

[PDF] Rivers: A Novel

Michael Farris Smith - pdf download free book



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Author: Michael Farris Smith
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Description:

From As a Mississippi native, award-winning short story writer and first-time novelist Smith makes good use of his home state's milieu in this powerfully written apocalyptic tale about an unending southern storm. Smith imagines the devastation the Gulf Coast might experience if Hurricane Katrina marked the beginning of a continuous deluge of rain and wind, forcing the government to establish the Line, which isolates the South in flooding and lawlessness. Still haunted by the death of his wife and unborn child, a man named Cohen chooses to stay below the Line, where he avoids the chaos and ekes out a living in his unfinished house. Then a pair of teens ambush and nearly kill him, stealing his Jeep and ransacking his belongings. Left homeless, Cohen finds his way to a ramshackle trailer park controlled by a messianic figure named Aggie, from whose clutches Cohen frees the

teens and several women for a perilous dash to safety above the Line. While *Rivers* is already inviting inevitable comparisons to Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), Smith's canvas is broader and the story even more riveting. --Carl Hays

Review "Every once in a while an author comes along who's in love with art and the written language and image and literary experiment and the complexity of his characters and the great mysteries that lie just on the other side of the physical world, writers like William Faulkner and Cormac McCarthy and Annie Proulx. You can add Michael Farris Smith's name to the list."
(James Lee Burke, New York Times bestselling author of *Creole Belle* and *The Tin Roof Blowdown*)

"The lightning whips and the thunder bellows and the rain attacks in the water-stained pages of Michael Farris Smith's *Rivers*, a hurricane-force debut novel that will soak you with its beautiful sadness and blow you away with its prescience about the weather-wild world that awaits us."
(Benjamin Percy, author of *Red Moon*, *The Wilding*, and *Refresh, Refresh*)

"[*Rivers*] is a wonderfully cinematic story—but there are no Hollywood clichés in Smith's prose or plot. He portrays each character as a human being with a back story and personality: They may make choices that appall or frustrate us, but the characters are rounded and real . . . Smith resorts to no formula, and his ability to keep you guessing about what will happen next adds tension to long stretches of honed prose. He also manages to make 300 pages of relentless rain so real that you're surprised your fingers aren't pruned when you look up from this engrossing story."
(*The Washington Post*)

"Michael Farris Smith's powerful *Rivers* is the kind of book that lifts you up with its mesmerizing language then pulls you under like a riptide. . . . It's not surprising that early reviews have name-dropped Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* . . . In the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Sandy [and] with meteorologists issuing doomsday scenarios about the fate of coastal cities, *Rivers* succeeds as both a stunning work of speculative fiction and a grim forecast of a coming national catastrophe."
(*The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*)

"The momentum of this book is propulsive. . . . Most impressive of all is the fact that Farris Smith managed to capture my attention with an opening line—and, for that matter, an opening passage, and an opening chapter—about the weather."
(*The Paris Review*)

"[A] powerfully written apocalyptic tale. . . . While *Rivers* is already inviting inevitable comparisons to Cormac McCarthy's *The Road* (2006), Smith's canvas is broader and the story even more riveting."
(*Booklist*)

"Smith's vision of a post-apocalyptic society left behind by civilization is expertly executed. This world is chilling—all the more so for its believability—and it is peopled by compelling, fully realized characters, some of whom only exist in the form of ghosts. In contrast to this bleak world, Smith's prose is lush, descriptive and even beautiful. A compelling plot, fuelled by a mounting sense of tension and hope in the face of increasing hopelessness, will keep readers engrossed to the very end."
(*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review))

"Smith's passion for the South is palpable, and the native Mississippian writes as if in a part homage, part plea to save the splendor of his home state. With stunning prose and nearly perfect pacing, *Rivers* is an uncommonly good debut, forcing the reader to consider not only the

consequences of climate change but also ponder the limits of the human spirit."
(*Summerset Review*)

"*Rivers* is a novel that forces the reader to face terrifying possibilities and haunts long after the last page. Smith captures the essence of humanity in an almost post-apocalyptic world and his writing earns him a well-deserved place next to greats like William Faulkner or Cormac McCarthy."
(*DeSoto Magazine*)

"What if the devastation of Hurricane Katrina were not a one-time anomaly of ferocious weather, a crumbling infrastructure and an ineffective, incompetent national recovery response, but the first of endless waves of destructive coastal weather? What if the impact of climate change were not centuries away, but right now? . . . The satisfaction of *Rivers* comes from Smith's finesse in creating a realistic thriller within the fiction genre of cataclysm. His scenes are as real as 24-hour Weather Channel videos."
(*ShelfAwareness.com*)

"A post-apocalyptic world a la *The Road* by Cormac McCarthy (indeed, Smith's prose style has some of the same hard-muscled, grim texture of McCarthy's words)."—
(*The Quivering Pen*)

"A story so powerful, I thought it was going to ignite every time I picked the damn thing up. *Rivers* will be compared to some of the greatest stories ever written by writers of generations past and present, but what can't be compared is the power and skill that lie within its pages. The words will shear your eyes and brand your mind, and you'll be scarred by what you've read for days, weeks, even months after. This is an important book. Pick it up—I bet you won't be able to put it down."
(Frank Bill, author of *Donnybrook* and *Crimes in Southern Indiana*)

"Take an environmental apocalypse, blow in the cadences of Ernest Hemingway and the vision of Cormac McCarthy, sweeten it with humanity, add a Southern twang, and you might get something close to *Rivers*. Michael Farris Smith's debut novel is not only a great read; it's a significant one."
(Anne Korkeakivi, author of *An Unexpected Guest*)

"Anyone who was on the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina will recognize the world portrayed in *Rivers* . . . The novel builds from this tense, atmospheric beginning to a harrowing conclusion, the kind of book that will soak into you like a relentless downpour. Smith's storm-swept prose and desolate setting will remind readers of Cormac McCarthy's *The Road*, but there is something in Cohen that reminds us of a Larry Brown protagonist, burned out yet determined, and something especially in his passage through the fugitive land that recalls TV's 'The Walking Dead'. Events like Katrina and 9/11 stoked the country's imagination for survivalist stories like *Rivers*, so it seems fitting that this promising Mississippi writer has come back to the source and paid homage, in his Southern Gothic way, to the region's bull-headed will to keep going."
(*The Clarion-Ledger (Mississippi)*)

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