



Down From the Mountain

Courtney Allen

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Down from the Mountain is an historical fiction of a struggling Appalachian family, working and living in a hand-to-mouth existence on hard and unforgiving land. In the beginning, Troy Stanton's young niece, Clara, becomes pregnant, and there is much contention as to the father and how to manage the circumstances. When the pregnant Clara suddenly vanishes, Troy is mired in indecision and finds few answers with no one to turn to. The Stantons suspect foul play from someone inside the small town, but Clara's brother, Silas, discovers the secret and must bury it from the eyes of the community for the truth is never to be told.

From the greatest desires comes the most bitter hatred, and the Stantons must stand their ground in order to survive in a world fraught with unjust grievances and black-hearted adversaries. The story is built as Clara embarks on a treacherous journey and brother Silas copes with living on the mountain, ultimately defending his own life, while Troy goes in search of his niece after she mysteriously disappears from their mountain home. Along the way, Clara's fatherless, unborn child is in peril as Clara undertakes the dangerous road to another life and onto her final destination, one that she never intended arriving at in the first place. Involving matters in the region, the Stantons are faced with generational hatreds that refuse to die and negotiating their lives in the highlands of Appalachia becomes increasingly difficult. They are paired with many challenges and dilemmas of moral choices, life decisions, compromising situations, danger, distrust and honor. Life in the mountains is hard and keeping his family name is first and foremost to Troy Stanton.

This story is an intriguing journey of love and struggle, even murder and death, between the will to move their lives onward and the desire to become a family once again. Turn the cover to find the opening pages compelling, the heart of the book strong, and the ending satisfying yet bittersweet. Down from the Mountain is a tasteful debut novel that will fill you with wonder, entice your soul, and leave you wanting more.

Down From the Mountain Details

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Author : Courtney Allen

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From Reader Review Down From the Mountain for online ebook

Barbara says

The author generously sent me a copy of this book and I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it. Thank you very much Mr. Allen. I certainly appreciate the gesture.

Having lived on a farm until I was six years old, I could identify with the characters in the book, especially Silas. I was aware of how hard a farmer works to barely get by. Silas is such an endearing young man that you find yourself pulling for him all through the story. His sister Clara has a great deal to overcome. I won't go into details because it might spoil the book to know her trials and tribulations ahead of time.

I found it hard to believe that this was the first novel published by Courtney Allen. He has such a way with words and makes you feel as if you were right there through every happening. I certainly hope he publishes more of his books. His characters actually "come alive" on the page - some you like and some you don't, but there are no wasted passages.

I highly recommend this read. You won't be disappointed I promise you.

Jill says

At a time when the buzz has reached a crescendo around the prequel to *To Kill A Mockingbird*, Courtney Allen steps up to center stage with a book that beautifully incorporates some of the classic's elements: a coming-of-age story, early racism, even a courthouse trial.

But make no mistake, *Down From The Mountain* is an original work, and the similarities are far fewer than the differences. Courtney Allen channels the voice of a rural young man named Silas McCarter, whose southern-Georgia Appalachian family is scraping by in the late nineteenth century...and then his pregnant sister Clara vanishes.

And, as they say, the plot thickens. Who is the father of Clara's child? Is there foul play? What happens when you are forced to make harsh choices for mere survival? And how much can a down-and-out family bear?

Courtney Allen deftly hits all the hot buttons of a good hybrid thriller and historical narrative in his plotting: greed and betrayal, shocking violence, close-minded people, irrational family feuds, (think: Hatfields and McCoys) rural culture, and ultimately, what a sense of home really means.

His characters – Silas and Clara, orphaned early in life, and Uncle Troy and Aunt Bly, the family members who have served as their protectors – are satisfyingly real. For the audience it's targeted to – those who enjoy harsh-reality turn-of-the-century coming-of-age stories – the rewards are ample. The reader can anticipate being transported to the rural countryside and a time when life was both simpler and far more complex.

Disclosure: I was provided with a free copy of *Down from the Mountain* from the author – whom I have never met -- encouraging me to write an honest review. I am rarely receptive to these overtures, but the author's strong belief in his book (at a time when mainstream publishing has become big business) won me over. Fine writers like Courtney Allen, who obviously have the talent and the vision to create compelling

stories, need their advocates too. This debut novel will have readers avidly turning pages to get to its poignant and gratifying conclusion.

Vanessa says

Down From the Mountain hearkens back to great works of fiction from times gone past. Courtney Allen did a splendid job capturing the emotion and voice of a young boy growing up in rural Georgia during the turn of the 20th Century. This novel details the lives of young Silas and Clara McCarter who were taken in by their aunt and uncle, Bly and Troy Stanton, following their parents' deaths. Allen follows their daily lives working a farm in Appalachian Georgia and captures the ambitions of both siblings: their hopes to move beyond their lives on the farm and onto brighter, more liberating futures that they carve in the world themselves.

Courtney Allen showed his talent at recreating the lives of farmers in the South during the early 1900s, from his accounts of life on the farm to the details of increasing automation and industrialization in cities like Atlanta and Dalton. I thoroughly enjoyed reading of the lives of Silas and Clara McCarter, anticipating how their stories would pan out. The book is filled with deceit, murder, love, despair, and hope and is a work that historical fiction fans can eagerly dive into.

I was provided a free copy of the book from the author asking that I read and write an honest review; much thanks to Courtney Allen for the free copy.

Michelle says

This historical debut novel "Down From The Mountain" authored by award winning author Courtney Allen is a gripping engaging story of fierce family and community loyalty, misguided and misunderstandings that ultimately lead to greed, betrayal, treachery, and murder. The story takes place in Fort Mountain, a rural Appalachian farming community near the majestic Blue Ridge Mountains.

A boyhood coming-of-age narration told by Silas McCarter, adopted by his childless aunt and uncle Troy and Bly Stanton, poor homestead farmers. The illegitimate pregnancy of his sister Clara brought enough shame and distress to the Stanton's, especially when they realized she intended to marry the father of her child, a young black man. At the turn of the 19th century this was socially unacceptable; Clara suddenly vanished before the birth of her baby. Bly was heartbroken, as Troy began the search for his missing niece.

Silas hearing the only the bits and pieces of stories relating to his parents death, and theft of his family land allegedly through swindling. There was a vicious feud between his proud uncle Troy and a neighboring merchant and his family. Silas is forced into early manhood in a single shocking violent incident that shouldn't have ever happened. Later on, he was kidnapped, who would leave this boy to die in the harshness of the coming winter in an abandoned barn, and why? There are many twists and turns as readers gain a better understanding of rural Appalachian customs, culture, ways of life in this exciting unforgettable novel. Many thanks and much appreciation to Courtney Allen for the copy of this book for review, and for his sponsorship of the First Reads Giveaways:)

Temple says

Down From the Mountain is one of those books with a movie in the future. The plot moved effortlessly, with some surprising twists. Character and plot development were done in such a way as to remind the reader of some of our more endearing classics. The time period was well researched, and presented in a way that let the visuals leap out of the page.

Courtney has a way of giving the story a life of its own, and I must say, I enjoyed it from beginning to end. I will be following his works and progression as an author!

Jackie Rogers says

Found Down From The Mountain an Attention getter and holder. Is About the Stanton family consisting of Troy,Bly, Clara,and Silas. With Silas writing the book. Clara and Silas lost their parents o a mysterious illness and are being raised by Troy And Bly. Mountain living extremely hard and leads Clara to harsh choices to escape the mountain living. Found it holding my interest as an ongoing feud is making life even more difficult for the Stantons. Would recommend to all with twists and turns and violence. Tou wont be disappointed in this novel by Courtney Allen. Thank you Goodreads.

Aisling says

Hugely satisfying. This was an impossible-to-put-down family saga with lots of historical atmosphere and brilliant writing. I could feel the heat from the potbelly stove on a cold evening, sense the thrill of seeing a motorcar for the first time, felt the ache of a back sore from laboring in the fields (or maybe that was just me sitting and reading too long....)

Courtney Allen tells the story of two orphaned children who are raised on a rural farm in Georgia in the early 1900's. The book alternates between the two children one of whom runs away at age 17 in search of a new life. Both story lines are fascinating and heart wrenching.

I would have kept reading for hundreds more pages.

But that is only because the author tells a story and paints a picture so vividly you feel transported. In actuality, the book ended perfectly and really leaves the reader feeling, well, hugely satisfied. I highly recommend this book . Highly. Courtney Allen belongs on the best seller list.

Donna says

I received this book from the author, Courtney Allen, to read and review.

First of all, I would say that this book deserves 8+ stars. It is so wonderful.

It is the story of the Stanton family and an ongoing feud with the Adams clan over land and a horse. To say the least, these two families just do not click. They are always fighting each other. Death becomes a factor for Tom Adams and Samuel ends up in prison.

Clara and Silas McCarter came to live with Troy and Bly Stanton when their parents died of a mysterious illness. Being their aunt and uncle, they came to live with them on their working farm in Fort Mountain. It was hard work for the children and Clara long decided this was not the life for her. She became pregnant by a black boy who suddenly disappeared. One day Clara decides she needs to leave the farm and disappears herself. No one knows where she could have gone being pregnant and in her eighth month. Where in the devil did she go? How could she just vanish like that? The family, worried sick, didn't know where to look or whom to contact.

Now you will find this a very adventurous book and will love the characters as much as I did. I hope you find this book exciting and won't want to put it down until the last page.

Thank you Mr. Allen for a great novel. Congratulations.

Lee says

Down From the Mountain is an amazing book! I was drawn right in to the lifestyle of the North Georgia mountains, the Appalachian people of the early 1900's. What an unforgettable story! Silas and Clara lost their parents early in life and were taken in by their aunt and uncle, and so begins a story of farming and chores and toiling on the land. They found a home there on the mountains...and a family. Silas puts down roots and learns about life from his Uncle Troy and Aunt Bly. Clara, the older sibling, is less satisfied with the mountains, wanting to leave at the first chance she gets, especially when she turns up pregnant at 17. There are mysteries to be found in this story, family feuds that lead to bloodshed, and numerous emotions that come from the story and the people found within. It's a captivating telling of the Stanton family and how the mountains and the sense of home and loyalty run deep. You won't be able to put it down, and the events and people in the story will linger long after the last words. I really enjoyed reading this book and highly recommend it. Thanks to the author and Goodreads for providing the complimentary copy in exchange for an honest review.

Marjorie says

Given To Me For An Honest Review

Down From The Mountain by Courtney Allen isn't a must read, it's a HAVE to read! For being a debut novel, can I say that Courtney Allen has hit it out of the ballpark. Before you begin reading, make sure you have your seatbelt on nice and tight because once you open the book it's going to grab you tightly and hold you down as you watch the pages turn and turn and turn some more until you reach the end. Clara and Silas are orphans and go to live with their Aunt and Uncle. Clara and Silas are soon living a life of hard farm work and long hours. Soon the family has a secret and Clara wants to leave. She wants to live a life of luxury. She hates being on the farm. The day finally comes and she runs away. Does Clara find what she seeks? What becomes of Silas? Does he become a farmer? You'll find a bit of a surprise ending. I'm not telling. I gave this

book 5 stars but it deserves so many more. It would make a great addition to your library as well as a great gift to give. The holidays are coming and birthdays are all the time. I highly recommend this book to everyone especially if they enjoy reading history, drama and action. What I especially like is that this was being told through the eyes of the characters. I look for many more fantastic reads from Courtney Allen.

Sharon Huether says

I received this book from the author for a review. A very compelling story of how life was in Appalachia in the late 1800's. Clara and Silas were orphaned at a young age. They are sent to an Aunt and Uncle. A hard life living from hand to mouth. As Clara got older, she made an unwise choice. Her fate could have been better. Silas's love of books and reading lead to a job at a newspaper. The book was so good I wish to have read more.

Eileen says

This novel paints a vivid picture of life in Appalachia at the end of the 1800's. The hardscrabble existence, the colorful characters, the abject poverty – all were there in a quite readable story, knit together by a unique, though bizarre moral code. My reservations lie with the quality of the writing, which dipped toward mediocre at times. I found some of the character development unconvincing. For instance, eighteen year old Clara, one of the protagonists, has had a fairly grim life on the small family farm. Following a shift in circumstances whereupon she finds herself living on a wealthy 2000 acre horse ranch, the transformation from ignorant farm girl occurs almost overnight. However, in defense of the book, the imaginative plot together with vibrant descriptions of the majestic Appalachian backdrop more than compensate for the aforementioned shortcomings.

Anne says

Wish I could give this book 7 stars! I started it two days ago just before bed. Stayed up until 2:00 on Saturday and 1:00 last night finishing. The characters are so vivid that feel you know them. The story grabbed me right away and took me on a ride I was not expecting. Kind of like your first ride on a roller coaster! I'm thankful that Mr. Allen contacted me to see if I would review his book. It's a new favorite read. I love historical fiction, so that also drew me in.

Chris Mara says

A sweeping historic family story situated in the Blue Ridge mountains of Appalachia and a small town in Georgia, at the foot of their mountain.

Farm life is a hard scrabble life and their livelihood depends so much upon their land. So if there's a bad crop or bad weather, or sinister business among family or neighbors (as you will find out), it could be the end of everything. This saga takes us through the ins and outs of daily family farm life and it is very interesting. It certainly is not dull.

Silas is our young boy and his older sister, Clara, come to their aunt and uncle's farm after their parents have passed. They both try to adjust to the change as well they can; Silas is more knowledgeable of his surroundings and close kinship with his uncle. I like how Silas and his uncle became close. Silas was like the son they never had.

Clara, is another story. I had a feeling this girl was going to "go her own way," and she does, in a way that would be upsetting and shameful to her aunt and uncle and brother. She runs away, and without spoiling the story, this girl has made her mistakes but at same time has had opportunities given to her, but in the end, Clara is Clara and I was a bit perturbed with her.

Silas on the other hand, made a life of his own in the end, thanks to his uncle and aunt and his love of reading. He did experience one neighbors ongoing wrath and barely survived it and to his final day, has nightmares over it. Silas was very observant and smart and learned a lot growing up. He was also surrounded by good folk he could turn to if needed. He was well respected and trustworthy.

Silas inherited the land and cabin after his uncle and aunt passed and took his wife and two boys to see it before putting it up for sale. Time passes all too swiftly and Silas is now being put into an assisted living facility by his grandchildren. We all come full circle with our love, our life and our memories.

While I enjoyed this book, my favorite of the two historicals by author, Courtney Allen, is Lee County Elegy. And that's just my personal preference. ?

Thank you to the author, Courtney Allen, for kindly providing me with a free copy of this book for a fair and honest review. Well done!

Nicole says

This is one of those books you really hate to label, or the label that applies just doesn't do the book justice. Let's face it, "Historical Fiction" is just not as eye-catching as "Thriller". Don't let the genre label fool you, this is one damn good story. (I of course mean no disrespect to fans of Historical Fiction.)
