NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Includes Elizabeth Strout’s never-before-published essay about the origins of The Burgess Boys

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY
The Washington Post • NPR • Good Housekeeping

Elizabeth Strout “animates the ordinary with an astonishing force,” wrote The New Yorker on the publication of her Pulitzer Prize–winning Olive Kitteridge. The San Francisco Chronicle praised Strout’s “magnificent gift for humanizing characters.” Now the acclaimed author returns with a stunning novel as powerful and moving as any work in contemporary literature.

Haunted by the freak accident that killed their father when they were children, Jim and Bob Burgess escaped from their Maine hometown of Shirley Falls for New York City as soon as they possibly could. Jim, a sleek, successful corporate lawyer, has belittled his bighearted brother their whole lives, and Bob, a Legal Aid attorney who idolizes Jim, has always taken it in stride. But their long-standing dynamic is upended when their sister, Susan—the Burgess sibling who stayed behind—urgently calls them home. Her lonely teenage son, Zach, has gotten himself into a world of trouble, and Susan desperately needs their help. And so the Burgess brothers return to the landscape of their childhood, where the long-buried tensions that have shaped and shadowed their relationship begin to surface in unexpected ways that will change them forever.
With a rare combination of brilliant storytelling, exquisite prose, and remarkable insight into character, Elizabeth Strout has brought to life two deeply human protagonists whose struggles and triumphs will resonate with readers long after they turn the final page. Tender, tough-minded, loving, and deeply illuminating about the ties that bind us to family and home, The Burgess Boys is Elizabeth Strout’s newest and perhaps most astonishing work of literary art.

Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader’s Circle for author chats and more.

“What truly makes Strout exceptional . . . is the perfect balance she achieves between the tides of story and depths of feeling.”—Chicago Tribune

“Strout’s prose propels the story forward with moments of startlingly poetic clarity.”—The New Yorker

“Elizabeth Strout’s first two books, Abide with Me and Amy and Isabelle, were highly thought of, and her third, Olive Kitteridge, won the Pulitzer Prize in fiction. But The Burgess Boys, her most recent novel, is her best yet.”—The Boston Globe

“A portrait of an American community in turmoil that’s as ambitious as Philip Roth’s American Pastoral but more intimate in tone.”—Time

“[Strout’s] extraordinary narrative gifts are evident again. . . . At times [The Burgess Boys] almost effortlessly fluid, with superbly rendered dialogue, sudden and unexpected bolts of humor and . . . startling riffs of gripping emotion.”—Associated Press

“[Strout] is at her masterful best when conjuring the two Burgess boys. . . . Scenes between them ring so true.”—San Francisco Chronicle

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Amazon.com Review

An Amazon Best Book of the Month, March 2013 It can’t be easy to sit down and write a new novel after your last, Olive Kitteridge, won the Pulitzer Prize (in 2009). The pressure! The pressure! In The Burgess Boys, novelist Elizabeth Strout somehow manages to survive whatever next-book anxiety while at the same time revisiting the themes and types of characters that have made her famous: plainspoken Mainers (some transplanted now to Brooklyn) bound together by both love, competitiveness and the issues of the day. Here, hotshot lawyer Jim and bighearted Bob Burgess come together over a politically incorrect prank perpetrated by their sister’s son—and discover that their distrust of each other has never really gone away. But then, neither has their love. Nobody does buried conflict and tortured familial relations better than Strout. --Sara Nelson

Product Description

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