave home is a difficult one. She loves her family, but she knows that she cannot stay on the farm forever. She wants to experience the world and see what she is capable of. Maureen's journey is one of self-discovery and growth. She learns about herself and the world around her, and she ultimately finds her place in life.

The Farm in the Green Mountains is a beautifully written novel that captures the complexities of family life, the challenges of growing up, and the power of dreams. McDermott's prose is lyrical and evocative, and she brings her characters to life with great depth and compassion. This is a novel that will stay with you long after you finish it.

Characters

- **Maureen Coughlin:** The protagonist of the novel, Maureen is a bright and ambitious young woman who dreams of a different life for herself. She wants to go to college and become a writer.
- **Patrick Coughlin:** Maureen's father, Patrick is a hard-working Irish immigrant who believes that Maureen's place is on the farm.
- **Eileen Coughlin:** Maureen's mother, Eileen is a kind and loving woman who supports Maureen's dreams, but she also worries about her leaving the farm.

- **Thomas Coughlin:** Maureen's younger brother, Thomas is a kind and gentle young man who loves Maureen very much.
- **Mary Coughlin:** Maureen's younger sister, Mary is a beautiful and popular young woman who is very different from Maureen.

Themes

- **Family:** The novel explores the complex relationships within a family. Maureen loves her family, but she also feels stifled by their traditional values. She wants to experience the world and see what she is capable of.
- **Growing up:** The novel follows Maureen's journey from childhood to adulthood. She learns about herself and the world around her, and she ultimately finds her place in life.
- **Dreams:** The novel emphasizes the importance of following your dreams. Maureen dreams of going to college and becoming a writer, and she is determined to make her dreams a reality.

Setting

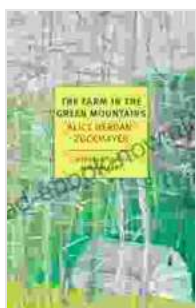
The novel is set in rural Vermont in the early 1960s. The Green Mountains provide a beautiful and rugged backdrop for the story. The novel captures the rhythms of life on a dairy farm, and it also explores the social and economic changes that were taking place in rural America at the time.

Author

Alice McDermott is an American novelist who has written eight novels and three short story collections. She has won numerous awards for her work, including the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize. McDermott is

known for her lyrical prose and her insightful exploration of family relationships.

The Farm in the Green Mountains is a moving and lyrical novel about a young woman's coming-of-age in rural Vermont. McDermott's prose is beautiful and evocative, and she brings her characters to life with great depth and compassion. This is a novel that will stay with you long after you finish it.



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