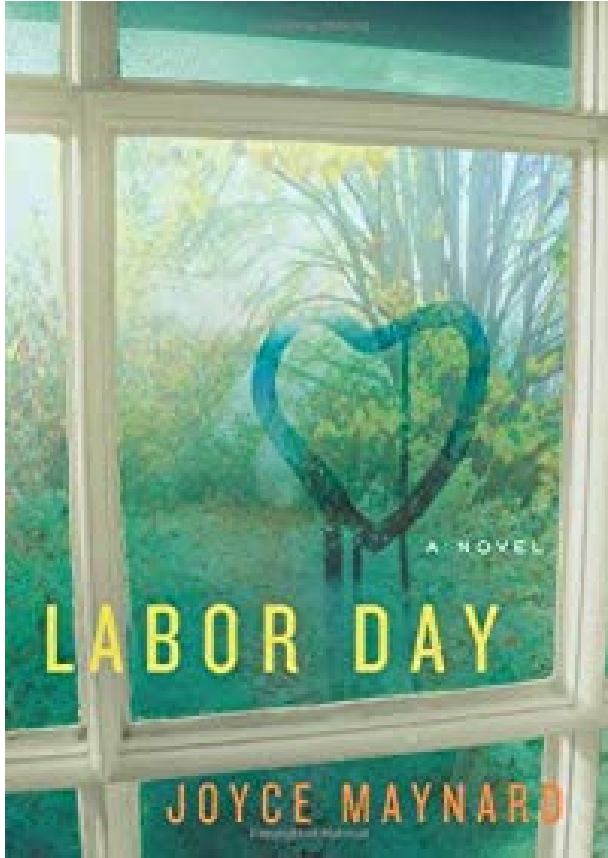


Labor Day



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With the end of summer closing in and a steamy Labor Day weekend looming in the town of Holton Mills, New Hampshire, thirteen-year-old Henry—lonely, friend, not too good at sports—spends most of his time watching television, reading, and daydreaming about the soft skin and budding bodies of his female classmates. For company Henry has his long-divorced mother, Adele—a onetime dancer whose summer project was to teach him how to foxtrot; his hamster, Joe; and awkward Saturday-night outings to Friendly's with his estranged father and new stepfamily.

As much as he tries, Henry knows that even with his jokes and his "Husband for a Day" coupon, he still can't make his emotionally fragile mother happy. Adele has a secret that makes it hard for her to leave their house, and seems to possess an irreparably broken heart. But all that changes on the Thursday before Labor Day, when a mysterious bleeding man named Frank approaches Henry and asks for a hand. Over the next five days, Henry will learn some of life's most valuable ones: how to throw a baseball, the secret to perfect piecrust, the breath pain of jealousy, the power of betrayal, and the importance of putting others—especially those we love—above ourselves. And the knowledge that real love is worth waiting for. In a manner evoking Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and Nick Hornby's *About a Boy*, acclaimed author Joyce Maynard weaves a beautiful, poignant tale of love, sex, adolescence, and devastating treachery as seen through the eyes of a young teenage boy—and the man he later becomes—looking back at an unexpected encounter that begins one single long, hot, life-altering weekend.