

TAKING AFTER MUDEAR

By

Tina McElroy Ansa

Forthcoming from DownSouth Press in Spring 2008

A sequel to the best-selling novel **UGLY WAYS**

Esther Mudear Lovejoy of Mulberry, Georgia is back!

Best-Selling author Tina McElroy Ansa returns with her signature ability to “tell a good, quirky story” and tell it “with humor, grace and great respect for the power of the particular” (*The New York Times Book Review*) with her new novel **TAKING AFTER MUDEAR**.

TAKING AFTER MUDEAR, Ansa’s fifth novel, is the superbly crafted sequel to her award-winning best-seller, **UGLY WAYS**. And it is the book fans have been waiting for. Jill McCorkle calls **UGLY WAYS**, “an absolute beauty...that crackles and sings with life.” And although, as **TAKING AFTER MUDEAR** opens, the matriarch of the Lovejoy family has been dead for months, she and Ansa’s newest novel again crackle and sing with life.

TAKING AFTER MUDEAR continues to follow the story of the three Lovejoy sisters and their mother Mudear, who is deceased but refuses to die, in the small Georgia town of Mulberry.

The baby of the family, Annie Ruth, -- pretty, unmarried and hugely pregnant with the first Lovejoy grandchild -- has moved back to Mulberry and is living with her big sister, Betty, a prosperous businesswoman. The middle girl, Emily, who claims she has taken a leave of absence from her job in Atlanta, has moved in, too, to help out and mostly raise the level of sibling tension and friction.

But just as the girls begin to think things have settled down for them, Mudear, their recently deceased, self-centered, self-focused mother, starts to make her presence felt again. And with the birth of Annie Ruth’s baby girl, the fragile Lovejoy family situation begins to totter even more.

With each piece of evidence that something otherworldly and strange is indeed still hanging around the Lovejoy household, the sisters suspect more and more that they are being haunted by their mother. With various “baby’s daddies” showing up and Lovejoys having signature meltdowns, things soon escalate into a full-blown supernatural Mulberry battle for the very life of the newborn child.

Indeed, Mudear has come back for that baby girl!! And the sisters have to discover if they are merely the Lovejoy “girls” (“Them girls still got some ugly ways about ‘em!” Mudear is fond of muttering.) or truly the Lovejoy women!!

The novel is about the joys, fears and responsibilities of taking control of our lives and of those who follow us. It is also full of the humor and quirkiness that the Boston Sunday Globe says makes Tina McElroy Ansa “stand out from the crowd.”

The author says, “I know my readers. They love the Lovejoy ‘girls’, Mudear and Mulberry and will be eager to read what they are all up to now. With a new and surprising voice added to the mix, **TAKING AFTER MUDEAR** will be a natural choice for book club, classroom, kitchen table and night club discussions now and years down the road. It is a novel that speaks to women, families and the issues and times in which we live. And again asks the question I always explore: What truly makes a mother?”

Tina McElroy Ansa’s previous novels -- **BABY OF THE FAMILY, UGLY WAYS, THE HAND I FAN WITH** and **YOU KNOW BETTER** -- have all made their place on best-seller lists (African-American Blackboard List and Novel of the Year), year-end reading lists (New York Times Notable Books of the Year), must-reading lists (25 Books Every Georgian Should Read), library recommendations (ALA Best Fiction) and awards rosters (NAACP Image Awards, Georgia Authors Series Awards).

Her novels are also taught in universities and colleges courses all over the country and are great favorites for book club discussions of readers of all ages and backgrounds.

And once again, nationally acclaimed artist Varnette P. Honeywood is creating the unique original collage for the cover of **TAKING AFTER MUDEAR** which will also be produced in full-color posters for promotional purposes.

For media inquiries or to schedule a book signing, reading or appearance, please contact Bernadette Adams Davis at publicity@downsouthpress.com or 407-928-2044. Tina McElroy Ansa’s tour schedule is available at www.downsouthpress.com.