



The Jump-Off Creek

By Molly Gloss

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A reading group favorite, *The Jump-Off Creek* is the unforgettable story of widowed homesteader Lydia Sanderson and her struggles to settle in the mountains of Oregon in the 1890s. “Every gritty line of the story rings true” (*Seattle Times*) as Molly Gloss delivers an authentic and moving portrait of the American West. “A powerful novel of struggle and loss” (*Dallas Morning News*), *The Jump-Off Creek* gives readers an intimate look at the hardships of frontier life and a courageous woman determined to survive.

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The Jump-Off Creek By Molly Gloss Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Set in the high mountain country of Oregon during the 1890s, this first novel is a quiet, unsparing portrait of pioneer life, recounted simply and without romanticism. Drawing on pioneer diaries, journals and hand-me-down stories of her own ancestors, Gloss displays a deep awareness not only of the brutal hardships of frontier life, but also of the moral codes and emotional attachments of the people who settled there. Drawn by the freedom the West offers, Lydia Sanderson leaves a disappointing marriage in Pennsylvania and comes to Jump-Off Creek to homestead a place of her own. Tim Whiteaker, "gone cowboying" since the age of 13, and his partner, the half-Indian Blue Odell, raise cattle nearby. Three wolfers, squatting on abandoned property near Jump-Off Creek and walking the thin edge of the law in order to earn a marginal living, provide much of the tension within the novel. The author's intimate understanding of the harsh physical conditions and of the rituals and practices of frontier life (there are long descriptions of how to brand cattle and how to mend a roof) sometimes overshadows a deeper delineation of character. However, most of the scenes are handled with a restraint that communicates the characters' endemic loneliness, and the dialogue, though spare, is rich enough to convey their emotional conflicts.

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From Library Journal

Not a standard "Western," but a novel of the West notable for its accurate portrayal of life on a homestead and for the quality of writing that will make readers linger. At the height of the Depression of 1895 Lydia Sanderson, freed by the death of her husband, travels to Oregon where she homesteads on a mountain, living in a wretched hovel on land not fit to grow even a vegetable garden. Her companions are two mules, two goats, and hard work. Lydia's neighbors are few and far but bound together by a common struggle to survive. Their life is one of terse converse, kindness, and quick response to one another's needs. A rare treat of a first novel.

- *Sister Avila, Acad. of Holy Angels, Minneapolis*

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Review

"Sometimes it seems that literature is an excellent medium for measuring intimacy; sometimes the white space and the black letters seem to gleefully record the distances between us. "The Jump-Off Creek," written by Molly Gloss in 1989 and reissued by Mariner, is about a woman, Lydia Sanderson, who homesteads alone in Washington state. The book is a prism of loneliness in the form of a novel." -- reviewed by SUSAN SALTER REYNOLDS The Los Angeles Times

"As authentic as sand in one's shoes." - Edward Hoagland

"A rare treat to find characters we can care about this much." The Philadelphia Inquirer

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jeremy Jones:

The book *The Jump-Off Creek* gives you the sense of being enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to

make your capable far more increase. Book can to become your best friend when you getting stress or having big problem with your subject. If you can make reading through a book The Jump-Off Creek to get your habit, you can get more advantages, like add your own capable, increase your knowledge about a few or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like wide open and read a publication The Jump-Off Creek. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this e-book?

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