

Reader Views

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The Price of Pride

By Donna MacQuigg

Five Star Publishing (2006)

Reviewed by Kelli Glesige for Reader Views (3/06)

“The Price of Pride” is an enjoyable and entertaining western romance that takes place in the Territory of New Mexico in the year 1892. The deaths of Zachary Farrell and his young fiancée, Emily Brighton, in a suspicious fire have Zachary’s older brother; Marshall Ira Farrell determined to get to the bottom of the untimely deaths. The Marshall leaves his current jurisdiction of Carefree, Arizona and heads home to Santa Fe, New Mexico, intent to bring a killer or killers to justice.

Meanwhile, in St. Louis, Missouri, Sarah Brighton, cousin to the unfortunate Emily who also perished in the fire, is the lone female journalist working for the St. Louis Herald newspaper and writing for the society page. Sarah’s ambitious nature and her determination to be any man’s equal have caused conflict with her boss in the past, but when she asks for a few weeks off to travel to Santa Fe to see to her deceased cousin’s estate, she is flatly refused. Sarah resigns from the paper and heads to Santa Fe, single and alone, but full of spunk.

Once they arrive in Santa Fe, of course Ira and Emily are destined to meet, and both are determined to solve the mystery of the questionable fire and premature deaths of their relatives. At first each one has different ideas on solving the mystery, but they soon realize they must work together to bring justice. The web gets more tangled when another murder is uncovered and a cattle rustling heist has so many townsfolk baffled. Could all of this be connected? Ira and Sarah soon realize that maybe it is not dislike they feel for each other, but something entirely at the other end of the spectrum of emotion.

What follows is a fun-filled adventure to find the guilty parties, with a good deal of romance thrown in. The story is your typical western complete with shootouts, good guys versus bad guys, and pretty girls that hang out in the local saloon. If you enjoy westerns and romantic mysteries, you should enjoy “The Price of Pride.” The Farrell family reminded me of the late television show, Bonanza, as Uncle Jeb does all the cooking and holds the home front together for the other males of the household; Adam, Cole and Ira, along with Zachary before his death. No other females live on the ranch.

The Farrell's business is cattle and they are one of the largest landowners in the area, making their ranch one of the wealthiest. In comparison, I remember how in Bonanza, Ben Cartwright was a single parent to Adam, Hoss and Little Joe on the Ponderosa Estate in Nevada where cattle was their expertise, and Hop Sing kept the household running smoothly.

Donna MacQuigg tells a good tale, and I enjoyed the strong-willed characters she developed. Each is determined and has certain expectations, so inherently there will be friction, and sparks will fly. And they do, literally! Reading "The Price of Pride" was a pleasurable experience, and I would recommend it to others who enjoy a good western romance!