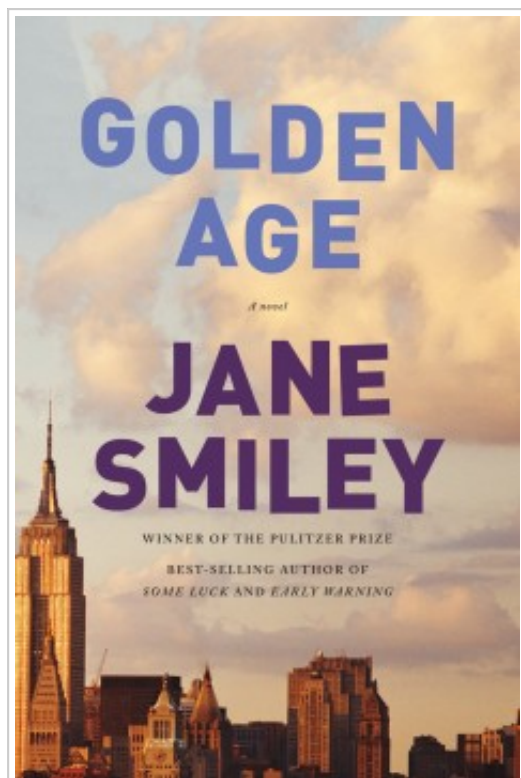


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Golden Age

by Jane Smiley

Price: \$26.95(Hardcover)

Published: October 20, 2015

Rating: 0.0/5 (0 votes cast)

From the Publisher:

From the winner of the Pulitzer Prize: the much-anticipated final volume, following *Some Luck* and *Early Warning*, of her acclaimed American trilogy—a richly absorbing new novel that brings the remarkable Langdon family into our present times and beyond

A lot can happen in one hundred years, as Jane Smiley shows to dazzling effect in her Last Hundred Years trilogy. But as *Golden Age*, its final installment, opens in 1987, the next generation of Langdons face economic, social, political—and personal—challenges unlike anything their ancestors have encountered before.

Michael and Richie, the rivalrous twin sons of World War II hero Frank, work in the high-stakes world of government and finance in Washington and New York, but they soon realize that one's fiercest enemies can be closest to home; Charlie,...

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What We Say

My first thought on finishing Jane Smiley's "Golden Age" is a very satisfied, "She did it." Smiley's bold trio of books -- dubbed the Last Hundred Years Trilogy -- had a simple goal. She would tell the story of the Langdon family and thus America over one hundred years. She started on a small farm before the Great Depression right up to the present and on into the (near) future. Each chapter would take place during one year. The cast would become sprawling. Children became parents and then grandparents and then memories. Events we see firsthand turn into dimly remembered, sometimes mythologized stories. Remarkably, the three books are supremely ambitious but never feel big: sprawling, epic, wide-screen are not the words that spring to mind. And yet they cover so much, so well. Having read all three books in a relatively short span of time, I'm most immediately impressed by Smiley's empathy, how she gets under the skin and understands and presents without judgment everything from a very small child to a closeted gay man to a diehard Republican to pretty much anything you can name. It's all here, literally: the changes in our country; major events like the Cold War to 9-11 to global warming; small events that loom large for those facing them, like births and deaths, heartaches and dashed hopes. It's supremely confident, engaging moment to moment and when one steps back remarkably poised. Over hundreds if not thousands of incidents taking place in the private lives of dozens of characters, I didn't quite buy exactly one (and even that was thoroughly justified by what came before). This is a major work and the sooner you read it all, the better. -- Michael Giltz

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What Others Say

"To most novelists, the prospect of writing a trilogy that spans an entire century might have seemed outrageously ambitious, if not downright foolhardy. But Jane Smiley is not most novelists. The Pulitzer Prize-winning author didn't simply rise to the multiple challenges of the multigenerational family saga. In the trilogy—which concludes with *Golden Age*—Smiley tells not only the story of an American family, but also the story of America itself. Set on a farm in Iowa and, as various members of the Langdon clan spread out, throughout the country and the world, *The Last Hundred Years* finds the family buffeted by change, including war, economic ups and downs, shifts in the culture and practice of farming, politics and a variety of other factors. At the same time, the way the characters interact with history is indivisible from the way they interact with each other, which is inextricably bound up with family dynamics and the mystery of human personality." —Kevin Nance, *Chicago Tribune*

"With *Golden Age*, Smiley wraps up her sweeping, cumulatively absorbing American epic—as expansive and ambitious in its way as Balzac's *Human Comedy* and John Updike's...

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