



This Cold Country

Annabel Davis-Goff

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Known for her elegant prose and her keen eye for the nuances of class, Annabel Davis-Goff adds the lush immediacy of a Merchant-Ivory film to her compelling tale of a woman and a culture forever changed by World War II.

Only three days after Daisy Creed weds Patrick Nugent, heir of an Anglo-Irish family, he leaves for the war. Having never met her husband's family, Daisy embarks for her new home, Dunmaine, in County Waterford. The family's affairs echo its estate: grand on the outside, decaying within. Left alone with Patrick's eccentric brother and silent grandmother, Daisy is determined to save Dunmaine and secure her place there. But before she can grasp the unspoken rules, she is unwillingly drawn into events that throw her determination off course.

Daisy Creed is a resilient, courageous, altogether enterprising Everywoman of her time in this novel about a way of life and the war that precipitated its transformation.

This Cold Country Details

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Author : Annabel Davis-Goff

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From Reader Review This Cold Country for online ebook

zyra.cyra.zyra says

I was too excited to read this book. Considering the cover made me scan over it and judged it as (maybe) the book that fits me. I soon learned that the setting was during a Western War (*which I thought great*). The story of **This Cold Country** spins around Daisy Creed (*who is at my age when the book ended*) whom I considered courageous—for marrying a guy she hardly knew; for she is not afraid of living in the country foreign to her with her in-laws and for standing up, at her young age, trying to save the house she is now living in. Smart—for figuring out the character and personality behind each people she's living with.

I have to be honest, when I'm almost half of the book, I still wondered what the story is all about, how confused I was and was really hoping to reach on the “climax”/thrilling and exciting part. There was some disappointments (people and events) that I have to considered: To **James**, I thought he was just so sweet to Daisy but a surprise visit to her room was not a good idea. His character was unfixed and confusing to me. **Corisande**, I don't know what she is trying to hide. **Maud**, I was still waiting for that surprise thing (*the surprised thing in the story was not even surprising to me*). **Philomena**, her sudden death was still a question to me. **Andrew Heskith**, or should I say the guy who pretended to be Andrew Heskith, the writer didn't elaborate this much. Even on Daisy and Patrick's love story, I kept hanging for I am not pretty sure how everything might end, if there was a chance that Patrick will be reunited to Daisy from battling the war. What I considered as good points in the story is how the author played its characters. How everyone stays and leaves. The author is fine in comparing and describing feelings, things and events in the story; how she managed to write in a setting of a war. I considered the last few chapters before the book ends as the exciting part (*not what I have expected though*) of the story for it is where everything happens with excitement and how characters are eventually trusted until I realized that I was already at the very last part of the story and I still have unanswered questions, but I guess this is the author's way of ending/writing the whole story- she wants/allows the reader to question and/or imagine what will happen next

PS. Just don't judge the book by its cover!

J.S. Dunn says

Has been set in print to take the pages required to be a novel in length, but is really an expanded short story. Would have savaged it with a low number of 'stars' but the writing is very fine, if overly ponderous. The belabored style perhaps evokes the early 20th century, so even that flaw was partially forgiven.

For one familiar with, to this day, the crumbling grey houses of the fading angloirish, there were moments of silent laughter. Probably inappropriate, but they happened. ---I've had dinner with them, you might think to yourself.

It's difficult to screw up anything set in Ireland, and the political nuances of that era of supposed neutrality were nicely drawn. But beware, this is very much an expanded short story.

Michelle says

Well... there is a clear and distinct voice to the author, a throwback to the 1940's for sure. The characters - their speech and actions - are very real, very accurate. And the portrait painted, of an Irish family and a young English war bride who joins them, is one of disappointments, deceptions, and survival. It was nice to immerse myself in that time and place - the isolated home in Ireland, in the years of the Second World War. And the author does build in accounts of the historical context of Ireland. But it felt a bit long, hard to keep focused on. Still, a fairly thought-provoking read.

Jamie says

I wasn't sure whether I loved this book, or only liked it. The jacket description is spot on: the telling and language has the feel of an old movie. But as the book develops it feels more like a documentary than a novel. The narrative follows Daisy for several months (actually, I think a little over a year, but it was hard to tell). The writing is almost dream-like and hazy. It's a telling of Daisy's day to day life: British land-girl turned Irish wife waiting for her husband to come home from the war. It was docile, bucolic, slow paced. Not exciting or attention grabbing, but sweet.

Sue says

had promise. daisy creed seemed a strong willed, strong bodied young woman ready to tackle more than just war duties. she married patrick quite impetuously, he left for war immediately. she moves in with his family (traveling from england to ireland) and never quite asks the right questions of anyone. there's a murder involved, she has a one night affair.

Melissa says

DNF...could not get into it ?

JaneEire says

I am not sure why I plodded through this book - I guess partly because I am interested in Ireland during WWII. This book was somewhat slow but at other times, things seemed to occur too quickly, "out of the blue." Some of it was also very far-fetched. It seemed like it was trying to make a lot of profound points but it was not satisfactory to me. The main character was not that likable or believable. What was by far the worst part of the book was the author's writing style, which involved a lot of commas and dashes.

Here are just a couple sentences to illustrate what I mean:

"Ambrose had not been the maker, although he might have - probably had - been the cause, of the scene, and his presence at the table made her own evening easier. It dispelled or at least postponed the, however exciting, however eagerly awaited, awkward moment when she and Patrick had to acknowledge the reason they were in London." Chapter 7, p. 108-109 Not sure why I picked those two sentences because there are

similar examples on every page. The choppiness made some of the sentences confusing.

Kimberly says

Liked the writing style. You really got to know what this Land Girl went through during WW2. At one point , her uptight new relations make a toast to "Peace" instead of "Victory" and she describes enjoying the toast since it was "less exclusively masculine"....she also struggles with fidelity, which in her day and age, would have been a whopper.....

Laura C. says

"This Cold Country" is aptly named. Very British. Without the sense of humor. Did I mention pitiless? Shaving my legs with a dry razor would have been more fun.

Prudence says

I really, really loved this book. Wanted to give it 5 stars, but that means "amazing" and I can't really say that. The topic of a young woman's survival in war-torn WWII England is filled with insight into class relations and Anglo/Irish friction and cooperation during the war against Germany. Social mores, traditions and matters of "form" are scrutinized and tested under the stress of war and the ignorance of its outcome. In a country that could soon be overcome by fascism, and the end of their lives and lifestyle as they know it, hard decisions about existence and happiness must be made, and drastic compromises and actions are taken that affect a whole generation. Life in the UK during our parents' and grandparents' lifetime was quite different than for those in the U.S. This is a good primer for those who want to learn how much life has changed in the last 70 years.

Linda says

Another evocative story by Davis-Goff. This time the protagonist is a British young woman working on a farm as a Land Girl who meets and marries an Anglo-Irish soldier and then goes off to Ireland to live with his family. The same falling-down house, strange characters, sense of secrets and foreboding as in her other books. But Davis-Goff is an author who seems able to see Irish issues from multiple sides which makes for fully-realized characters and stories. An engrossing read.

I love books where I discovered some bit of new information that relates to the larger world and not just the story. Here are two from "This Cold Country":

The port of Queenstown is now called Cobh. It's spelled c-o-b-h, but it's pronounced 'Cove' because there's no v in Gaelic. I mention this because most old novels I read refer to the old name.

(This coming weekend being the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, I should mention that Queenstown was the last stop the Titanic made to pick up passengers before she hit the open sea on her

maiden voyage. If you have ever looked at the passenger lists, you will note that all the passengers picked up at Queenstown were third class — poor Irish going to America to try to find a better life.)

In Britain the tradition has been to wear a red poppy on Remembrance Day commemorating the end of WWI. In Ireland, the tradition is to wear a lily on Easter Monday to celebrate the Easter Rising of 1916.

Patricia says

It took me a few weeks to realize the source of the vague sense of unease when I read this book. I was falling for a stereotype that I don't actually believe: that smart rich people live in the cities, and dumb, poor people live in the country. This book takes place in several different rural places, but they are all in England or Ireland, and happen to also be estates with are lousy with rich people. So my inner stereotype was having trouble reconciling the rich people with rural setting.

I didn't love this book, but it was engrossing, and had to do with several life choices I'm not familiar with: being a Land Girl during WWII, marrying someone you had only met a few times and then going to live in an entirely different country with your new husband's relatives—whom you have never met—while he goes off to fight the war.

The author repeatedly used a plot device wherein she would tell the story in chronological order, then suddenly with no warning jump forward so I was confused as to what exactly was going on, then she would go back and fill me in. The effect was supposed to be intriguing, I think, but mostly it gave me literary whiplash.

Jina Howell-Forbes says

Interesting WWII time period novel. I really cared about Daisy, the main character. I liked hearing about Irelands' perspective in the war. I thought the story was well written, but I didn't think it ended right. I don't like to get involved in a story and then have it left up in the air. I know life is like that, but I want my fiction to be better than that. I am left wondering what happened...

Kirsten says

I really enjoyed this and found it quite compelling, but it didn't have much of an ending (or any resolution at all.....) - so I'd probably give it 3 1/2 stars, if that option were available. Set in England and Ireland during the opening years of World War II, with a bevy of class and social issues for everyone.

Joan says

I really enjoyed the first half or so of the book, reading about Daisy's service in the Women's Land Army and learning a bit about Irish history and about their position during WW II. I even enjoyed the story of Daisy's struggles with moving from the middle class world into a more upper class society after her marriage, her

challenges with her new husband's family while he was away at war, and the efforts of the landed class to deal with their changing fortunes. But the last half of the book was much less interesting as it became more of a soap opera with a little war-time drama thrown in. The last part of the book seemed very choppy and then it just closed without a real ending, as if even the author had gotten tired of these characters and this story. I would have given the first half of the book 4 stars and I wish the rest of the book had continued to be as interesting and captivating.
