

THE GEOGRAPHY OF WOMEN

A Romantic Comedy



A Novel

JACK FRITSCHER

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THE GEOGRAPHY OF WOMEN

"Fritscher's Laydia Spain joins Rita Mae Brown's Molly and Dorothy Allison's Bone as one of the smartest, sassiest heroines in recent years."

—David Van Leer, reviewer for
The New Republic and *The Times Literary Supplement*

"The Jack Fritscher whose voice sounds so true telling spunky Laydia Spain O'Hara's exuberant story of self-discovery is, believe it or not, the same Jack Fritscher known in men's circles for his exuberantly pleasureable prose. That he's just as vibrant and vital a storyteller with a women's romantic comedy as with a man's romantic fantasy is a testament to his remarkable way with words. This good-natured romp through a more innocent time is as rife with honesty and life as *A Confederacy of Dunces*."

—Richard Labonté, *A Different Light Books*

"The power of Jack Fritscher's previous books, *Some Dance to Remember*, and *Mapplethorpe: Assault with a Deadly Camera*, derives from their intense focus on urban masculinity in the 1970's and 1980's. *The Geography of Women* charts an entirely different terrain: that of a young tomboy falling in love with a 'cinnamon girl' in a small Southern Illinois town in the 1950's. *The Geography of Women* is a fine book, an unexpected delight—funny and relaxed—and told in a style that is part Mark Twain, part William Faulkner, part Rita Mae Brown, and part Dorothy Allison. My favorite sentence is, 'My thigh-feelin made me feel like a cyclone about to touch down on a couple a trailer parks.' Fritscher loves his characters' quirks and humanity. This is a lively and surprising addition to the rich tradition of humor in Southern literature."

—Jim Marks, Publisher,
Lambda Book Report, Washington, D. C.

"This novel is Fritscher's best work...reminiscent of great Southern writers. A truly touching story about difference and goodness, and why it's sometimes good to be different."

—Edward Lucie-Smith, critic and author,
Race, Sex and Gender, London

"Back then I figgered from the way they put it, the cause a female trouble was husbands," says Laydia Spain, the narrator in *The Geography of Women*, and it's that consistent, vernacular mix of humor and smarts that gives Jack Fritscher's quick-footed new novel its considerable charm. I think that the many readers familiar with Fritscher's earlier novels will be especially impressed by the way in which, rather than repeat himself, this writer extends his reach."

—Stuart Dybek, Western Michigan University,
author of *The Coast of Chicago*, whose work appears in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, and the *Prize Stories O. Henry Awards*

"Wonderful storytelling! The writing is as vivid as a fast-talking screenplay with music. By page three, you hear the dialog and you see the movie."

—Armando Aguilar,
Thrust Magazine, Los Angeles

"Fritscher's women glow with warmth. You feel their desires, needs, love, and--in the writing--the very beat of their hearts."

—Mira Schwirtz,
critic whose review of Fritscher's work appears in
The San Francisco Review of Books, New York

By the author of *Some Dance to Remember*

"Classic!" —*The New Republic*

"Mythic!" —*The Advocate*

Also by Jack Fritscher

Fiction

Some Dance to Remember
What They Did to the Kid
Stand by Your Man
Rainbow County
Corporal in Charge
Titanic

Non-Fiction

Gay San Francisco: Eyewitness Drummer
Mapplethorpe: Assault With a Deadly Camera
Love and Death in Tennessee Williams
When Malory Met Author: Camelot
Television Today



“The human face is a limitless terrain that just pulls you right in. The geography of women is where nature itself takes course homeward bound, the long route or the short, the high road or the low.” —*The Geography of Women*

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**A Romantic Comedy
A Novel**

Jack Fritscher



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For author history and literary research:
www.JackFritscher.com

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For
the Irish storyteller,
my mother,
Virginia Claire Day-Fritscher,
a born seanachie

Epigraphs

“Once I Had a Secret Love”

—Doris Day,
Hollywood, 1957

“Love Me Tender”

—Elvis Presley,
Memphis, 1956

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