

Alysa of the Fields: Book One in the Tellings of Xunar-kun

Tina Field Howe

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Reviewed by Ian McCurley (age 14) for Reader Views (4/08)

“Alysa of the Fields” begins when Alysa, a young Field Folk woman, is crying by a stream. She lives on the alien world of Xunar-kun. Three-thousand years ago a great event called the Cataclysm took place, ravaging the land and killing most of the inhabitants of the world. One of the few remaining groups, the homesteaders, was led, just before the cataclysm, to the mountains where they remained safe since that day. Years later, when Alysa’s father died, she becomes a trader. The trader’s job is to trade with the wondering nomadic tribe of the Trailmen. After becoming lost in the snow and being rescued by one of the tribesmen, she learns that they are not indeed savages, but intelligent and skillful people with origins close to their own. Now, when children are being snatched by mutants from the cataclysm, Alysa must go, with no survival knowledge whatsoever, on a long journey to find these people and request eight.

Tina Field Howe writes so exquisitely, though targeted at girls, male readers can find some enjoyment. While it takes time to get into, “Alysa the Fields” will enrapture you and you will be unable to put it down. Readers who enjoy post-apocalyptic events, cultural exchanges and unlikely heroes, will almost certainly enjoy this book. Be sure to read Book Two in the “Tellings of Xunar-kun.”