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The Last Sister: A Novel (Young Palmetto Books)



Synopsis

Set during the Anglo-Cherokee War (1758-61), *The Last Sister*, by Courtney McKinney-Whitaker, traces a young woman's journey through grief, vengeance, guilt, and love in the unpredictable world of the early American frontier. After a band of fellow settlers fakes a Cherokee raid to conceal their murder of her family, seventeen-year-old Catriona "Catie" Blair embarks on a quest to report the crime and bring the murderers to justice, while desperately seeking to regain her own sense of safety. This journey leads Catie across rural South Carolina and through Cherokee territory--where she encounters wild animals, physical injury, privation, British and Cherokee leaders, and an unexpected romance with a young lieutenant from a Scottish Highland regiment--on her path to a new life as she strives to overcome personal tragedy. The Anglo-Cherokee War erupted out of tensions between British American settlers and the Cherokee peoples, who had been allies during the early years of the French and Indian War. In 1759 South Carolina governor William Henry Lyttelton declared war on the Cherokee nation partly in retaliation for what he perceived as unprovoked attacks on backcountry settlements. Catie's story challenges many common notions about early America. It also presents the Cherokee as a sovereign and powerful nation whose alliance was important to Britain and addresses the complex issues of race, class, and ethnicity that united and divided the British, the Cherokee, the Scottish highlanders, and the Scottish lowlanders, while it incorporates issues of power that led to increased violence toward women on the early American frontier.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is absolutely engaging. I was sucked by word one. The author has a real gift for keeping her readers on the edge of their seats with her suspenseful writing with the occasional down time to heal and recuperate. Courtney balances her story between the two wonderfully so the reader isn't bored with downtime or overwhelmed with constant action. The story itself and the characters are amazing as well. I felt engaged by Catie's struggle for survival in the cold mountains of Appalachia, her fight for justice for her family's murder, and her finding love in the most unexpected of places. The author draws on real historical facts and figures to create one girl's struggle against the elements, men bent on war, and to understand her place in the grander scale of historical events she finds herself smack in the middle of. All the author's characters are fascinating. From the minor like Susannah Emory trying to live between two worlds to the major like Lt Malcolm Craig struggling to overcome a horrific past and find love again with this stranger of a girl he rescues. Yet, I really do feel that the show was stolen by Catie. She's such a strong character, full of passion for life that she fights so hard to keep, filled with the fire of justice that she's struggling to bring for her family, and with such a strong will that she's able to overcome some pretty dang strong obstacles. Courtney does an admirable job in bring all her characters to life, and she succeeds in spades. I also have to commend the author on her historical research, not all that surprising however since she does hold a college degree in it. There are many nuggets of information hidden in this whopper of a tale that will make the historical enthusiast in anyone happy as a pig in mud (call me Ms Piggy!).

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