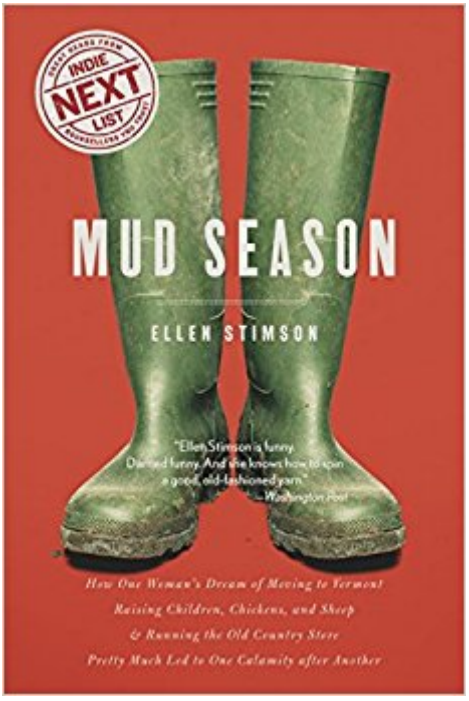
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Mud Season: How One Woman's Dream Of Moving To Vermont, Raising Children, Chickens And Sheep, And Running The Old Country Store Pretty Much Led To One Calamity After Another



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Synopsis

Living the dream of the endless vacation In self-deprecating and hilarious fashion, Mud Season chronicles StimsonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s transition from city living to rickety Vermont farmhouse. When she decides she wants to own and operate the old-fashioned village store in idyllic Dorset, pop. 2,036, one of the oldest continually operating country stores in the country, she learns the hard way that Ã¢â ¬Å“improvementsÃ¢â ¬Â• are not always welcomed warmly by folks who like things just fine the way theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢d always been. She dreams of patrons streaming in for fresh-made sandwiches and an old-timey candy counter, but she learns theyÃ¢â ¬â„¢re boycotting the store. Why? Ã¢â ¬Å“The bread,Ã¢â ¬Â• they tell her, Ã¢â ¬Å“you moved the bread from where it used to be.Ã¢â ¬Â• Can the citified newcomer turn the tide of mistrust before she ruins the business altogether? Follow the author to her witÃ¢â ¬â„¢s end and back, through her full immersion into rural lifeÃ¢â ¬â ¢swapping high heels for muck boots; raising chickens and sheep; fighting off skunks, foxes, and bears; and making a few friends and allies in a tiny town steeped in history, local tradition, and that dyed-in-the-wool Vermont Ã¢â ¬Å“character.Ã¢â ¬Â•

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Stimson’s predictable tale of uprooting to Vermont after an idyllic fall vacation has its fun moments, including "choosing the cheese" and experiencing Mud Season, the time in early spring when "the snow opens up the hard, bare ground beneath it," but never enough of them to outweigh the plodding narrative. Initial visions of a picturesque small-town life are immediately sidetracked by the day-to-day of historic home renovations and management troubles at the "Horrible Quaint Country

Store" that Stimson and her husband decide to open. Natural descriptions provide moments of serenity: "There seems to be a whole, separate world just below the snowy, melty surface." Such instances, unfortunately, are often bogged down by repetitive footnoting. Stimson's story, which concludes with bankruptcy negotiations and a promise never to buy a store again, is fraught with anxiety and missteps. More than thirty appended pages of recipes, including three pet memoriam, supply cheerier resolutions than the story commands. Such additions detract from what would otherwise be a bittersweet story, making this book far more complicated, and less enjoyable, than it should be. (Oct.) --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Starred Review Get your schadenfreude ready. StimsonÃ¢â ¬â„¢s fish-out-of-water memoir is chockablock with self-deprecating, belly-laughable vignettes. Not since Betty MacDonaldÃ¢â ¬â„¢s The Egg and I (1945) has anybody seemed more ill-suited to country life. And yet this born-and-bred midwestern city dweller, having run up an enormous tab at her local Vermont country store, thinks, Maybe I could run a quaint country store. Visions of herself, husband John, and their Bernese Mountain dog, Eloise, greeting delighted customers with homemade breads and soups and cozy woodstove fires eclipsed all logic. They bought the store. Which sounds ominously like the phrase, they bought the farm. Which it may as well have been in the case of this former wholesale book businesswoman who seemed hell-bent on proving she had more money and credit than brains. Naturally, first thing, Stimson rearranged the store to suit her well-intentioned yuppie sensibilities. The locals stayed away in droves. Indeed, her first customersÃ¢â ¬â •staid, khaki-and-sensible-shoe-wearing native VermontersÃ¢â ¬â •took one look at her swingy orange and purple outfit accessorized with jangly jewelry and thought she was a fortune teller. The experience foretold a very long acclimation and heaps of hilarious anecdotes. As for this bookÃ¢â ¬â •come for the humor, stay for the recipes. --Donna Chavez --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Having already read Ellen Stimsom's Good Grief, and loved it, on a cold February day in Santa Fe, New Mexico, I decided to read her first book. I attended grad school in Montpelier, VT, coming from Southern California in winter (maybe I wear socks) to Montpelier with tons of snow, was a shock and as much education as studying for my MFA. Stimson absolutely captures the culture shock, and is able to joke about her earlier notions of Vermont being paradise. But it's also a story of family and country stores and animals--dogs to hens to sheep--which left me cry.ing in some spots but laughing in others, This tale is beguiling and rich with emotional truth. It made me wish I was her

next door neighbor. Reading it on a snowy day was like having surround sound and seeing a movie that hurtled toward it’s inevitable finish with such energy, I did not want it to end. I hope she publishes a new book soon. I adore her writing, her stories about food, kids and chickens. Just a lovely book to give to a friend who entertains ideas of "moving to the country" or watching Diane Keaton in Baby Boom, one of my favorite films. I will reread this when I need a hug.

Reading this book was like being home again. I grew up a few miles from the Vermont State Line in Upstate NY and this book could have taken place in my own home town. We all knew each others dogs and kids and everybody watched out for each other. I think of my cousin out plowing his field with his team of Belgian Horses and cursing the early spring mud. We all dreaded that damp cold that comes with mud season and yet were happy that days were growing longer. My neighbors were characters right out of this book and behind that New England reserve there was a steadfast love that one cannot deny. I remember looking out the window to see a herd of cows trotting through the yard and every neighbor setting out to help round them up and return them to Max, the owner. This book WAS like a warm hug and like going home again. Thank you, Ellen Stimson. Even though I now live in the Midwest I have only to pick up your book to go home for a while.

This book was not worth bothering with. I read to completion everything I start, including the ingredients in a box of cookies. The cookie ingredients are more interesting. Editing is poor- many grammer errors.The author seems to think she is wonderful and a brilliant business woman. She leaves the reader wondering where she gets her money. She fails at retail, starts three business while on the verge of bankruptcy and never explains her sources of funding. The ending of the book features obituaries for three family pets and then veers into an unclear group of cooking recipes. This book is disjointed and a real mess. Don’t waste your time on it.

Sometimes a story can be both very compelling and gripping as well as being very personal at the same time. This is the case with Mud Season. I really enjoyed reading the story of her family’s adventures (and MISadventures) in pulling up their mid-America roots and moving to the "Republic of Vermont." This was one of those great books that I found myself reading in one (well, two) marathon sessions - I just couldn’t put it down! I really felt like part of this courageous family as they took on the challenges and experienced the joys and challenges of setting up a new life in a new place. So one last comment... When you get to the very end of the book, there are a few pages where I would warn you in advance - have tissues, LOTS of tissues. The last few pages of the book

touched my heart and earned this book a permanent place in my bookshelf.

Enjoyed the book. Made me try Grade B Maple syrup, which I now love! I could have done without the curse words but the book was funny and her humor was relatable. I like how she loves her family and pets. I am the same. Cute book. I think the local Vermont people were a little harsh and not too accepting of newcomers though. I am sure newcomers are annoying to them like the Northerners are to us Southerners here in NC. However, I married a Northerner so we have to learn to just chill. Everyone who moves to a new area has a learning period.

Really loved this book. This was her second but I read it first. I did read the first one next "good grief:life in a tiny village". Im glad that i read it second because I probably would never had read this one "mud season".

I loved this book so much that I bought it for a friend! Anyone who has fantasies about moving to the country for a bucolic life should read this book!I laughed and laughed and laughed.

Name of book was not the focal point. I found it funny at times and cute. The author has a clever way of writing but jumped around a great deal.

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