ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

HISTORICAL

God, Send Sunday
Jesse Jones
CreateSpace
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Five Stars (out of Five)

Born a slave, Shadrach Cobb grows up yearning to be free. Against the cotton plantation's rules, he secretly learns to read and write at the same time his master, Morris Pendrickton, teaches him the family shoe-making trade. Cobb learns that he was conceived when Morris raped his mother.

Barlow, his natural half-brother and the legitimate son of Pendrickton, becomes ever more envious of Shadrach's abilities. As the half-brothers mature, friendship turns to condescension and then hatred, as Barlow uses his devious imagination to torment and punish Shadrach. Barlow's sister, and Shadrach's half-sister, Laura Lee, offers Shadrach her love and support. She tries to understand the jealousy that rages in Barlow, but she cannot thwart his plans.

One day, while delivering shoes, Shadrach meets a white woman who tells him about Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad.

Shadrach meets Kancy at a neighboring plantation. They fall in love and marry. A short time later circumstances force them to plan their escape to freedom in the North. They seek help from the woman who told Shadrach about the Underground Railroad. As he achieves freedom and financial success, Shadrach must come to terms with his moral and religious values.

In a society where slaves are property, the author paints Morris Pendrickton as a decent man, who lacks the strength of character to go against his son or his Southern culture. Barlow plays on his father's natural greed and ambiguity about Shadrach. Morris's slaves pay the price. Jones gives the reader characters that cover a wide range of human values, emotions, and motivations. Both black and white characters display human strengths and weaknesses. The well-developed plot takes readers through a time of approaching change in American history.

The story places readers in a setting that is both familiar and unfamiliar. Jones's description of a slave's view of life on a plantation, a bigot's view of controlling slaves, a plantation owner's view of the financial advantages of slave labor, an abolitionist's view of the evils of slavery, and a Christian's view of God's will all lend to the credibility of the story.

Shadrach and Kancy must navigate their way through their time and place in human history.

Author Jesse Jones's work includes several fiction titles and a stage play. In *God, Send Sunday* he develops a character that learns life lessons as he experiences love, hate, bigotry, and betrayal.

This novel can be read on different levels. Whether it is viewed as a comment on slavery, the pre-Civil War era in America, or political structures in the North and the South, the real story is the human struggle between right and wrong, between good and evil.

Pat McGrath Avery