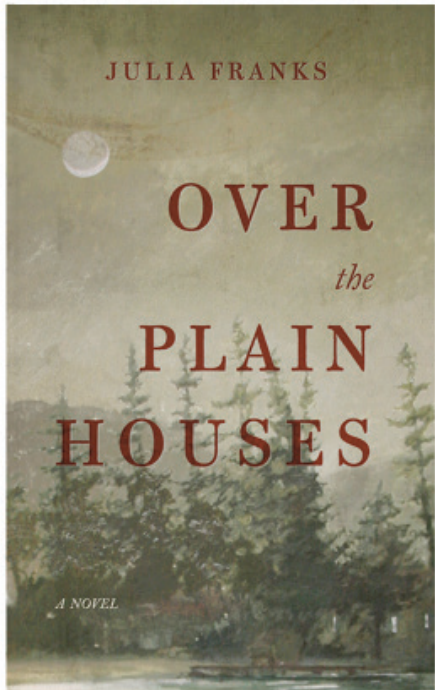


Over the Plain Houses

JULIA FRANKS



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We are a non-profit independent press in Spartanburg, SC that publishes well-crafted, high-quality works by new and established authors, with an emphasis on the Southern experience. We are committed to high-caliber novels, short stories, poetry, plays, memoir, and works emphasizing regional culture and history. We are particularly interested in books with a strong sense of place.

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IT'S 1939, AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT has sent USDA agent Virginia Furman into the North Carolina mountains to instruct families on modernizing their homes and farms. There she meets farm wife Irenie Lambey, who is immediately drawn to the lady agent's self-possession. Already, cracks are emerging in Irenie's fragile marriage to Brodis, an ex-logger turned fundamentalist preacher: she has taken to rambling through the woods at night to escape her husband's bed, storing strange keepsakes in a mountain crevice. To Brodis, these are all the signs that Irenie—tiptoeing through the dark in her billowing white nightshirt—is practicing black magic.

On one surreal night when Irenie slips back into bed with a kind of supernatural stealth, Brodis senses that a certain evil has entered his life, linked to the lady agent, or perhaps to ancient, more sinister forces.

Working in the stylistic terrain of Amy Greene and Bonnie Jo Campbell, this spellbinding debut by Julia Franks is the story of a woman intrigued by the possibility of change and escape—stalked by a Bible-haunted man who fears his government and stakes his integrity upon an older way of life. As Brodis chases his demons, he brings about a final act of violence that shakes the entire valley. *Over the Plain Houses* bares the myths and mysteries that modernity can't quite dispel.

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JULIA FRANKS has roots in the Appalachian Mountains and has spent years kayaking the rivers and creeks of Tennessee, North Carolina, and West Virginia. She lives in Atlanta, where she teaches literature and runs loosecanon.com, a web service that fosters free-choice reading in the classroom.

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