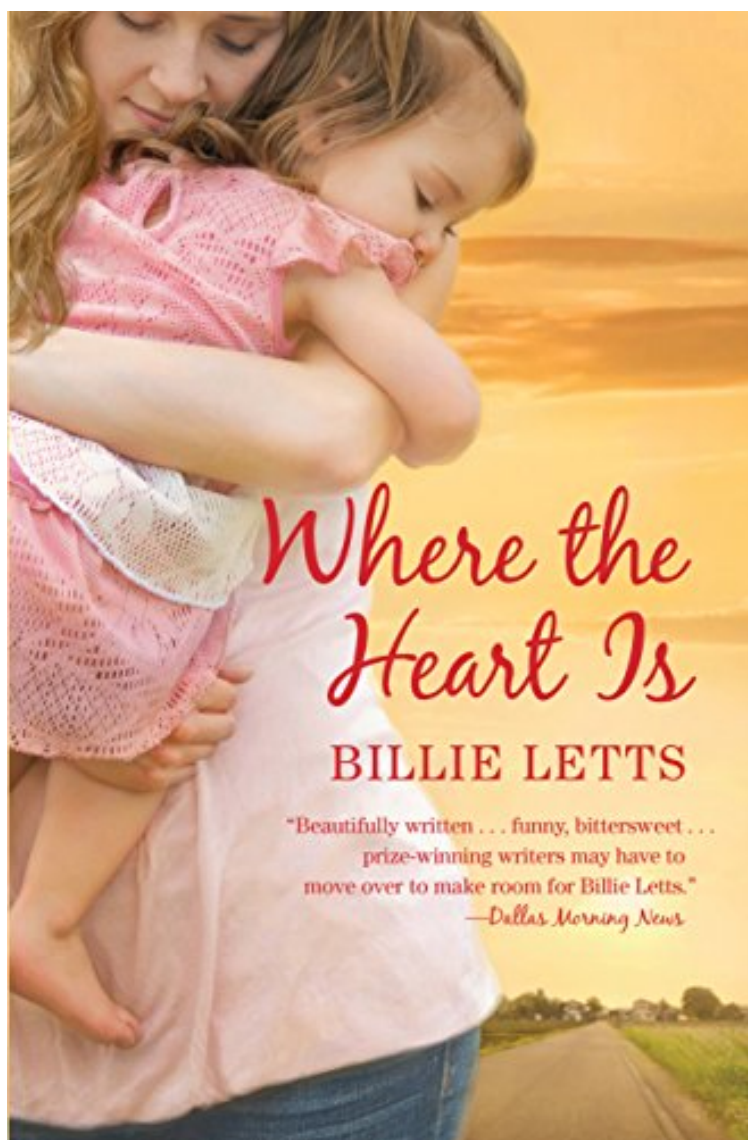


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Where the Heart Is (English Edition)



Par Billie Letts
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurTalk about unlucky sevens. An hour ago, seventeen-year-old, seven months pregnant Novalee Nation was heading for California with her boyfriend. Now she finds herself stranded at a Wal-Mart in Sequoyah, Oklahoma, with just \$7.77 in change. But Novalee is about to discover hidden treasures in this small Southwest town--a group of down-to-earth, deeply caring people willing to help a homeless, jobless girl living secretly in a Wal-Mart. From Bible-thumping blue-haired Sister Thelma Husband to eccentric librarian Forney Hull who loves Novalee more than she loves herself, they are about to take her--and you, too--on a moving, funny, and unforgettable journey to . . . Where the Heart Is..comOprah Book Club Selection, December 1998: A funny thing happens to Novalee Nation on her way to Bakersfield, California. Her ne'er-do-well boyfriend, Willie Jack Pickens, abandons her in an Oklahoma Wal-Mart and takes off on

his own, leaving her with just 10 dollars and the clothes on her back. Not that hard luck is anything new to Novalee, who is "seventeen, seven months pregnant, thirty-seven pounds overweight--and superstitious about sevens.... For most people, sevens were lucky. But not for her," Billie Letts writes. "She'd had a bad history with them, starting with her seventh birthday, the day Momma Nell ran away with a baseball umpire named Fred..." Still, finding herself alone and penniless in Sequoyah, Oklahoma is enough to make even someone as inured to ill fortune as Novalee want to give up and die. Fortunately, the Wal-Mart parking lot is the Sequoyah equivalent of a town square, and within hours Novalee has met three people who will change her life: Sister Thelma Husband, a kindly eccentric; Benny Goodluck, a young Native American boy; and Moses Whitecotton, an elderly African American photographer. For the next two months, Novalee surreptitiously makes her home in the Wal-Mart, sleeping there at night, exploring the town by day. When she goes into labor and delivers her baby there, however, Novalee learns that sometimes it's not so bad to depend on the kindness of strangers--especially if one of them happens to be Sam Walton, the superchain's founder. *Where the Heart Is* oddly mixes heart-warming vignettes and surprising, brutal violence. Novalee's story is juxtaposed with occasional chapters chronicling Willy Jack's downward spiral into prison, disappointment, and degradation. And even in Sequoyah, sudden storms, domestic violence, kidnapping, and deadly fires punctuate Novalee's progress from homeless, unwed teen mom to successful, happy member of the community. This is not a subtle book; there's never any doubt that our heroine will make a home for herself and her baby or that Willy Jack will get what he deserves for abandoning them. Still, Billie Letts has created several memorable characters, and there's always room for another novel that celebrates the life-affirming qualities of reading, the importance of education, and the power of love to change lives. --Alix Wilber

From Publishers Weekly Letts's debut novel concerns a pregnant teenage girl who finds a new life among the quirky inhabitants of a small town in Oklahoma. Copyright 1996 Reed Business Information, Inc.