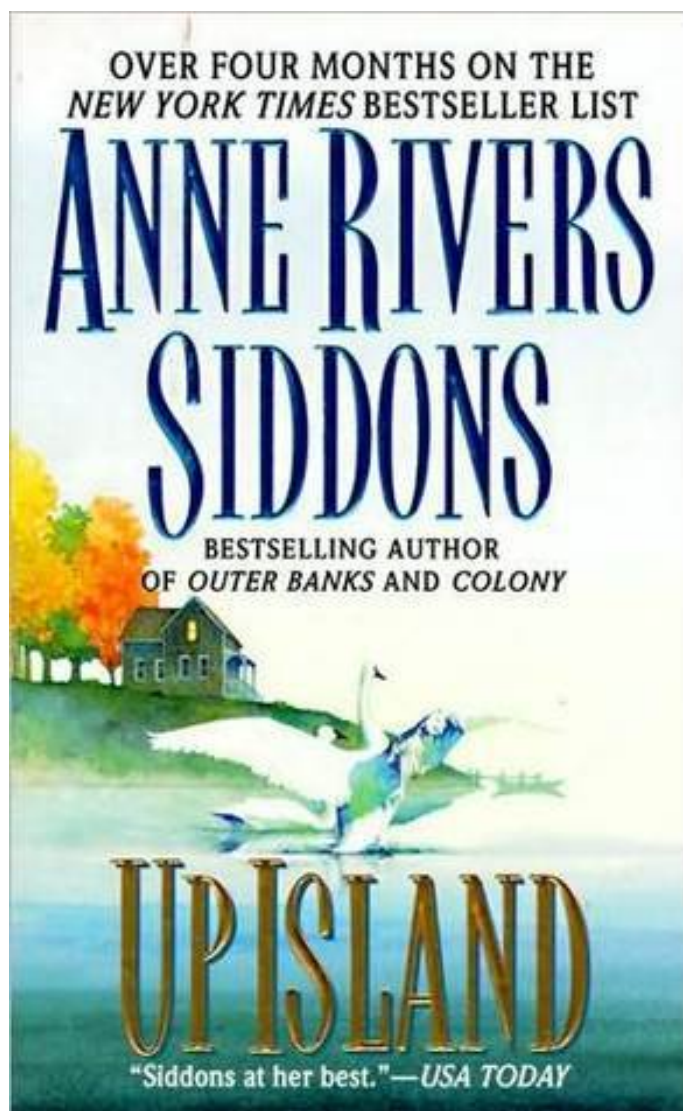

Anne Rivers Siddons

Up Island



Title: Up Island

Author: Anne Rivers Siddons

Format: Kindle Edition

Language: English

Pages: 512

Publisher: , 0

ISBN:

Format: PDF / Kindle / ePub

Size: 8.9 MB

Download: allowed

Description

From childhood, Molly Bell Redwine was taught by her charismatic, domineering mother that "family is everything." But no one warned Molly that family can change unexpectedly. In rapid succession, her husband of more than twenty years abandons her for a younger woman, her mother dies, and her Atlanta clan scatters to the four winds. Molly is set adrift in a heartbeat.

With her old world crumbling, Molly takes refuge with a friend on Martha's Vineyard, hoping to come to terms with who she truly is. When the summer season ends, Molly decides to stay on, renting a small cottage on a remote up-island pond—becoming part of an odd, new, very real family that taxes her old outworn notions. And as the long Vineyard winter approaches, Molly braces herself for the arduous task she must undertake: a search for renewal and identity, and the strength to carry her through to the warm and healing spring.

Insightful reviews

Jo: I love reading Anne Rivers Siddons stories. I love the world she takes me to. This is the second book of hers I've read and I plan to read a lot more. I like the way she contrasts the development of the seasons and nature with her story and characters.

The main character, Molly, was entirely believable to me. I've known women like her - the author's description of her denial behavior in coping with the difficulties she encounters is so real. Molly drove me crazy in places because it was obvious there were things happening, but Molly just chose not to deal with it - reminded me of my mother. But, I care about Molly and identify with her losses. Siddons characters are multi-dimensional.

The swans were an important part of the story for me. I love all birds to begin with and knew that swans mate for life and they are very precious birds. Family being an important plot of this story, the swans were perfect for representing the quality of fidelity. I loved the relationship between Molly's father, Tim, and the swans. I couldn't understand why Molly didn't have that same sensitivity.

There were a few places that I feel the author left hanging - like the mention of Molly cutting Dennis's hair, but she never did? Or, the bed sores of Luz that got treated and mentioned only once? That was part of the ongoing demands on Molly and I kept waiting to get to the part of some resolution on these two issues.

But, that's just a small part of the story. I learned more about Martha's Vineyard. I had no idea they still had "wild" places on the Vineyard. I loved visiting it vicariously in this story. I do like the way the story ended. The maturity on Molly's part through this story is shown in the ending.

Russell Sanders: Beware of preconceived notions. When I pulled the battered copy of *Up Island* from a box of discarded books a friend had asked me to disperse, I saw the author's name. Anne Rivers Siddons? Isn't she a romance writer? Or does she do quick-read shallow best

sellers? But reading the jacket flap, I saw the novel was set in Atlanta (I love anything set in the South) and in Martha's Vineyard (a place that is as exotic to me as Afghanistan.) So I pulled the book and placed it on my "to-read" shelf. Someday I would get to it and have a quick sojourn to places both familiar and unknown.

But oh, was I wrong. My preconceived notions were banished as much as protagonist Molly Redwine's are in the story. Siddons writes literarily, with much grace. Her vocabulary is rich (there are words I used in Scrabble play that I know how to spell, but thanks to Siddons, now know how to use.) Her characters are colorful and wounded. And all that makes for a read that is satisfying and entertaining.

Molly Redwine, an Atlanta well-to-do society wife of a Coca Cola executive, has the perfect life: a daughter who has given Molly a grandchild, a son on the cusp of high school graduation and looking forward to university, a father who adores her, and a husband who is hard-working and supports her—he, the only love she has ever known. For Molly, she has the notion that she has a wonderful family and family is everything. But her life begins to unravel when her husband unceremoniously dumps her for a younger, shrew of a woman. Molly is devastated and in denial. But when she follows a friend—for respite from all this—to the friend's summer home on Martha's Vineyard, Molly sees a place to hide. She decides to stay the winter, and she soon encounters an aging, sick Portuguese woman; the woman's bed-ridden, child-like cousin; and the woman's one-legged, cantankerous son. Add to the mix Molly's father, who comes to stay a while, and a pair of overindulged, willful swans. Molly's post-husband life becomes full and almost unmanageable, but it forces her to confront her notion of what family really is.

Siddons is a superb storyteller, crafting a coming of age story for the middle aged set. I read a lot of young adult novels, which quite often tell of a teen's ripening into adulthood. But here Siddons confronts Molly Redwine's stunted growth at middle age, and through her machinations, brings the character, finally, into adulthood. It is masterful. And it makes me want to seek out more of Siddons's books.

Angeh: I have read and enjoyed many of Anne Rivers Siddons novels but this story of what happens to Molly Redwine after her mother dies suddenly and her husband leaves her for an awful younger woman is one of her best. She has such a gift for describing places - in this case, Martha's Vineyard - that you can practically see and smell and sense what it is like, even if you've never been there. Molly goes to the island to stay with a friend while she recovers from the shock and pain of the terrible events in her life. An odd group of characters, including two surly swans, become Molly's surrogate family as she tries to figure out what to do next. I loved this book so much that I actually contemplated taking a sick day from work so I could finish it.

Beth B: "If there has been ever one lady who knew what was once important, that girl was once Molly Bell Redwine. From childhood, Molly used to be taught via her charismatic, tough mom that "family is everything." yet in what sounds like an instant, Molly discovers that relatives can swap with out warning."I desire lifelike fiction so i believe i would have rated this a bit low. even if a few of the emotion was once believable, this e-book learn extra like a fairytale to me. It saved my curiosity yet i did not "get lost" in it. So, three stars it is.

Suzanne: summer time learn with a predictable plot a couple of southern girl whose husband leaves her for a more youthful version. She spends the summer time recuperating and

rebuilding her existence on Martha's winery with many references to a thinly disguised Chappy seashore Club, Edgartown and winery existence in general. Siddons is an effective author and her prose and plot strains are engaging. My favourite a part of the e-book was once the connection with the swans Up Island close to Chilmark the place she spends the winter. Swans mate for life. the feminine swan can not fly as a result of a few type of injured wing as a result they wintry weather over on a pond close to the most character's iciness home. The descriptions and imagery of the swans, wintry weather lifestyles on a frozen pond and what it particularly skill to mate for all times i discovered memorable. i have not checked out swans an analogous approach since.

Lynn: I simply didn't like this booklet within the least! i'm obdurate so while I commence whatever i need to complete it yet i presumed approximately giving up in this ebook greater than once! the writer makes use of pompous language like "He evidently used to be now not in speedy extremis" and a number of other connection with flotsam and jetsam to explain the particles of the most character's lifestyles yet this major personality used to be whatever yet pompous. She was once nearly cowardly and childlike. An ostrich desirous to bury her head within the sand. The finishing supplied no answer to the underlying clash (the get a divorce of the most character's marriage). actually disappointing! I will not learn one other Anne Rivers Siddons book.

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