



Purgatory: A Novel of the Civil War

By Jeff Mann



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During the Civil War, two young soldiers on opposite sides find themselves drawn together. One is a war-weary but scholarly Southerner who has seen too much bloodshed, especially the tortures inflicted upon the enemy by his vicious commanding officer, his uncle. The other is a Herculean Yankee captured by the rag-tag Confederate band and forced to become a martyr for all the sins of General Sheridan's fires. When these two find themselves admiring more than one another's spirit and demeanor, when passions erupt between captor and captive, will this new romance survive the arduous trek to Purgatory Mountain?



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Editorial Review

Review

Purgatory, set during the final days of the Civil War, follows the story of young Ian Campbell, a Confederate soldier far away from home, reeling from the death of his brother, and hiding a secret: he enjoys the loving embrace and touch of other men. Then, one day, Ian's life is rocked and changed forever when the unit takes captive a Union soldier named Drew Conrad. Ian is charged with being Drew's captor, responsible for keeping Drew alive so that the unit, including Ian's brutal uncle Sarge, can torment, torture, and humiliate him. Before long, the two men's innate animosity gives way to respect and friendship, and passion and love for one another.

Purgatory is a fascinating read, a novel rich with scenes of military combat, internal strife amidst the troops, harrowing and disturbing torture, and unbridled passion. But at the core of the novel is something that distinctly sets it apart from Mann's earlier tome, *Fog: Purgatory*, at its heart, a romance novel. And what a monumental romance novel it is. One cannot help getting swept up into the passion, intimacy, and love that Ian and Drew share. Theirs is a relationship that propels difficult choices, tests familial and military ties, and challenges the convictions and beliefs of a number of characters.

From beginning to end, *Purgatory* is rife with relentless tension, teeming with passion and romance, and laced with an array of both likable and loathsome characters. *Purgatory* is truly a compelling and interesting read. Bravo to Mann for a groundbreaking novel that blends historical facts and fictional characters in a touching romance between two men. --Edge New York

"Mann's writing combines elegance and earthiness in realistic passages that move the action along swiftly and dramatically. A professor at Virginia Tech, Mann has taught such courses as Appalachian folk culture, gay and lesbian literature and creative writing. His familiarity with Southern history and American lit color and enrich the narrative. Whether intended or not, the cast of characters recalls that of Melville's *Billy Budd*, with Drew the Billy-Christ martyr figure, George the repressed Claggart and Sarge an unreflecting Captain Vere. The novel's last page, in which the lovers try to imagine the future, calls to mind nothing less than Prior Walter's blessing in the final scene of Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*." ----Elliott Mackle for *Out in Print*

"Larry Townsend, Jack Fritscher and John Preston, S&M literary masters (and Masters) of yore, have a worthy heir. First with *Fog* and now with this Civil War-set second novel, Mann--a prolific contributor to erotica anthologies as well as a profoundly sensuous poet and an elegantly personal essayist--merges deliciously erotic and decidedly literary writing with whiplash precision. The premise: young Confederate soldier Ian Campbell, slight but wiry and hiding a hankering for man-love, is tasked by his spiteful squad-commanding uncle with guarding captured Yankee Drew Conrad, a Herculean hunk whose tortured fate--after he's been bound, gagged, whipped, bloodied and near-starved for Rebel soldier amusement--is to die. That the two young soldiers fall in love is a given. But the majesty of Mann's masterful storytelling is that he depicts their transformation--from dominant captor and submissive captive to a couple determined to realize their romantic destiny--with a sublime blend of accomplished research and intense S&M action. Elegant historical fiction meets orgasmic queer prose..." --Richard Labontte, *Pride Source*

About the Author

Lambda Literary award-winning author Jeff Mann has written many essays, poems, and short stories about his Appalachian heritage.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Leticia Hodges:

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