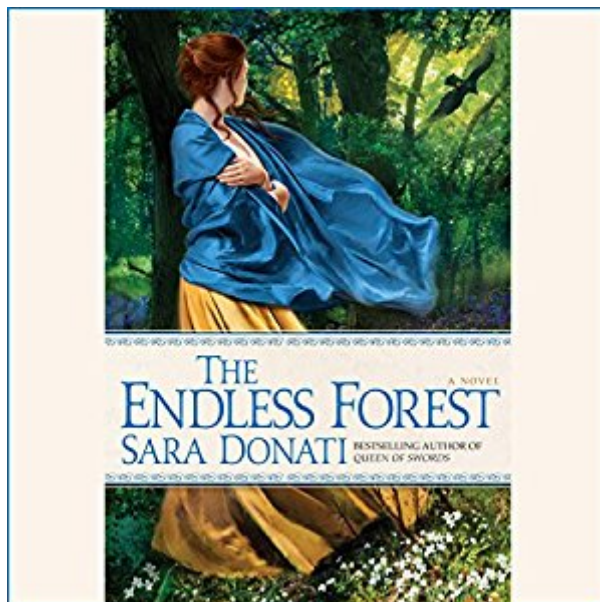


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The Endless Forest



Synopsis

A rich, passionate, multilayered portrayal of family strength and endurance from bestselling author Sara Donati. In the spring of 1824, in the remote village of Paradise on the New York frontier, Nathaniel and Elizabeth Bonner celebrate a glorious reunion as their children return from far-off places: Lily and her husband from Italy, and Martha Kirby, the Bonners' ward, from Manhattan. In the peace that follows a devastating flood, childhood friends Martha and Daniel, Lily's twin brother, suddenly begin to see each other in a new light. But their growing bond is threatened when Martha's estranged mother arrives back in Paradise. Jemima Southern is a dangerous schemer who has destroyed more than one family, and her anger touches everyone, as do her secrets. Has Jemima come to claim her daughter or does she have other, darker motives? Whatever transpires, Martha, Daniel, and all the Bonners must stand united against the threats to both heart and home. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Oh! I love how this final installment begins. Sitting by the fire with Curiosity talking to us as big as you please. I just LOVE it! Obviously this was a book of closure. Discovering where everyone has been, and all the Bonner family (and various "wards") whom have been away etc. coming home to Paradise to heal and mend or just to renew. New marriages...more births...and of course inevitable deaths. The continuing drama with Jemima Southern, natural disasters, secrets and murder mysteries. This final story sums up the Saga nicely although I still had unanswered questions about

Ethan Middleton. (how did Jemima come to her information?) It was so hard to let Nathaniel, the Bonner men and these strong women go. I became so emotionally invested with this Saga..(but of course!) and I love them all... I wanted to start the whole series over again as soon as I finished. But Mr. James A. Michener sums up my feelings perfectly when he wrote: - - "When I approach the closing pages of a great novel, a feeling of profound regret comes over me, for I realize I am about to sever a relationship with characters I have grown to love. And to abandon a corner of the world in which I have spent rewarding weeks, months and even years, for I read slowly and carefully. I feel, when the pages dwindle, as if something good were being stolen from me, something precious that would not be replaced. You may laugh at what I say next, but when I realize how few pages are left I ration myself, only so many each day, and when the final one looms, and I close the book, I stare at the back map for many minutes, aware that something precious has touched my life." - - James Michener Thank you Ms. Donati for a fabulous, heart warming Saga!

Up until now, Diana Gabaldon's Outlander series has been my favorite. However I feel that Sara Donati has at least equaled, if not surpassed Ms. Gabaldon with this Wilderness series. Ms. Donati has the ability to make us care about the characters in her stories, a most important trait in a truly great writer. We followed Nathaniel and Elizabeth through a time in American history that doesn't always get the hype it deserves. We saw in them the ability of the human spirit to survive even under seemingly impossible conditions. In Hannah we saw the plight of an intelligent woman caught between two worlds. In Curiosity we found the wisdom of the ages and the loyalty of a true friend, who's support withstood everything. Each character was real. Some pulled on my heart strings, while others made me want to commit murder! At the end of the sixth book, knowing it was the last in the series, I actually felt a sense of loss. In most ways I do appreciate that Ms. Donati wrote a very unique epilogue and let us know what happened to the people we had come to know so intimately. On the other hand, because she did "wrap it up" I know that she has ended the series, and I can't find comfort in hoping that she will write more.

Now this is more like it! After giving a less than stellar review on the previous installment "Queen Of Swords" I was thrilled to see that Donati was back on track with this final novel in the series. "The Endless Forest" was evocative of the first novel in the series "Into the Wilderness" which is still the best novel in the series by far. What did I love about "The Endless Forest"? I loved that we were back in the woods of upstate New York and that we were back amongst all the characters we have come to care about. I loved that there was a lot more of Elizabeth and Nathaniel than we've had

recently and found that I actually liked Hannah, Daniel, and Lily more than I did in previous novels--though I had come to like Hannah in the last novel. It was nice seeing all the families settle and grow. I enjoyed the story of Daniel and Martha which was in many ways similar to that of Nathaniel and Elizabeth in the first book. It was wonderful to have the warmth and emotion back after the sterile previous novel. I felt like this was Donati again and that I was back in the series I had come to love. It was nice to see Elizabeth and Nathaniel surrounded by their children and their grandchildren, to see the fruition of their amazing love story. No, there was not a lot of the adventure and mayhem of the previous novels but I didn't feel that was a negative because we got a lot of the familial relationships that have been missing. The reason I gave this book a 4 star instead of a 5 star was the awful, awful epilogue. HATED the epilogue and wish, wish, wish I had not read it! I thought I would read an enjoyable epilogue of what happened to the characters over the next few years. Instead I got death after death, tragedy after tragedy. Why? What was the point? There was no reason to just kill these people off one after the other. To anyone who loves these characters I would recommend not bothering with the epilogue. I sure wish I hadn't.

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