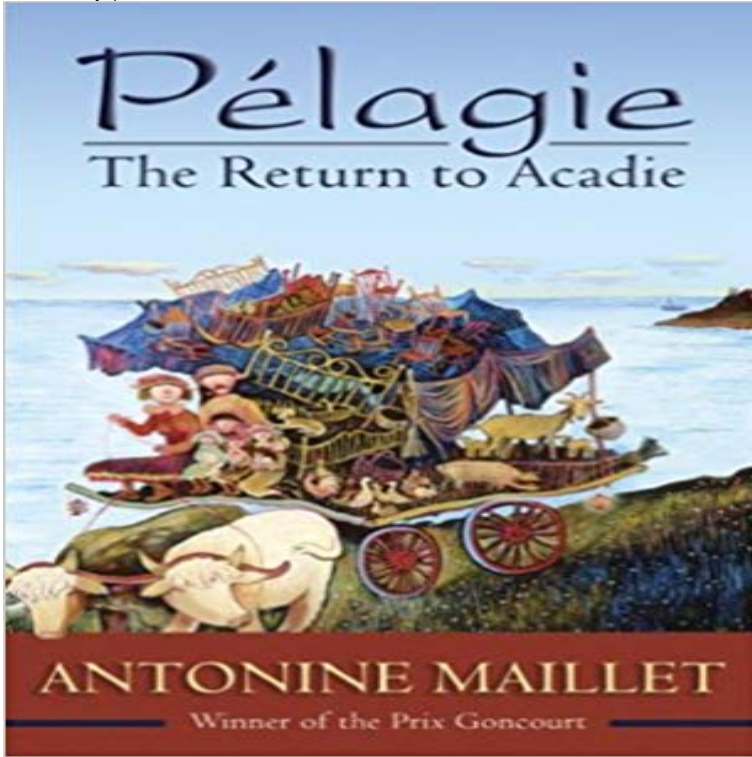


Pelagie: The Return to Acadie



In 1979, the legendary Acadian novelist Antonine Maillet won France's most coveted literary award, the Prix Goncourt, for the original version of this novel, *Pelagie-la-Charette*. In her acceptance speech, she said, I have avenged my ancestors. Goose Lane Editions is proud to re-issue this classic of Acadian literature to mark the 400th anniversary of the founding of Acadie and the debut of the novel's musical adaptation, *Pelagie: An Acadian Odyssey*. Directed by Michael Shamata, the musical brings together the words and lyrics of Vincent de Tournonnet and music by Allen Cole. It will be presented at the Atlantic Theatre Festival in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, from July 27 to August 22, following successful runs at CanStages Bluma Appel Theatre in Toronto and The National Arts Centre in Ottawa. This funny, lyrical account of a daring Acadian widow's journey home from exile is the Mother Courage of Acadian literature. At thirty-five, Pelagie is a survivor of the Great Disruption of 1755, when British soldiers deported Acadians who had farmed along the Bay of Fundy for generations. Splitting up families, the soldiers tossed men, women, and children pell-mell into ships and dispatched them to ports all along the eastern seaboard of the US and to Louisiana. When it was heard years later that the British would tolerate their return to Acadie, thousands loaded possessions and children onto handcarts and set out on foot. After fifteen years of working as a slave in the cotton fields of Georgia, Pelagie, too, has had enough. Drawn home as if by a magnet, inspired by her love of her family and of Beausoleil, a heroic sea captain, and determined to outrace the Wagon of Death, Pelagie sets off to take her people on a 3,000-mile trek back to their homeland. Her single cart, pulled by six oxen, soon attracts scattered Cormiers and LeBlancs, Landrys and Poiriers, Maillets and Legers. Together,

this caravan of colourful Acadians undertakes a ten-year journey up the Atlantic coast to their childhood homes.

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