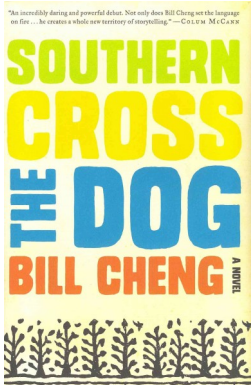


Southern cross the dog ; a novel

Voodoo, Blues, and Wandering after the Great Flood



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ISBN:

9780062225009

This first novel by an Asian-American has already created a lot of buzz. First, it has an intriguing topic: Mississippi after the great flood of 1927. Secondly: the main characters are compelling-- they are very poor African-Americans under the yoke of the white inhabitants. Finally, it shows exquisite writing. William Ferris said, "Bill Cheng embraces the region's 1927 flood, voodoo, blues, and race with breathtakingly beautiful prose."

Southern Cross the Dog starts with a group of black children playing "Little Sally Water" in the rain--the rain that caused the great flood. Soon the story focuses on the character of Robert, the second born child of Etta and Ellis. Before long, you discover that his family has just suffered an immense tragedy. White vigilantes had hung the oldest son Billy for loving a white girl.

Bill Cheng captures the chaos and hardship after the flood. Dead bodies floated past. Men with boats offered rides but also stole the food and valuable keepsakes of the displaced families. Robert's family began this journey together, but ended up in a refugee camp. Because Etta has lost her mind over Billy's death, she needs constant care. Ellis makes a difficult decision: to send young Robert off with someone to work in another town. Ellis thinks this is the only way all three of them will survive but he mistakenly does not tell his son why he is sending him away.

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