

DECEMBER 2012:

Far Alaska

A novel by Mason Smith

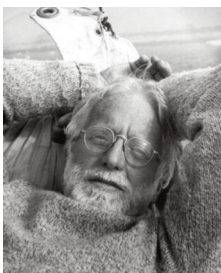
Mocked and ridiculed in his North Country home for being unable to change with the times, a stubborn, ignorant old man lights out for Alaska at 72, taking with him the daughter of a skinflint farmer he has worked for years back. Clarence knows little of women or of living with anybody or even of living in the present tense, nor does he really know where Alaska is. But he's given up self-respect and good conduct, he's on the road across Canada in a pickup truck with a fat and talkative person, determined to sin at last and going into a land he knows only in folk-ballad, the Wild West and Klondike confused. As Clarence and Hesther journey farther and farther toward far Alaska, their partnership blossoms. They astonish themselves (or at least Clarence) in bed. She proves to be a barrel-racer in disguise, a shaman and a mischief, game for anything, while Clarence pushes ahead, surprising them both as he expands with the territory. His long-imagined West comes alive with bank robbery, horse theft, Indians, grizzly bears, trouble in a saloon, gunfire and gold and moral choices. And, when they finally get there, one more gal than you're allowed back in the lower forty-eight.

Praise for Far Alaska

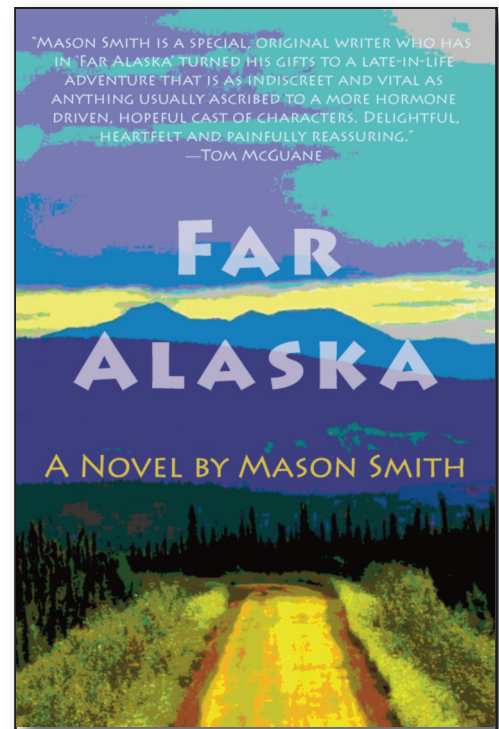
"Mason Smith is a special, original writer who has in 'Far Alaska' turned his gifts to a late-in-life adventure that is as indiscreet and vital as anything usually ascribed to a more hormone driven, hopeful cast of characters. Delightful, heartfelt and painfully reassuring."

—Tom McGuane

About the author



Mason Smith grew up in northern New York. He holds a master's degree in Creative Writing and a Ph.D. in English and American Literature from Stanford. His first novel, *Everybody Knows and Nobody Cares* (Knopf, 1971), was published while he was at Stanford and led to a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and two residencies at The MacDowell Colony. He has written extensively for *Sports Illustrated*, *Gray's Sporting Journal*, *WoodenBoat Magazine*, and *Adirondack Life*. He has taught at the University of California at Santa Cruz, Clarkson, and SUNY Potsdam. His real biography has always been daily work, working wives, homes, cars, boats, wood-piles and, above all, children. He has three sons from his first marriage, is now equally a writer and a boatbuilder, living in Long Lake with wife Hallie Bond and their daughter and son.



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