



## A Parchment of Leaves (Ballantine Reader's Circle)

By Silas House

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**A Parchment of Leaves (Ballantine Reader's Circle)** By Silas House

It is the early 1900s in rural Kentucky, and young Saul Sullivan is heading up to Redbud Camp to look for work. He is wary but unafraid of the Cherokee girl there whose beauty is said to cause the death of all men who see her. But the minute Saul lays eyes on Vine, he knows she is meant to be his wife. Vine's mother disapproves of the mixed marriage; Saul's mother, Esme, has always been ill at ease around the Cherokee people. But once Vine walks into God's Creek, Saul's mother and brother Aaron take to her immediately. It quickly becomes clear to Vine, though, that Aaron is obsessed with her. And when Saul leaves God's Creek for a year to work in another county, the wife he leaves behind will never be the same again. The violence that lies ahead for Vine, will not only test her spirit, but also her ability to forgive—both others and herself. . .

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## A Parchment of Leaves (Ballantine Reader's Circle) By Silas House Bibliography

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## Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

House offers a poignant, evocative look at the turmoil that plagues a rural Kentucky family during WWI in his solid second novel, which begins when Saul Sullivan takes a shine to a mysterious, beautiful Cherokee woman named Vine. Courtship quickly leads to marriage and a newborn girl named Birdie, but trouble surfaces when Saul's younger brother, Aaron, an unfocused dreamer who longs for a more fulfilling life than his country existence as a laborer, also becomes attracted to Vine. Aaron's opportunity to express his longings comes when Saul leaves to work at a logging camp, hoping to provide some luxuries for his family while supporting the war effort. Vine spurns Aaron's initial advances and manages to drive him away, but the younger brother returns with a young mixed-race bride from East Tennessee who looks exactly like Vine, and soon he is drinking heavily and exercising his formidable temper on his newly pregnant wife. Saul returns briefly to try to straighten out his brother but, when he departs, Aaron turns his attentions on Vine again, who shoots Aaron after he rapes her and goes after Birdie, then buries the body on top of a mountain near the family homestead. A slightly more original story line would have made this an exceptional novel, but House's lovely storytelling, graceful prose, strong characters and his feel for Southern rural life distinguish it. *Agent, ICM.* (Oct. 18) Forecast: Solid local sales are the bedrock on which this novel's success will rest, but strong reviews, a 15-city author tour and House's NPR connection (he is a frequent contributor) are certain to broaden House's audience.

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From Library Journal

In 1917 rural Kentucky, a young Cherokee woman named Vine, rumored to cast spells on unsuspecting men, falls in love with local Irishman Saul Sullivan, whom she eventually marries. This second novel by Appalachian writer House (*Clay's Quilt*) tells the story of Vine and Saul's tender relationship and the prejudice they face and eventually overcome. While Vine was not raised according to Cherokee customs, she is still aware of being seen as an outsider when she leaves her Cherokee community to be with her husband. People are drawn to her gentle and generous personality, however, and soon she forms enduring friendships with her hard-working mother-in-law, Esme, and feisty and independent midwife Serena. When World War I erupts and Saul temporarily takes a better-paying job far from home, Vine finds herself trying to ward off the unwanted advances of Saul's restless younger brother, Aaron, who declares his own love for Vine. A deep respect for the natural world and the enduring spirit of the human heart are what make this book worth reading and remembering. Recommended for all fiction collections.

*Maureen Neville, Trenton P.L., NJ*

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From [Booklist](#)

In the follow-up to his much-acclaimed debut, *Clay's Quilt* [BKL Mr 1 01], House returns to his Kentucky mountain setting. The year is 1917, and a beautiful Cherokee woman named Vine falls in love with and marries Irishman Saul Sullivan. She must relocate to God's Creek, leaving her people behind on Redbud Mountain, and she is deeply homesick. She keeps busy by building her new house and figuring out just what kind of man she has married. She meets Serena, a profane, raucous midwife, and gives birth to a fragile daughter she names Birdie. Vine is content until she realizes that her brother-in-law is obsessed with her; she tries to tell Saul but gets nowhere. When Saul takes work at a distant sawmill, Aaron grows bolder and becomes violent. Vine is not sure she will be able to save her marriage. This is a moving love story set against a stunningly beautiful background, and House seems to capture it all--the deep emotion, the love of land, the customs of mountain people--in quietly eloquent prose. *Joanne Wilkinson*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **William Hoover:**

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#### **George Hartzell:**

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#### **Robert Ross:**

Within this era which is the greater individual or who has ability in doing something more are more special than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you must do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to experience a look at some books. One of several books in the top checklist in your reading list is usually A Parchment of Leaves (Ballantine Reader's Circle). This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in growing to be precious person. By looking way up and review this publication you can get many advantages.

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