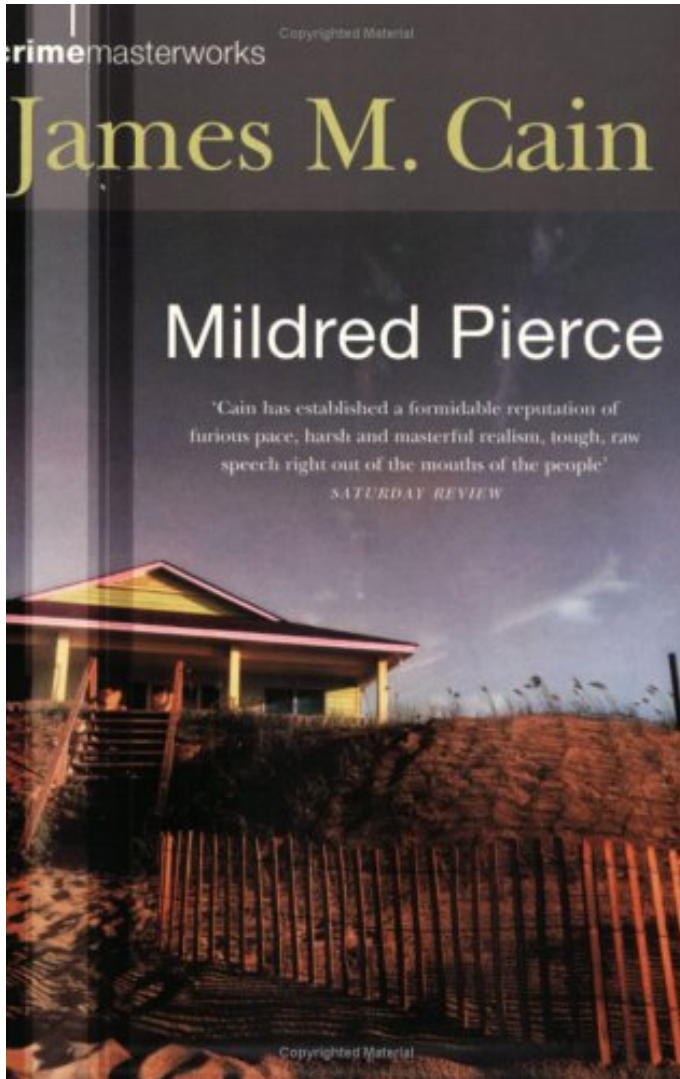


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**James M. Cain**

**Mildred Pierce**



Title: Mildred Pierce

Author: James M. Cain

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## Description

Mildred Pierce had gorgeous legs, a way with a skillet, and a bone-deep core of toughness. She used those attributes to survive a divorce and poverty and to claw her way out of the lower middle class. But Mildred also had two weaknesses: a yen for shiftless men, and an unreasoning devotion to a monstrous daughter.

Out of these elements, Cain creates a novel of acute social observation and devastating emotional violence, with a heroine whose ambitions and sufferings are never less than recognizable.

## Insightful reviews

C.C. Cole: Like many others, I saw the recent Kate Winslet mini-series “Mildred Pierce,” and finally saw the film starring Joan Crawford on Mother’s Day weekend, so I decided to read the book to further explore this story that deviates from many clichés of men, women, and children’s interpersonal relationships.

First, I like period stories that take in as a whole the economic effects, which is expected during the Great Depression. Mr. Cain not only explained it from the viewpoint of the lead character Mildred, but it was done well enough to dread opening the mailbox for the incoming bills. Such realism adds richness to the book and is applicable today.

Stories and marriage deviate as much as marriage itself. The relatively benign ending of Mildred’s first marriage isn’t typical, but some marriages do end without a love/hate firestorm of verbal abuse and/or worse. By the book’s end, the message rings clear that married couples sometimes find more in common with each other than anyone else they meet in the future.

The relationship of Mildred and her dreadfully snobby daughter Veda I found to be difficult to take in; I’ve never witnessed such in a child. But in fairness to the author, it’s a deviation away from a cliché that children always want to please their parents. That isn’t always the case; here the parent is desperately trying to get approval from her child. In a woman as smart and independent as Mildred a logical thinker would say she should throw that ungrateful kid out of the house; however, motherhood isn’t necessarily logical when it comes to love and protection of children.

Mildred’s taste in men appears to leave something to be desired, but again, she never appears to be looking for “perfect” love. She wants companionship and equality during a time when such is in rare quantity. While her marriage to her disloyal “boy-toy” Monty was a bad choice, nothing about his behavior before the end suggested that he would be anything else than what he turned out to be: A non-working, formerly wealthy man dependent on women as long as he remained entertaining to them. She never respected him and he resented it.

Last, but not least, is the character Mildred herself. While being smart, strong-willed, and unpretentious, she makes misjudgments and mistakes. The flaws in her character is what

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makes her seem all the more real to the reader. She's an inspiration for independent women and a cautionary reminder that even the most headstrong lady can fall to the oldest tricks that men do with women: The opposite sex and money.

"Mildred Pierce," is an excellent, entertaining read. It's an alternative look into the life of a woman whose struggle isn't raw emotion, abuse, or low self-esteem. Instead, it reveals a woman who rises out of hard financial times on her own terms and hits the stumps of life that she can call her own. Five stars!

James Thane: James M. Cain's [Double Indemnity](#) and [The Postman Always Rings Twice](#) have always been two of my favorite crime novels. While *Mildred Pierce* was turned into something of a crime story in the movie starring Joan Crawford, the book is the fairly straight-forward story of a California woman who struggles to make a life for herself and her daughter, Veda, during the years of the Great Depression.

As the book opens, Mildred throws her lazy, unfaithful husband out on his ear and become the single mother of two young daughters. Forced to fend for herself, she becomes a pie maker. She later takes a job as a waitress and through hard work and grim determination parlays the skills she learns on the job into owning her own restaurant. However, Veda, Mildred's elder daughter, has nothing but contempt for her mother's efforts and is embarrassed that her mother is so *declassé*.

Veda, who is most certainly the daughter from Hell, aspires to higher things and never stops to appreciate the sacrifices that her mother makes on her behalf. Nor does she apparently ever stop to wonder how she, her sister and their mother would survive save for Mildred's efforts that Veda so casually mocks. The amazing thing is that Mildred is totally enchanted by this ungrateful urchin and bends over backwards to please her. Mildred constantly ignores and forgives the hateful things that Veda says and sacrifices her entire life to pleasing the little snot until, in the end, a serious crisis results.

Cain has created here two of the most memorable characters in American fiction and has woven around them a gritty story of Mildred's struggle to survive and succeed, both in business and in her plaintive attempt to win her daughter's favor. I admire what he has done, but I can't say that I really enjoyed this book all that much. I simply could not identify or empathize with any of the characters, and my patience with *Mildred Pierce* ran out very early on. As terrible a thing as it is to say, were I *Mildred Pierce*, by the third or fourth chapter of this book, her darling Veda would have been in traction and I would have been in jail. But that, of course, would have made for a much shorter novel.

Sakura87: Mildred Pierce, ventotto anni ben portati, due bambine e un marito inetto e traditore, si ritrova sul lastrico quando decide di divorziare. Non è un buon momento per cedere all'amor proprio: la Grande Depressione proietta una lugubre ombra sull'economia americana, e né

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Glendale, tranquilla cittadina californiana, né la più popolosa Los Angeles, sembrano avere qualcosa da offrirle. Eppure, Mildred non può più sopportare di stare accanto a Bert, che la tradisce con una vedova dai seni ballonzolanti e non è in grado di trovarsi un lavoro da quando l'Anonima Pierce è fallita, ed eccola fare il suo ingresso in «quella grande istituzione americana che nessuno cita mai il 4 luglio: una vedova bianca con due bambine piccole da mantenere». Per continuare a provvedere a Ray, affettuosissima figlia minore, e a Veda, undicenne con manie narcisistiche e pretese di superiorità rispetto al gretto mondo borghese - ma proprio per questo straordinariamente ammirata e amata dalla madre -, Mildred è costretta a strisciare umilmente e a lungo davanti alle scrivanie dei centri di collocamento, sovraffollati di disoccupati molto più preparati di lei, e persino a compiacere Wally, ex collega di Bert, per ottenerne l'appoggio. Ridotta a esercitare il mestiere di cameriera, con grande vergogna e nascostamente a Veda per non perderne il rispetto, Mildred riesce a sbarcare il lunario dignitosamente sfruttando il suo unico talento, la pasticceria. Ben presto un progetto molto vivido si delinea all'orizzonte della giovane madre: aprire con le sue forze un ristorante per provvedere ai bisogni della famiglia.

Il romanzo di Cain, datato 1941, colpisce molto più per la vividezza dei personaggi che per la complessità della trama. Mildred è una protagonista straordinaria, e si rivela tale ancor più se si considera il periodo in cui è ambientato il romanzo e quello in cui è stato scritto.

Da giovane moglie di un ricco borghese mai costretta al lavoro, Mildred attraverserà varie fasi d'emancipazione fino a divenire la ricca proprietaria di una piccola catena di ristoranti. Bella, intelligente, di buona volontà e smaliziata, il suo punto debole è il cieco amore verso la demoniaca Veda, inizialmente bambina viziata e capricciosa, poi donna perversa, ipocrita e calcolatrice, pronta a tutto per raggiungere denaro, ammirazione e una posizione sociale, e mossa da odio e vendetta nei confronti di una madre che rappresenta tutto ciò che più detesta: la modestia e le fatiche della borghesia. La turbolenta subalternità di una protagonista altrimenti forte e indipendente nei confronti della figlia che, subdolamente o palesemente, la ferirà in ogni modo possibile, un amore morboso perfettamente consapevole della crudeltà del suo oggetto e masochisticamente recidivo nel suo errare coinvolgeranno senza scampo il lettore, costringendolo a leggere e a soffrire con la sfortunata Mildred.

Un dramma familiare imperdibile per i due emozionanti – nel bene o nel male - ritratti di donna che offre, per l'ambientazione americana perfettamente restituita, per lo stile di scrittura accurato e tuttavia essenziale.

Michela: "Mildred Pierce" © James McCain Perché ho comprato questo libro che pochissime persone hanno sentito nominare?Bè, è noto ormai quanto le copertine influenzino i miei acquisti compulsivi e così è andata anche questa volta: sono in libreria che giro con gli occhi fuori dalle orbite e scorrendo velocemente lo scaffale dedicato alla casa editrice Adelphi mi vedo Kate Winslet in uno sfondo verde smeraldo, leggo los angeles quarta di copertina che mi informa che questo libro è stato ripubblicato in line with l. a. prima volta dopo ben forty five anni, l'autore è James Mc Cain lo stesso de "Il postino suona sempre due volte" e che "la protagonista di questo libro è Mildred, l. a. cui figura spiccava in qualunque folla, in tutte le folle: ritratto di donna tenace, volitiva e intraprendente nella cupa the United States degli anni Trenta del XX Secolo "Ok, lo compro. Iniziando l. a. lettura mi ritrovo in America, all'epoca delle cassette tutte uguali con il giardino, e il rassicurante maritino che se ne torna a casa tutte le sere alle 18, posa los angeles valigetta ed il cappello e cube " Tesoro, sono a casa" ; arriva allora l. a. moglie che,

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tutta sorridente dopo aver passato l. a. giornata a sfornare dolci, focacce, frittelle e polpettoni vari, aver accudito los angeles prole ed essersi fatta l. a. piega ai capelli sempre perfetti, ha ancora il fiato di dire: "Bentornato amore, l. a. cena è in tavola". Cioè, ma anche no, grazie. Mildred è una donna così, ha 28 anni e los angeles sua vita è pressoché finita. Ma qualcosa cambia, ed è questo che los angeles rende una vera eroina in keeping with il suo periodo: si ribella advert un marito 'poco corretto', lo butta fuori di casa e, udite udite, inizia a lavorare. Da semplice casalinga inesperta diventa una feroce donna d'affari: abiti lussuosi, pellicce, auto, gioielli, feste, uomini... brava Mildred, adesso si che ci siamo. Qual è il personaggio che inevitabilmente le creerà problemi? L'ex marito? los angeles gelosia delle altre donne? Interessanti corteggiatori? No, sua figlia Veda, la creatura forse più demoniaca di tutta l. a. narrativa noir; Veda, come tutte le donne belle e intelligenti, assetate di potere e di denaro si creerà un piccolo esercito di adulatori pronti a tutto pur di accontentarla, ed attraverso le mosse di questi pedoni riuscirà a fare scacco matto alla regina Mildred. Le gioie della maternità penso io. Finale a parte, quello che ci appare in step with tutto il libro è los angeles figura specialty di questa donna battagliera che di fronte alla necessità si rimbecca le maniche e combatte in line with le proprie figlie e in keeping with los angeles propria dignità, scontrandosi con i pregiudizi e pettegolezzi di un periodo che a noi donne offriva ben poche possibilità, senza dimenticare mai los angeles propria femminilità. Quanta contemporaneità in tutto questo. Impariamo da Mildred, donne. PS: in line with chi fosse interessato esistono due versioni cinematografiche di questo libro, los angeles prima è del 1945 'Il romanzo di Mildred' che valse l'Oscar come protagonista a Joan Crawford e l. a. seconda è una interessante miniserie in cinque puntate, prodotta dalla BBC e che ha partecipato fuori concorso alla 68ª Mostra di Venezia. Mildred è interpretata dalla brava e bella Kate Winslet (da qui l. a. copertina del libro) ed è andata in onda su Sky Cinema 1 dal 14 ottobre 2011. Da vedere entrambe le versioni.

Kai Coates: I had a talk with a detective the day prior to this approximately gauging how sincere someone is being by way of how damaging their tale is to their very own character. And Mildred Pierce is sincere like that. now not in against the law experience (this relatives drama is a little a departure from Cain's different recognized noir gem stones - The Postman continually earrings two times and Double Indemnity), yet how Cain creates thoroughly discovered and generously wrong characters. there's honesty each inch of Mildred - from her thickening waistline to her company acumen. You root for her as a personality simply because she embodies the yankee dream - if you happen to work flat out you could succeed. What the yankee dream fails to say is if you're in any respect successful, there is a sturdy likelihood your children are going to be spoiled brats that the remainder of the area has to deal with. input Veda, one of many all-time maximum villains. there isn't a unmarried second within the booklet the place the reader will think, "Oh that Veda, she's no longer too bad" and yet, she's not often a one-dimensional sketch villain. Cain, even if he is not a truly sophisticated writer, does a very good activity of unveiling the surroundings and activities that create the immense Veda.

Barry Pierce: i might comprise this publication within the style i love to call, "Middle classification White girls Have a truly undesirable Time". different works during this style include, A Streetcar Named hope by means of Tennessee Williams and The Awakening via Kate Chopin. I appear to rather take pleasure in this style for a few reason. I got here to Mildred Pierce for 2 reasons, one) the Joan Crawford movie and two) glance that is my name! total I did take pleasure in this book. you definitely care concerning the characters, in particular Mildred, which i locate fairly

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rare. the connection among her and Veda is a mythical within the ebook because it is on film. i would certainly suggest this for enthusiasts of the movie and for brand spanking new readers of the story. it is a hard-boiled classic.

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