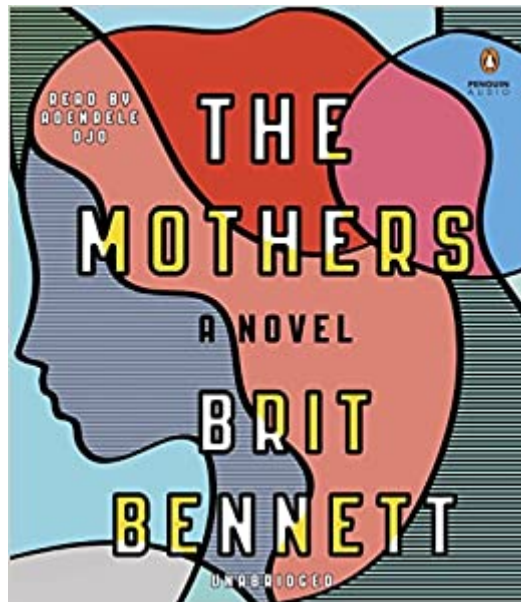


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The Mothers: A Novel



Synopsis

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NBCC John Leonard First Novel Prize Finalist • PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for Debut Fiction • Finalist • New York Public Library Young Lions Award Finalist • An NPR Best Book of 2016 • An Entertainment Weekly Best Book of 2016 • A Vogue • Magazine Best Book of the Year • A Goodreads Choice Award Finalist • One of Elle.com's Best Books of the Year

"Ferociously moving • | despite Bennett's thrumming plot, despite the snap of her pacing, it's the always deepening complexity of her characters that provides the book's urgency."

• "The New York Times Book Review" Luminous • | engrossing and poignant, this is one not to miss." • "People, Pick of the Week" • "Fantastic • | a book that feels alive on the page." • "The Washington Post" A dazzling debut novel from an exciting new voice, *The Mothers* is a surprising story about young love, a big secret in a small community • "and the things that ultimately haunt us most. Set within a contemporary black community in Southern California, Brit Bennett's mesmerizing first novel is an emotionally perceptive story about community, love, and ambition. It begins with a secret. "All good secrets have a taste before you tell them, and if we'd taken a moment to swish this one around our mouths, we might have noticed the sourness of an unripe secret, plucked too soon, stolen and passed around before its season." It is the last season of high school life for Nadia Turner, a rebellious, grief-stricken, seventeen-year-old beauty. Mourning her own mother's recent suicide, she takes up with the local pastor's son. Luke Sheppard is twenty-one, a former football star whose injury has reduced him to waiting tables at a diner. They are young; it's not serious. But the pregnancy that results from this teen romance • "and the subsequent cover-up • "will have an impact that goes far beyond their youth. As Nadia hides her secret from everyone, including Aubrey, her God-fearing best friend, the years move quickly. Soon, Nadia, Luke, and Aubrey are full-fledged adults and still living in debt to the choices they made that one seaside summer, caught in a love triangle they must carefully maneuver, and dogged by the constant, nagging question: What if they had chosen differently? The possibilities of the road not taken are a relentless haunt. In entrancing, lyrical prose, *The Mothers* asks whether a "what if" can be more powerful than an experience itself. If, as time passes, we must always live in servitude to the decisions of our younger selves, to the communities that have parented us, and to the decisions we make that shape our lives forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An Best Book of October 2016: *The Mothers* is an absorbing and powerful novel about motherhood, female friendship and finding love with a broken heart. Brit Bennett will captivate you with her characters — who are hurting, flawed and trying to navigate the unsteady transition into adulthood. Seventeen year old Nadia Turner has her world turned upside down when her mother commits suicide and shortly thereafter, she discovers she's pregnant with the pastor's son's child. Nadia finds a safe harbor in her best friend Aubrey, but as the years go by, her past decisions invade the present, ushering in a new wave of wounds. *The Mothers* ambitiously tackles heavy circumstances, but the hope of these young black women and Bennett's ability to convey the ferocity of what it means have a mother, to be a mother, and to want a mother, make this novel a resoundingly magnetic and essential read. --Al Woodworth, *The Book Review* --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

"Brit Bennett is the real thing. *The Mothers* is a stellar novel — moving, thoughtful. Stunning. I couldn't put it down. I'm so excited to have this brilliant new voice in the world." — Jacqueline Woodson, National Book Award-winning author of *Brown Girl Dreaming* and *Another Brooklyn* "Brit Bennett's masterful debut is brimming with unforgettable scenes and the sort of keenly-observed, precise language that makes you look at your own relationships anew. Told with the wisdom of a seasoned, compassionate storyteller, *The Mothers* is a novel about community, friendship, grief and growth. The two women at the center of this novel are characters you will find yourself thinking about long after you've turned the last page-- they pull you in close and never let you go. Bennett is a brilliant and much-needed new voice in literature." — Angela Flournoy, author of National Book Award-finalist *The Turner House* "Brit

Bennett's *The Mothers* is a brilliant exploration of friendship, desire, inheritance, the love we seek, and the love we settle for. It is the kind of book that from its first page seduces you into knowing that the heartbreak coming will be worth it." — Danielle Evans, author of *Before You Suffocate Your Own Fool Self*

Brit Bennett's *The Mothers* is an engaging and assured debut novel of depth, and introspective power. It succeeds as a brilliant study of a modern black woman, and as a lyrical and majestic portrait of her place in society." — Chigozie Obioma, author of *The Fishermen*

Brit Bennett is so bracingly talented on the page. . . . [The Mothers is] astute and absorbing and urgent." — Jezebel

This book is something special: sage and sad and spectacular. This is a book about how the choices you make, and those made for you, shape the lovely, hopeful tragedy of your life." — Bookriot

A wise and sad coming-of-age story showing how people are shaped by their losses." — Kirkus

From the Trade Paperback edition.

The Mothers: Brit Bennett brings the perfect tone to a near perfect story. *The Mothers*, is not a novel that I would have picked up to read, out of a list of assorted titles, for leisurely reading. I bought the novel because I had long ago decided to forego reading all of the eight books on the course — a book list — that a talented local minister will talk about in a course for our Bigelow Senior Center this Fall. I have always wanted, not only to take the course in which the Reverend Rowe discusses his readings of the previous year, which, in total, amount to eight titles, but I have always regretted not having made the attempt. Having, once again, decided to take the course, I have chosen to read all eight books listed in the course description, although, it is not necessary to do so. I found *The Mothers* to be one of my better, summer reads, not only because it reads so true but also because Bennett's cohesive, sensitive writing held up throughout, so well. It's true. I would not have read *The Mothers* had it not been on the Reverend's list. But I'm very glad I did because Bennett's telling of the story is so vividly resonant.

Wow. Shocking read. Started out a bit slow but ended up being a great read half way through. I was conflicted about each and every character - the ending left me hanging, wanting more, wishing I had some closure - but nonetheless powerful.

It took me a while to complete this novel. Not because it was bad, but because I fell in love with the story and how beautifully it was written. The way the author presented the story made me linger on the words and fall in love with language. The story was about everyday people, relationships and

complicated matters of life, betrayal, loss, and community. It was a fresh voice in story telling and I look forward to more from this author.

In many ways this is a spellbinding book. It is the story of Nadia as she grapples with becoming an adult. It is also the story of Luke and Aubrey. I found the church mothers, a Greek chorus of sorts, somewhat awkward. All in all, a terrific debut.

I finished it and went back to read the other reviews and I agree totally with those that said they thought it just fell off at the end. Might have been better had the author written a couple of different endings for the reader to pick from. Left me up in the air.

Thought provoking and insightful far beyond the years of its author. I have some minor squabbles about the inconsistency of the narration and feel like the last 50 pages should have informed the first 200 more, for a more consistent voice and weight but overall a very strong and powerfully pain-filled novel.

Fantastic debut novel by a very talented writer. She takes a small incident in an isolated and insular community and spins it into a breathtaking and suspenseful yarn. Characters are well drawn, relationships are fully explored. The prose is lyrical but still direct and readable. Will definitely recommend. Look forward to more novels from this wonderful young writer.

A community that would rather hold a young girl back rather than to be happy that she was able to fix her mistake and move on? Selfish idiots. I don't buy it. I applaud her for leaving and hardly looking back!

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