

Private Parts



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Why Mattie marries Jimmy Lee Turner is a question she can't really answer. He'd been better off, she says, marrying "somebody like my sister-in-law Celeste...One of those girls born knowing who she is and what she's supposed to be doing at all times. Bloode"

New novelist Rebecca Godwin has created the voice of Mattie Turner so skillfully that reading *Private Parts* naturally slips into eager

listening. Godwin's craft becomes a living voice in the ear, like the telephone gossip Mattie can't hang up on.

Not that Mattie wasn't thrilled to go out on dates with Jimmy Lee. But their brief courtship is transformed overnight into a near-silent marriage, she going through her motions, he throwing fits behind a door. Even on their honeymoon, Mattie lies awake thinking while Jimmy Lee snores. Mattie feels alone-abandoned by her mother, distant from her boyish husband, scorned by Iris higher-class family, and at best amused by the other women in Red Hill, South Carolina. From passive acceptance of what life offers, Mattie grows to expect more. And when a violent storm tears into town, she finds she must break out of the stifling existence she's endured for too many years.

In *Mattie Turner*, Godwin gives life to a

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