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Blizzard: A Story Of Dakota Territory



Synopsis

A homesteading farmer, his pregnant wife, their daughter, and the grandmother wake to a beautiful winter morning on the prairie. And then it descends upon them - the infamous Children's Blizzard of 1888. Who will survive? With characters from Rosette: A Novel of Pioneer Michigan, "Blizzard: A Story of Dakota Territory" captures in one sod shanty the dramatic effects of a storm on the bodies and spirits of people who have internal storms of their own. Cover painting and design by Betsy Marsch, illustrator and cover designer for Rosette: A Novel of Pioneer Michigan.

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Customer Reviews

"Blizzard" is a short story that Cindy Rinaman Marsch recommended I read before 'Rosette'. It takes place in 1888 on one fateful day in Dakota Territory during The Children's Blizzard. Rosette, her son DeWitt, his pregnant wife, and their young daughter are caught in the storm with nothing but a shack and their own wits to survive. I read this story as part of my #yearofindiewomen. I was contacted by the author about this story for an honest review, and I downloaded the story for free during a free Kindle promotion. Before I read this, I had never heard of

The Children's Blizzard (also called the Schoolhouse Blizzard). (I will admit, I am not a well versed in history, as shameful as that is.) If you haven't heard of it either, here's a brief explanation from Wikipedia: The "Schoolhouse Blizzard, also known as the Schoolchildren's Blizzard, School Children's Blizzard,[1] or Children's Blizzard",[2] hit the U.S. plains states on January 12, 1888. The blizzard came unexpectedly on a relatively warm day, and many people were caught unaware, including children in one-room schoolhouses. () The blizzard was preceded by a snowstorm on January 5 and 6, which dropped powdery snow on the northern and central plains, and was followed by an outbreak of brutally cold temperatures from January 7 to 11. The weather prediction for the day was issued by the Weather Bureau, which at the time was managed by Adolphus Greely; it said: "A cold wave is indicated for Dakota and Nebraska tonight and tomorrow; the snow will drift heavily today and tomorrow in Dakota, Nebraska, Minnesota and Wisconsin." [1] () What made the storm so deadly was the timing (during work and school hours), the suddenness, and the brief spell of warmer weather that preceded it.

I have received an advance reader copy for the purpose of writing an honest review. I gave this book 5 stars and would highly recommend it to others. I love the writing style of Cindy Rinaman Marsch. First, she pays careful attention to actual historical facts, and second, she writes her stories from the perspective of real people who actually lived, attempting to remain true to their characters, even contacting relatives to determine the authenticity of the characters. Though this story takes place in just a few days, you are drawn into the story in the very first sentence. "Rosette Churchill stirred out of sleep in the dark morning as her son DeWitt tossed a lump of coal into the stove and clanked the door closed with the poker." Having read the book, "Rosette," I was already familiar with Rosette and DeWitt. This sentence took me right into the shanty with Rosette where I felt the darkness and the cold and understood her reluctance to get out of bed. One cannot read a story like this without being incredibly thankful for the real sacrifice people made to settle in our western states. Nothing was easy about their lives, from the financial sacrifices to the physical sacrifices they made. The suddenness of this blizzard was hard to imagine. In our day of advanced weather warnings, it is not easy to put ourselves in the circumstances of the characters and understand the severity of the struggles they endured. I will not spoil the story "you must read it for yourself" to find out what happens to Rosette, Floy, DeWitt, and Lillie. We experience the blizzard first hand as Rosette endures the storm with her granddaughter, Floy. What I most appreciate about the author's story is its readability.

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