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## Review - Jean Hager's *Yellow-Flower Moon*

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Someone led out the mare while Jody stood and watched. He tried but his feet wouldn't move.

"This here, as most of you know was young Jody's mare. She is gentle as a kitten and most of you know her. What am I bid?"

Jody opened his mouth and no sound came out he tried to move again and nothing happened.

"Come on gentlemen, what will you give for this fine little mare? Give me a bid someone."

Suddenly McCaslin was beside him and Jody felt himself being hurled bodily to the center of the ring.

"Now!" McCaslin hissed.

Jody jammed his hand into his pocket and brought out the silver dollar. He choked and stumbled over his words and his voice sounded like someone else's.

"I bid one dollar!"

Jody held his dollar between his fingers and raised his hand as high as he could get it. He watched as Red rested his hand on his gun and glared at the crowd. Jody tried to do the same. When old Mr. Brooks started to raise his hand Jody thought he would faint, but he felt better when the man didn't bid.

"I have one dollar bid who will give fifty?"

Jody held his breath again and waited. Red stood beside him and glared.

"Gentlemen, one dollar is a ridiculous price for this fine mare. Now give me a bid."

Jody waited.

"All right. If that's the way you want it. I have one dollar once. One dollar twice. One dollar. . ."

"Wait just a moment!"

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Jody had never seen Pa so mad. He strode to the center of the ring and his voice was loud.

"Just a minute sheriff. Everybody can see what's going on here! My son and his gun-slinger friend are trying to intimidate this crowd."

Jody started to ease away and Pa grabbed him by the shoulder.

"I am an honest man and this is what it takes to settle my honest debts. Furthermore I am going to leave here with an honest son. Now! Anyone who wants to is to bid on that mare."

Pa turned and glared at Red.

"McCaslin, I'll deal with you later."

McCaslin moved out of the circle to the back of the crowd. Jody winced at the pain in his shoulder but Pa held him firmly. Jody knew his face was crimson as he listened to the sheriff start again.

"I have one dollar bid who will give more?"

Jody closed his eyes tight and waited for the next bid. The only sound he could hear was the sound of the mare behind him as she breathed and switched her tail. He squinched his eyes tighter and held his breath. When Jody couldn't stand it any longer he let out his breath and opened his eyes and he couldn't believe what he saw.

Not a man in the crowd was looking at or paying any attention to the sheriff. They were simply standing and talking as though no sale was going on.

Finally Jody heard the words.

"Sold! To Jody here for one dollar. She's your horse, Jody."

When everybody had gone Jody tied the mare to the back of the wagon and got on the seat with Pa and Ma. Red McCaslin came over and extended his hand to Pa.

"Melvin, I didn't mean no harm. I hope you know

that."

Jody watched as Pa shook hands with McCaslin.

"It's all right Red. I understand what you were trying to do."

Red paused and looked at Jody. "He's a lot like you was when you was a kid."

Red tipped his hat to Jody's Ma and mounted his horse, and walked him away from the wagon.

"Red! Red! Wait!" Jody called.

Jody waited till Red had crowded the big horse close to the side of the wagon.

"Red you never told me who was the fastest bravest man you ever saw! Tell me! Tell me now before we go!"

Jody waited while the man on the horse took off his hat and looked thoughtful. Red finally grinned and nodded toward Pa.

"Him." He said. Then he kicked his horse and rode away.

Jody felt Ma's gentle fingers under his chin closing his mouth as the team started.

## ...REVIEWS...

Jean Hager's *YELLOW-FLOWER MOON*

— Genell Smith Dellin

Jean Hager, the Pawnee ranch woman who teaches neophyte novelists in Tulsa and leads the pack in the sale of paperbacks, has been published as one of the first in Doubleday's new hardback ethnic youth series.

*YELLOW-FLOWER MOON* is a romantic novel with a strong ethnic flavor and a special interest to Oklahomans. It is set in and around Pawhuska and Tulsa with a background of Osage culture and customs.

Maria Hawk, an Osage girl who has just finished law school in the East, returns to her family's ranch. She finds her grandmother desperate for money and on the verge of losing the Hawk land to an arrogant, wealthy neighbor, Dominic Cloud.

Maria has distrusted Dominic since she was 15, and even though she is attracted to him and he to her, she distrusts him still because she knows how much he wants her land.

The intense feelings between these two proud people as they struggle to understand each other are drawn with sensitivity and passion. The descriptions of the land, too, are done lovingly in a way that communicates its strength and beauty to the reader.

This book, available from Doubleday for \$9.95, is one of Jean Hager's best.