



Willie & Joe: Back Home

Bill Mauldin

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WWII's most famous soldiers, Willie and Joe, battle civilian life upon their return home in this sequel.

In the summer of 1945, a great tide of battered soldiers began flowing back to the United States from around the globe. Though victorious, these exhausted men were nevertheless too grief-stricken over the loss of comrades, too guilt-ridden that they had survived, and too numbed by trauma to share in the country's euphoria. Most never saw a ticker-tape parade, or stole a Times Square kiss. All they wanted was to settle back into quiet workaday lives without fear. How tragic that the forces unleashed by World War II made this simple wish impossible.

Willie & Joe: Back Home brilliantly chronicles the struggles and disillusionments of these early postwar years and, in doing so, tells Bill Mauldin's own extraordinary story of his journey home to a wife he barely knew and a son he had only seen in pictures. The drawings capture the texture and feel, the warp and woof, of this confusing time: the ubiquitous hats and cigarettes, the domestic rums, the rising fear of another war, and new conflicts over Civil Rights, civil liberties, and free speech. This second volume of Fantagraphics' series reprinting Mauldin's greatest work identifies and restores the dozens of cartoons censored by Mauldin's syndicate for their attacks on racial segregation and McCarthy-style "witch hunts." Mauldin pleaded with his syndicate to let him out of his contract so that he could return to the simple quiet life so desired by Willie & Joe. The syndicate refused, so Mauldin did battle, as always, through pen and ink. 288 pages of black-and-white cartoons

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