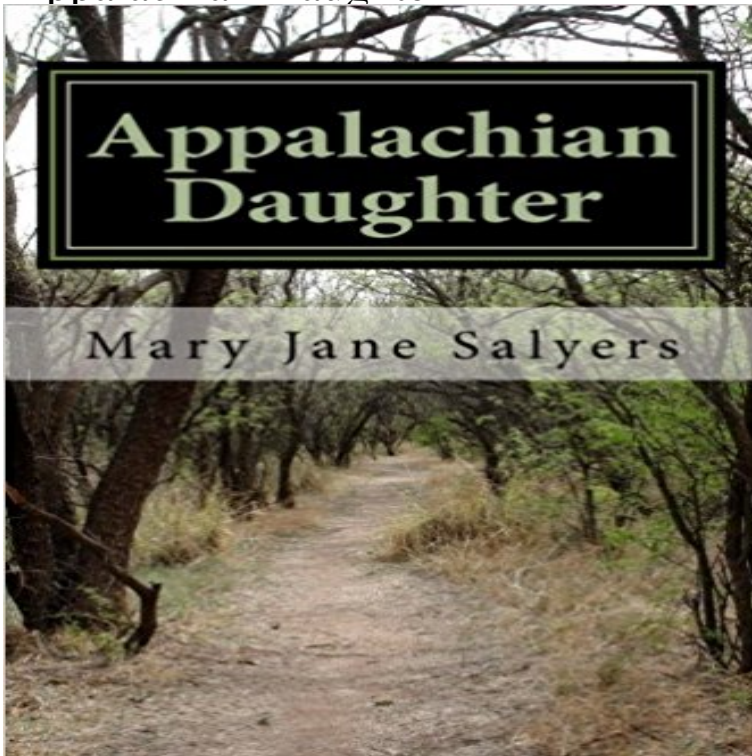


## Appalachian Daughter



Appalachian Daughter grabbed me Friday afternoon, and except for the time for sleeping and necessary duties, did not turn me loose until I finished it Saturday afternoon. Early Reader This coming-of-age novel depicts the trials, triumphs, and tragedies that befall Maggie Martin, the eldest of eight children whose family struggles to make ends meet on a hilly farm in Campbell Hollow, a narrow mountain valley in East Tennessee. On the last day of eighth grade, Maggie begins to dream of finding a way to escape the drudgery and confinement of life in the hollow and establish her independence. Her plan begins to fall in place when she enters high school and discovers she has a natural talent for excelling in shorthand, typing and other business classes. Meanwhile she spares no effort in helping her family continue to survive despite their poverty, a less than fertile few acres, and a family history of instability. She strives to fit in at high school in spite of the harsh limits placed on her by her hot-tempered, authoritarian mother, Corie Mae. She often turns for support to her easy-going father Ray, who sometimes intervenes to overrule Corie Maes restrictions. As she goes about her life, doing her school work and helping out at home, she interacts with interesting, unforgettable, and sometimes dangerous characters, including a mentally challenged neighbor, an escaped convict, and a lecherous employer. She is forced to make decisions and take actions that would be difficult for a much older adult. Maggie meets each challenge with determination, imagination, and courage whether its cutting a pitchfork from a mares tail or helping to deliver her baby sister. The typical spoken language, folkways, and traditional beliefs and religious practices are skillfully woven into this portrait of Appalachian family life. The authors sympathetic insights into mountain culture combined with memorably etched

characters and events create a realistic reflection of Tennessee mountain life during the decade following WWII. Maggie's life takes an unexpected turn when her cousin JD reveals a dark secret that could shatter the family. Maggie struggles to maintain her dreams of a better life amidst the many trials that will test the grit of this Appalachian Daughter. I absolutely loved the story! I really think that the thoughtful approach to the main characters' life situations will be meaningful to girls and boys who read the book. Early Reader

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