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Bly's "Down squash blossom road" (Book Review)

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Book Reviews



Bly, J. C. (2016). *Down squash blossom road*. Bly Books: Winchester, ID. 304 pp. \$14.95. ISBN 9781537175867

Down Squash Blossom Road is the second book in a series, and unlike some series books that begin with a plot summary, this one does not. Due to the many different plot lines and somewhat large cast of characters, it would be difficult to pick up this book without having read the prior book in this series. *Down Squash Blossom Road* may also be difficult to classify into one specific genre. It has the elements of a western, a thriller, a mystery, and a romance, though none of these dominates the book. While the first book has a relatively linear plot, *Down Squash Blossom Road* is more sprawling, taking place in multiple locations, with a few main sets of characters that occasionally intersect like a Venn diagram. It may be difficult to see how the different storylines are related until the end. The primary character is Reba Cahill, who merely wants to be able to run the family ranch in peace, preferably with a life partner who would be as invested in the ranch as she is. However, she must first navigate a malicious lawsuit from a bordering rancher, a long-estranged mother asking to return home, a couple of would-be suitors, and a run-in with a dangerous acquaintance. These events take her from Idaho to Nevada, then on to California. Things are certainly not turning out how she wants them to, and they will only become more convoluted as the story continues. The author excels at drawing real, well-rounded characters and depicting family dynamics. Moreover, the novel is anything but predictable, and it will keep readers guessing until the last page. *Down Squash Blossom Road* is appropriate for a general fiction collection, and this reviewer strongly recommends that if this book is going to be added to a collection, the first book should also be acquired.

Reviewer

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