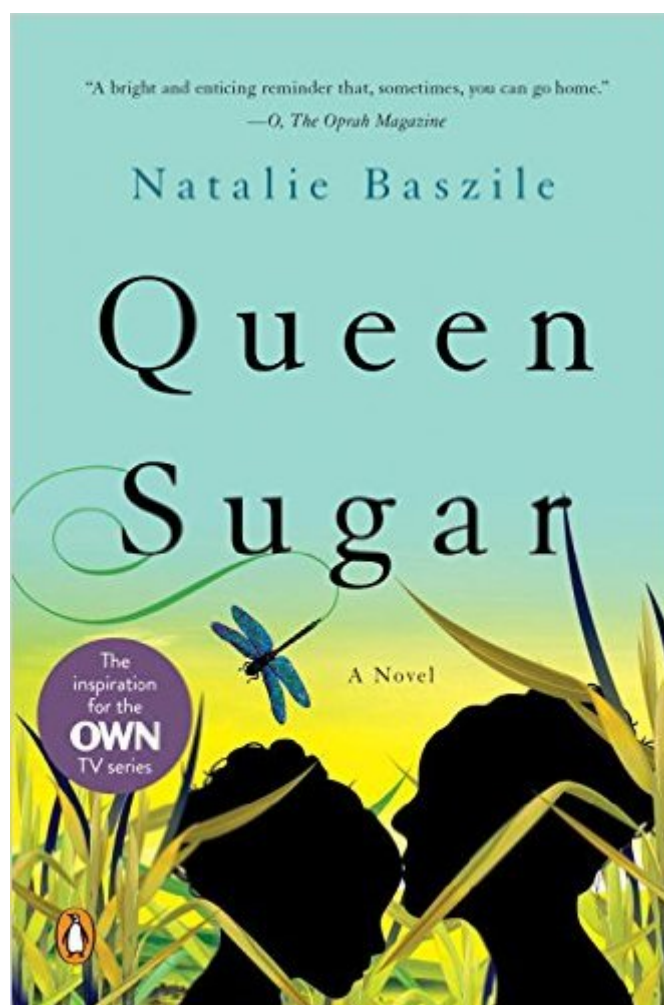


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# Queen Sugar: A Novel



## Synopsis

Smart and heartfelt and highly recommended. —Karen Joy Fowler, author of *The Jane Austen Book Club*

The inspiration for the highly anticipated 13-part TV series produced by Oprah Winfrey, directed by Ava DuVernay (*Selma*), and starring Rutina Wesley (*True Blood*) and Greg Vaughan, premiering September 6th on OWN. Readers, booksellers, and critics alike are embracing *Queen Sugar* and cheering for its heroine, Charley Bordelon, an African American woman and single mother struggling to build a new life amid the complexities of the contemporary South. When Charley unexpectedly inherits eight hundred acres of sugarcane land, she and her eleven-year-old daughter say goodbye to smoggy Los Angeles and head to Louisiana. She soon learns, however, that cane farming is always going to be a white man's business. As the sweltering summer unfolds, Charley struggles to balance the overwhelming challenges of a farm in decline with the demands of family and the startling desires of her own heart.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars — See all reviews (331 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #473 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #17 in Books > Literature & Fiction > African American > Women's Fiction #41 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Women's Fiction > Domestic Life #63 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Family Life

## Customer Reviews

When her father dies, Charley Bordelon is surprised to inherit an 800 acre sugarcane plantation in Louisiana. She knows nothing about raising sugarcane. Her father wasn't a farmer either, but he mortgaged everything he had to buy these 800 acres. Charley is a widow with a preteen daughter. She badly needs a fresh start and the only option is the sugarcane plantation. She settles in with her delightful grandmother, Miss Honey, and her other relatives. The one blot on the horizon is her half-brother. He has been in trouble most of his life; now he's back, and he resents that Charley got the whole inheritance. Learning the sugarcane business isn't easy, particularly since no one wants to

help her. Charley struggles against the odds and the desire to give up, but eventually finds help and a surprising romance. The unusual characters and the lovely setting make this book a delight to read. I enjoyed the descriptions of farm life, but they could be tedious to someone with no background in farming. I also found the plot rather slow even when Charley finds romance. She does a great deal of talking to herself about her troubles and it becomes repetitious. However, the setting and characters make it worth the read. I reviewed this book for Net Galley.

OK, so this is a first for me. I have never written a review before. I just finished the book and absolutely loved it! The story, the characters, the themes, the details and the descriptive imagery are all wonderful. I was thoroughly entertained and really did not want to put the book down. I read a lot and this book is by far my favorite in quite awhile. I'm recommending it to all my friends. I really can see the story as a movie as well. I have even fantasized about the actors and actresses who might be great in the character roles. I look forward to more stories from Natalie Baszile!

I read this atmospheric novel of the Louisiana sugar cane farmers life in one sitting. It was the perfect book to curl up with on a rainy day. I could not put it down. Wish it was another 300 pages!

The author allows us to see and feel the emotions that run through families during turbulent times. Many families have a Ralph Angel, just as we also have inheritances that are gifts and seeming curses all at the same time. Great writing!

I moved to New Iberia, Louisiana as a young bride. We built our home on Bayou Teche. The author writes about the sights, sounds and smells of the seasons. She writes how the sunlight is different in October from the summer. The story is wrapped around a mother and her daughter that grabbed my heart.

I thoroughly enjoyed this novel. A rich and relatable story filled with fragile hope in the face of, what appears to be an impossible task, true grit and very complicated relationships. A couple of loose ends left me wondering, like: the role of the natural healer (why? and what for?) and what became of "Miss Honey" once proven painfully wrong about Ralph Angel. These characters burn bright (in the case of the natural healer, for only half a page), then seem to extinguish without clear resolution. Others left me confused: Was "Hollywood" the product of in-breeding, thus his seeming "off"? And even in a fictional world amassing the kind of money capable of saving a farm by with one-man lawn

mowing operation seemed fantastic. Still, I cheered for the main character throughout, and connected with her struggles and pain. I think most people know or know of a "Charly" and "Ralp Angel."

The story is intriguing because it immerses you in a different place and introduces a host of characters and weaves an interesting tale but it's a slow read...a lot of build up (probably 90%) and then it resolves and it's over. I liked it while I was reading it but when it was over I felt underwhelmed like oh that was it?! Definitely well written and details well researched. It was different than most things I've read recently and includes many strong female characters which is a plus! I liked it more than I didn't but something in the end left me feeling ehhhh

I would not have chosen this book had it not been chosen by our book club. I read the complaints about the lack of development of the characters. I do not entirely agree with that. They were sufficiently developed to give the right "feel" to the story. And I continued to think about these characters long after I finished reading the book. For those not aware of the cane sugar on the mainland of the United States and the labor and hardships involved for a sugar farmer, particularly a black sugar farmer, this is a must-read. It is worth the time to read this book.

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