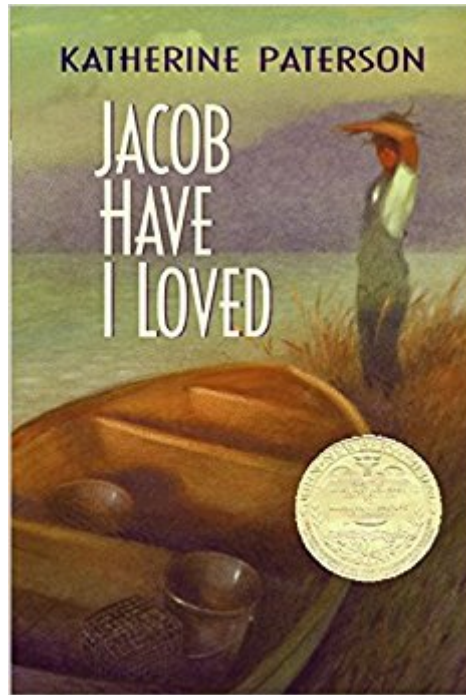


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# Jacob Have I Loved



## Synopsis

The remarkable Newbery-winning classic about a painful sibling rivalry, and one sister's struggle to make her own way. Sara Louise Bradshaw is sick and tired of her beautiful twin Caroline. Ever since they were born, Caroline has been the pretty one, the talented one, the better sister. Even now, Caroline seems to take everything: Louise's friends, their parents' love, her dreams for the future. For once in her life, Louise wants to be the special one. But in order to do that, she must first figure out who she is . . . and find a way to make a place for herself outside her sister's shadow.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (291 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

I thought this was a very good book, which dealt with sibling rivalry very well. I won't summarize the plot, because that's been done already, but it really delves deep into Louise's feelings. One of the main strengths of the book was that Caroline was not a bad person, she was actually very sweet and smart and gifted. It made me wonder, if these people were real, and I had met them, if I would have also chosen Caroline over Louise. That was one of the strengths of the book. It would have been so easy for the author to just demonize Caroline, and she didn't. Also, I don't understand why everyone finds Louise's crush on 70 year old Hiram revolting. There were very few men on the island, and the only two who actually cared for her were Hiram, Call and her father. Looking at it that way, it's not surprising that she chose Hiram. I found this book a very compelling read, that explores emotion- hatred between siblings- that our society doesn't really allow children to feel. That it did it so eloquently only made the point stronger. This was a great book, and it's totally appropriate for

children, because the eleven year old child you're trying to protect might actually be experiencing this issue themselves, and thinking it's abnormal. This was a very good book.

*Jacob Have I Loved* is an excellent children's story that is loosely based on the biblical account of Jacob and Esau. It is about the turbulent relationship between a pair of twin sisters. Louise, who is the narrator and the character of Esau, is unable to recognize her own talents because she is constantly comparing herself to her beautiful and gifted sister Caroline. Katherine Paterson's book is well written and very understandable. One of its main strengths is that it is written from Louise's perspective. Because Louise is the narrator, the reader is better able to understand why she is so jealous of Caroline. Another strength is that Paterson explores other relationships in Louise's life besides just the one between her and Caroline. The story focuses on how the sisters' parents, grandmother, friends, and neighbors react to Caroline and her sister. These other relationships affect the way Louise views herself and her sister as much as what Caroline says and does. Every child should read *Jacob Have I Loved*, especially those who resent their siblings because they think their sisters or brothers are smarter, more attractive or more talented than they are. The story will allow children in that situation to empathize with Louise and better understand that they have talents that they may have not yet recognized. Paterson's book was intended for children, but it would be a good book for parents and teachers to read also. It will help adults to understand children who may have not yet reached their full potential and are jealous of those who have.

I highly recommend this novel. It deals with difficult, but very real and raw emotions between siblings. The author Katherine Paterson is one of the best story tellers that young people of this generation can read and understand. The story has everything! A tale of family relationships, and rivalry between twins, set in the 1940's era in the Chesapeake Bay. I enjoyed this book for its dramatic intensity, fullness of the characterizations, believability, and honest dealing with many teen issues. Also, it took place in a locale that we don't usually read about. I will never forget these characters. Paterson is a wonderful writer. I read this book to catch up on children's lit for the age group I will be teaching this coming school year. Fifth graders on up should really read this book. They will certainly come away enriched. I discovered Paterson after reading her riveting "*Bridge to Terabithia*", another must read.

"*Jacob Have I Loved*" takes place in the 1940s on a tiny island in the Chesapeake Bay called Rass Island. Sara Louise "Wheeze" Bradshaw is the young teen who narrates the story. She's forever

feeling inferior next to her beautiful, talented twin sister, Caroline. And she's conflicted by her "sinful" feelings for the 70+ year-old stranger, Hiram "the Captain" Wallace, who's returned to his hometown half a century later. Without anyone to confide in (even her one and only friend, McCall "Call" Purnell, doesn't understand her), Louise feels as isolated as the island she lives on. Her fate seems to be filled with misery and loneliness compared to her sister's, especially after her religious grandmother spitefully recites a passage from the Bible: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated". (Jacob and Esau were twins like Louise and Caroline--and like Esau, Louise was the least favorite twin.) I had a hard time starting this book. The beginning was a little rough, but once I started it, I couldn't put it down. I read half the book in one sitting, until I reached the part where Louise, Cal, and the Captain were preparing to drown more than a dozen cats--which were pets, by the way, not just strays. I was totally turned off by this, but when I read further, the cats were spared and adopted by various families on the island. (Ironically, a storm later wiped a lot of them out.) The book won the Newbery Medal in 1981 and was later made into a TV movie in 1989. I never saw the movie, but I would definitely recommend this book to 13+ year-old girls who can relate to Louise and/or love the East Coast, particularly the Chesapeake Bay area.

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