



Clear Springs: A Memoir

Bobbie Ann Mason

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In this superb memoir, the bestselling author of *In Country* and other award-winning books tells her own story, and the story of a Kentucky farm family, the Masons of Clear Springs. Like Russell Baker's *Growing Up*, Jill Ker Conway's *The Road from Coorain*, and other classic literary memoirs, **Clear Springs** takes us back in time to recapture a way of life that has all but disappeared, a country culture deeply rooted in work and food and family, in common sense and music and the land. *Clear Springs* is also an American woman's odyssey, exploring how a misfit girl who dreamed of distant places grew up in the forties, fifties, and sixties, and fulfilled her ambition to be a writer.

A multilayered narrative of three generations--Bobbie Ann Mason, her parents and grandparents--**Clear Springs** gracefully interlaces several different lives, decades, and locales, moving from the industrious life on a Kentucky farm to travels around the South with Mason as president of the Hilltoppers Fan Club; from the hippie lifestyle of the 1960s New York counterculture to the shock-therapy ward of a mental institution; from a farmhouse to the set of a Hollywood movie; from pop music concerts to a small rustic schoolhouse. *Clear Springs* depicts the changes that have come to family, to women, and to heartland America in the twentieth century, as well as to Bobbie Ann Mason herself. When the movie of Mason's bestselling novel *In Country* is filmed near Clear Springs, it brings the first limousines to town, even as it brings out once again the wisdom and values of Mason's remarkable parents. Her mother, especially, stands at the center of this book. Mason's journey leads her to a recognition of the drama and significance of her mother's life and to a new understanding of heritage, place, and family roots.

Brilliant and evocative, *Clear Springs* is a stunning achievement.

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