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Ritter, Josh. Bright's Passage

Henry Bright, a half-shattered young veteran of WWI, came home to rural West Virginia a changed man. With him comes the angel Bright first met in a church in France and whom Bright believes saved his life several times on the battlefield. The angel now speaks to Bright through his horse and Bright feels compelled to take its advice. The angel, foretelling the coming of the next King of Heaven, makes the young man elope with his childhood sweetheart, stealing her away from her family. When she, the most important thing in his life, dies in childbirth, Bright doesn't know what to do with himself. But once again, the angel steps in, telling him to burn down his cabin and head off in search of a new mother for his child, the future King of Heaven. Bright is pursued on this quest by his late wife's brutal, psychopathic father and brothers as well as by the hellish forest fire sparked off by his cabin.

Lyrical, layered, and complex, Ritter's debut novel is a moving examination of the traumas of war and a delicately limned portrait of a man attempting to move beyond his own past and find his way to a future. Beautiful and moving.

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