



## I Will Send Rain

*Rae Meadows*

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Rae Meadows

**I Will Send Rain** Rae Meadows

**A luminous, tenderly rendered novel of a woman fighting for her family's survival in the early years of the Dust Bowl; from the acclaimed and award-winning Rae Meadows.**

Annie Bell can't escape the dust. It's in her hair, covering the windowsills, coating the animals in the barn, in the corners of her children's dry, cracked lips. It's 1934 and the Bell farm in Mulehead, Oklahoma is struggling as the earliest storms of The Dust Bowl descend. All around them the wheat harvests are drying out and people are packing up their belongings as storms lay waste to the Great Plains. As the Bells wait for the rains to come, Annie and each member of her family are pulled in different directions. Annie's fragile young son, Fred, suffers from dust pneumonia; her headstrong daughter, Birdie, flush with first love, is choosing a dangerous path out of Mulehead; and Samuel, her husband, is plagued by disturbing dreams of rain.

As Annie, desperate for an escape of her own, flirts with the affections of an unlikely admirer, she must choose who she is going to become. With her warm storytelling and beautiful prose, Rae Meadows brings to life an unforgettable family that faces hardship with rare grit and determination. Rich in detail and epic in scope, *I Will Send Rain* is a powerful novel of upheaval and resilience, filled with hope, morality, and love.

## I Will Send Rain Details

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Author : Rae Meadows

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# From Reader Review I Will Send Rain for online ebook

## Diane says

This novel is set during the Dust Bowl in the 1930s, but the characters were so true that the story felt timeless.

I've long been fascinated by this period of American history, and even though the novel is about a homesteading family and their struggles during the post-Depression drought, reading this book was a welcome escape from our fraught modern times.\*

I slipped easily into this story, in which we meet the Bell family: mother Annie, father Samuel, teenage daughter Birdie, and young son Fred. The Bells are trying to farm their homestead in Oklahoma, but they're challenged by the dangerous weather, love affairs, scary visions and a sick child. We get to see the different perspectives of each family member, and it was interesting to see how each person dealt with his or her own secrets and worries.

What I liked about this book was how cleanly it was written and the realness of the characters. The arguments that Birdie had with her mom — *You don't understand me! / I understand more than you know!* — have probably been fought between every generation of parent and child going back to the caveman. Similarly, the marital struggles of Annie and Samuel felt genuine.

I especially liked that this novel reminded me of my grandparents, who were farmers in Iowa and often told stories about the difficult years during the Depression. I could tell that the author did her homework on the period, and the details she added felt authentic.

*I Will Send Rain* came to my attention thanks to positive reviews in both The New York Times and Library Journal. I'm glad I made time for this lovely novel, and recommend it to anyone who likes stories about family drama or historical fiction.

*\*Personal Note: I read this book in the last week before the 2016 presidential election, and I want to address how much election anxiety there is right now. Seriously, it's been a struggle to accomplish any personal reading lately because of the political tensions. So I was glad I was able to escape into this novel set 80 years ago.*

## Favorite Quotes

"When had he stopped calling her Annie? They had become more formal with each other, more careful. She could feel herself retreating. Today, though, standing next to him when she'd seen the clouds and, thinking they held rain, felt the tightness in her jaw ease, she had imagined again a carpet of wildflowers, trumpet vines, and pale green buffalo grass all around them, and she'd felt an old tenderness swelling. You and me and this family, she had wanted to say. She had offered her silent hand instead."

"She refused to read the destruction of the garden as a larger sign. God doesn't use weather as a weapon, she thought."

"Even then she'd known she was tough; she just hadn't had a chance to prove it yet."

"A farmer needs a farm."

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### **Diane S ? says**

Grim and relentless. Oklahoma, the dust bowl, early 1930's, the dust keeps coming and coming, covering everything in its path. The Bell family, father Samuel can only watch as his crops are devastated, all his hard work for naught. Annie, the mother, still young herself, watching as her hopes and dreams of a better life are covered over. Birdie, fifteen, in love with a local boy and young Freddie, unable to talk and suffering from a lung ailment. Memorable characters all, but I identified with Freddie's attempt to breath, no inhalers, no nebulizers, all things I depend on that were not in existence back then. Kerosene and honey, the treatment available. Can't imagine.

The writing is powerful, the visuals and emotions palpable, the dust on everything, food, animals, just incredible. Many left, some went on the dole, others took another way out and some, like the Bell's stayed hoping for a better day, a better time, just hanging on to the best of their ability. The pastor with his own crisis of faith, trying to uplift his parishioners outlooks, feeling helpless in the face of so much pain. The family turning inward as the dust destroys everything outside, their lives begin to implode on the inside. Reaching for any way out, their manifestations of grief take different turns, small moments of joy stolen. A final tragedy and then a bit of hope.

These are characters to remember long after the last page is turned. A very memorable story.

ARC from netgalley.

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### **Karen says**

Since I still think about this book, and these people, I am going from 4 to a 5 review :) This is about a family, the Bell's, in Oklahoma, during the Dust Bowl years, the terrible losses for the farmers and their families. It was a book of hope and faith. Very good!

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### **Larry H says**

I love it when a book slowly takes you by surprise, as you realize what on the surface seemed like a fairly simple story dazzles you with emotion and beauty of its telling, when a story about a family tested by difficult times and tragedy reveals its richness, layer by layer. Rae Meadows' newest book, *I Will Send Rain*, is definitely one of those books.

The town of Mulehead, Oklahoma, as with many towns in the Great Plains region of the U.S. in the mid-1930s, cannot escape the drought. It's wrecking havoc on farming families everywhere, including Annie Bell and her husband, Samuel, who moved to Oklahoma as homesteaders and little by little, built a farm they were proud of, then a family. But now the Bells are suffering—their crops yield little, and the whole town is paralyzed by the economic and emotional effects the drought is having.

When the dust storms start hitting Mulehead, the Bells truly feel they're close to rock bottom. Samuel, who

tries valiantly to keep his farm limping along, is suddenly plagued by dreams of severe rain that he cannot explain, nor can he explain what he is compelled to do as a result of those dreams. Their 15-year-old daughter, Birdie, is in the flush of young love and wants much more out of life than Mulehead can offer her, but doesn't think anyone can understand her hopes and dreams, even if she is risking her chance at freedom. The Bells' young son, Fred, a sensitive, old soul, is plagued by dust pneumonia, and Annie herself finds herself tempted by a new admirer for the first time in her life, and is unable to understand the fervor of her husband's actions.

"More and more, he saw the drought as a test of faith. More and more, she feared the drought would free this tight coil of restlessness in her, expose her as someone less than steadfast."

As conditions in Mulehead worsen, Annie is torn between the path she has taken her entire life and the chance for something new, something that might offer her a way out of the crushing devastation the community is experiencing. But can she risk everything she has, everything she knows, for the slim hope of a chance? Does she really want to? And as Annie tries to make sense of what is happening to her family, her home, and her faith, she knows that problems won't simply be solved with much-needed rain, but she has to decide whether to see things through or finally live life for herself.

I thought this book was truly lovely, full of tension, emotion, anguish, and hope. Meadows so perfectly captured the anxiety and fears of this terrible period in American history, how people were affected and how they coped. As I mentioned earlier, this seemingly simple story of a family dealing with adversity packed so much power, so much beauty, that even when you had a feeling how certain plot threads might resolve themselves, you felt the story and these characters in your heart.

I'll admit that at first I was hesitant to read *I Will Send Rain* because historical fiction doesn't always resonate with me. But this book was really just so good, and Meadows' storytelling ability shone through a book which takes place in such a drab time and setting. This is a book—and an author—worth taking into your heart.

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blogspot.com>....

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## Margitte says

There were dust everywhere in Mulehead, Oklahoma when the drought of 1934 brought dark clouds rolling over the land and dumped migrating soil down instead of rain. It first covered the heat-scorched fields, then the homes, then their souls, and finally the secrets of the Bell family.

The neighboring farmers who had the guts, took off to a better life somewhere else, far away from the Dust Bowl, but others chose to stay and believe that everything will be better when the rains come. For Samuel Bell, each day was one nearer to the rain, as God has promised him in his dreams. In fact, the Almighty encouraged him to build a boat ...

Mulehead had nothing to celebrate, nothing to lure tourists there, until a plague of rabbits became a possibility that would lure the crowds in and bring some relief to the inhabitants' mood of despair. However, it did not turn out exactly as planned. For one, fifteen-year-old Birdie Bell discovered two realities in her life that would change her destiny on that day of the hunt, and Fred, her mute eight-year-old little brother, suffering from dust pneumonia, saw a lot more than he was willing to write down in the soil with a stick. His

psychosomatic breathing difficulties increases as the secrets in his family's lives intensify. The wire nests of the crows, his beloved ten chickens, and his collection of bones keep him rooted to his own pace of growing up, while the events he witnesses in the family force him to speed up his emotional growth far beyond the normal. He brought Annie's apron home where it belonged, yet Annie did not realize the symbolism in the act until it was much later and she was forced to re-evaluate her own desires and dreams ...

The dust storms changes everything for the family as well as the town. The community opens up their minds, hearts and souls in an effort to help each person to survive the onslaught on their morals and beliefs. Ruth's restaurant and pub was more than just a gathering place for the destitute, the outcasts and the lonely. It was a place where hope was never allowed to stutter for a minute, even when the dust tried to bury the frequent visitors under mounts of dubious intentions ...

My comments.

A perfect read! A great literary experience. A deeply touching story of an imperfect family who stood to lose everything but was invisibly chained to each other by more than a genetic bond between them. Love did not manifest itself in words. Instead, it spattered down in compassionate protection of each other. Words could never find the same foothold in the storms.

RECOMMENDED!

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### **Diane Barnes says**

A while back I saw the Ken Burns documentary on the dust bowl, with pictures and footage of those great clouds of dust rolling over the prairie. It was interesting and informative, as his productions always are. The facts were astounding, the losses of farms and lives, coming on top of the depression as it did, I thought to myself, "How did they stand it?"

This book tells us how they stood it, some of them who stayed. It also goes further into why and how, one day at a time. The author makes us feel the grit in our throats and noses, see the gray film that can't be cleaned, feel the panic when they see those great clouds of dust coming at them, forced to hunker down (or as they say today, "shelter in place"). We feel the desperation and despair at not knowing how to make it end, what to do.

And because this is a novel about one family caught in these times trying to make it through, we also get the messiness of family life. Bad choices, mistakes that can't be fixed, pain, recriminations, but also joy and love. I loved every single person in this family: Samuel the father who gets a message from God; Fred, the 9 year old with bad lungs but a happy heart; Birdie, the teen-ager with dreams of escape; and Annie Bell, the mother trying to hold them all together, while trying to find some joy of her own.

This was a beautifully written book with, for me, a perfect ending. Rae Meadows did Ken Burns one better, she let me get inside the skins of the people who lived through these years. I'm a fan.

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### **Cathrine ?? says**

4.25★

In 1930s Oklahoma the hopes and dreams of the Bell family are eroding from mega sandstorms, buried by the dirt invading their homes and lungs. The winds running free across the plains bring only devastation to their livestock, crops, and hearts. When the things that give meaning and purpose to life are disappearing and there is little left to take, what can bring release and fulfillment? How the individual family members nurture hope in the midst of despair is at the heart of this story. It is told alternately from the perspective of each, particularly Annie, the wife and mother flirting with marital disaster while revisiting the desires and expectation of her younger heart as her daughter's own sexual awakening unfolds.

This beautifully crafted story brings to life the effects of unrelenting hardship and loss on a family trying to cope with one of the worst man made environmental disasters in history. I sing praises to her prose. Historical fact-based literary fiction written just the way I love it.

Thanks to NetGalley and Henry Holt & Company for a galley of this work in exchange for my honest review.

**Extras: Because the best stories for me are the ones that start a search beyond the pages.**

A short video visit with the author hi-lighting her insights and inspiration behind the book.  
<https://www.kirkusreviews.com/tv/vide...>

Dust bowl artwork depicting this time period can be viewed thanks to Google image search and gallery websites.

<https://www.google.com/search?q=dust+...>

I was familiar with the historical details used as a backdrop for the Bell's story. They are vividly portrayed in the PBS/Ken Burns documentary film The Dust Bowl (which I revisited) and are skillfully woven throughout her pages. Link to the film's trailer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYOmj...>

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**Jaidee says**

5 " tender, compassionate, lyrical " stars !!

**2016 Honorable Mention Read with High Distinction**

"Sometimes at first light Annie could hear the wind roll over the plain and she could imagine it was the soft rustle of a sea of wheat. She remembered dew sliding down blades of buffalo grass and collecting in honeysuckle flowers and slippery under bare feet before dawn. Mornings like a juicy pear."

Ms Meadows has created a beautiful and poignant story of a family struggling to survive, love and live in the 1930s dustbowl. Gorgeous and very sad.

Unfortunately the rest of my review got erased somehow but it was one of my very favorites of 2016. Warm thanks to Ms Rae Meadows !

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### **Angela M says**

5 stars!

"There had been no rain for seventy-two days and counting. The mercury would climb past a hundred today and no doubt again tomorrow." I would not have been able to imagine this, if not for how Rae Meadows swept me up into this place and time - Mulehead, Oklahoma in the 1930's , where there's drought and the dust is as heavy as the burdens of the people who live there . There's darkness when the dust comes and blocks the sun and then even when the sun comes back , darkness remains in between the storms in the despair and burdens of the characters.

Annie Bell mourns her lost child and the chance at a better life as she struggles daily to manage the hardships and is beginning to doubt who she really is . Her husband Samuel mourns the way things were before the drought and the dust when he could farm the land, clings to his religion and his dreams . Their teenage daughter Birdie mourns the abandonment of her first love and a chance at a new life . Eight year old Fred who doesn't speak, sees so much about his family and suffers the physical effects of dust which has caused him severe breathing problems.

I was also drawn into this story by the narrative which provided for changing points of view , from one paragraph to the next in the same chapter, allowing us to see each of the characters around the same moment. The stories and the moments and the days of these characters are blended in a way that lets the reader see these different perspectives as they are but yet together . The characters are not perfect , but in spite of their doubts , their transgressions , they were never unforgivable; they always loved each other.

This is a beautifully written story of hardship, heartbreak, and hope about the strength of the human spirit in the face of loss and a harsh existence . Thank you Henry Holt and Company and NetGalley and especially Rae Meadows.

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### **Suzanne Leopold says**

This story is about the Bell family living in Oklahoma during the 1930's. They are a family of four learning to survive during The Dust Bowl. Annie and Sam Bell married young. Together, they built a farm and are raised two children, Birdie and Fred. They are barely surviving and their community is teetering. Families are packing up and leaving for work elsewhere.

Each member of the Bell family are internally suffering while waiting out this disaster. Annie is unsatisfied with her life choices and starts having feelings towards an admirer. Sam will not give up on the farm and has faith that all will get better. Through his vivid dreams, he believes that torrential rain is on the horizon and decides to build a boat. Birdie, the teenage daughter is in love, and wants to marry. She argues with her mother daily, and is ready to leave the home. Eight year old Fred is mute, very observant, and can only communicate through writing. He is struggling with health issues brought on by the storms.

The author does a tremendous job in making you feel the desperation and despair felt by each family member. The beautiful writing establishes a natural connection between them. Because of this, their

relationships and conflicts are well executed. I really enjoyed reading the story from each of the family member's perspective. The author creates a vivid portrayal of the life of farmers living during this time period.

Currently giving away 4 copies on my blog until 1/19/17 <https://www.facebook.com/suzyapproved...#>

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### **Fran says**

Dust, devastation, doom, departure. These are four of the many words describing the Dust Bowl of 1930's Oklahoma. Samuel Bell, a former tenant farmer, moves with new wife Annie to a homestead in Oklahoma. Living first in a dugout, the couple painstakingly build their future home and raise a family. In alternating voices we learn how Samuel, Annie, teenage daughter Birdie, and son Fred handle the havoc wrought by lack of rain, resultant crop failure and punishing dust storms.

Samuel Bell, the patriarch, feels the wrath of God. He will not abandon his land to work on another man's soil. He looks at the sky, reads his Bible and in his religious fervor is convinced that torrential rain will come. He emotionally withdraws from wife Annie and starts to build a boat expecting impending floodwaters.

Annie, a pastor's daughter does not embrace the life her parents envision for her. Instead, she opts for the freedom and adventure of farming. Annie's restlessness increases as layers of dust block the sun, settle on the livestock and invade the food supply. Annie becomes remote but bound to the land. A tryst with Mayor Jack Lily is sexually liberating despite her love of family.

Birdie Bell loves the boy next door. Cy Mack is her first love and Birdie dreams of marriage. She expresses typical teenage angst and can't understand her mother's reservations. Annie feels that Birdie will have a brighter future without Cy and the farming community. A deep secret and the Mack family's abandonment of their farm is more than Birdie can bear.

Fred Bell, an eight year old unable to speak communicates his thoughts by putting pencil to paper. Fred loves animals and is very diligent about his care of the family chickens. A sickly boy, he suffers from dust pneumonia which creates wheezing and difficulty breathing. Fred asks Samuel why God cannot make it rain. Fred and Samuel embark upon a plan to build a boat. After all, Samuel claims, a deluge will come and renew the destroyed land.

Rae Meadows enlightens us as to the dire consequences of living in the 1930's Dust Bowl. Principal characters as well as supporting players alike have a story to tell. The struggles are unimaginable but where there is life there is hope.. "I Will Send Rain" is a powerful, insightful book about the strength of the human spirit in devastating times.

Thank you Henry Holt & Company and Net Galley for the opportunity to read and review "I Will Send Rain".

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## Iris P says

I Will Send Rain

★★★★ ½ Stars

*"The storm took place at sundown, it lasted through the night,  
When we looked out next morning, we saw a terrible sight.  
We saw outside our window where wheat fields they had grown  
Was now a rippling ocean of dust the wind had blown."*

**From the song "The Great Dust Storm"**

**Words and Music by Woody Guthrie**

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To me the best historical fiction novels are those that strive to sketch a vivid picture of the period when the story is set, reveal the mindset of the characters and elicit a good deal of empathy towards those characters.

A good sign that a novel has captured my imagination is that I find myself enthusiastically researching the history behind the story. As a reader there nothing more satisfying than reading a book that stimulates my intellect enough to motivate me to learn more.

*I Will Send Rain*, Rae Meadows's elegant and moving account of the struggles faced by a family of farmers in a depression-ridden small town in Oklahoma, handily fulfilled those expectations.

By now most of us have seen those haunting pictures of the dust storms and the unthinkable devastation they left behind. What this novel does well is putting a human face on those turbulent economic times and on the environmental disaster that has come to be known as *The Dust Bowl*.

It's impossible to miss the otherworldly atmosphere of this novel, from a "rain maker" who convinces the town people that detonating dynamite would somehow bring rain, to the ubiquitous dust, the critters, the never-ending drought, and of course the unimaginable scope of the dust storms. Meadows cleverly incorporates these end-of-days images to create a striking and unforgettable collage of this place at this time.

Even though the novel opens at the start of the Dust Bowl, the town of Mulehead, Oklahoma is already facing one of the longest droughts the area has seen and a few families have begun taking government relief money and moving to California, a place they hear is blissfully green and rainy.

### **"Food Will Win the War"- US Food Administration poster, circa 1918**

The Bells family had arrived there 19 years earlier. They had followed many others to become homesteaders in pursuit of new opportunities in the Great Plains.

Samuel Bell's deep commitment and love for the land prevents him from even considering the idea of leaving. *"I cannon leave this land that is ours, a farmer needs a farm"* he thinks.

Annie Bell however, is looking at this reality from a very different perspective. A few years earlier the death of Eleanor, a new born baby, had quietly but persistently fractured her relationship with Samuel.

For some people facing calamity is a path that takes them closer to God, for others it pushes them away from him. Samuel and Annie find themselves going into these two exact opposite directions. While Samuel is clinging to his faith, Annie, the daughter of a minister, is questioning her whole belief system. In the midst of this chasm hangs the future of their marriage and their family.

**Image from "The Dust Bowl", a documentary by  
Ken Burns which aired on PBS in 2012**

The Bells's two children also take central stage in the novel. There is Birdie, their free-spirit, indomitable 16-year-old daughter. Like any typical teenager, Birdie is pushing boundaries and dreaming of leaving Mulehead to start a new life with her new suitor.

As a family of farmers living in the midst of a long drought there's a perpetual wait for rain. For little Fred Bell though there are some ulterior motives at hand "*Rain would mean wheat would mean money would mean a bicycle*", he concludes. What can I say? The little people have different priorities!

This frail, sweet 8-year-old boy was the one character that stole my heart. I think the reason I adored him so much was his ability to remain so pure and innocent throughout his difficult life.

Out of a sense of despair Annie ends up making some very questionable decisions, but I still found myself empathizing with her. As a woman of the times she had very few avenues to channel her frustrations. My favorite part of Annie's story is the way she reconciles the fact that she and her husband subscribe to very different worldviews. Eventually Annie decides not to begrudge Samuel's faith but also chooses to reassert her right to uphold her own beliefs.

Although Samuel's idea of (view spoiler), I'd liked to believe that this bizarre behavior was born out of his need to find a sense of purpose and a desire to protect his family.

*I Will Send You Rain* is at its core a story of tenacity and overcoming adversity. But in these times of instant gratification and quick turnarounds it also underscores the virtues of patience, of perseverance and most especially of hope. These are after all the "*next-year-will be-better*" people.

Even now, when technology has seemingly taken over our lives, farmers rely and trust nature to do its part. To me there something earnest and very admirable about that way of living.

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**Jennifer says**

*Life was mostly about remembering or waiting, Birdie thought. Remembering when things were better, waiting for things to get better again. There was never a now, never a time when you said, "This is it."*

Rae Meadows' newest book, *I Will Send Rain*, is an absorbing tale of life in Oklahoma during the Dust Bowl of the 1930's. Her writing is so atmospheric, I felt the heat bearing down, the wind blowing all around,

and wanted to wipe the dusty grime from my clothes and face.

While the novel provides a good sense of life during this time and place, Meadows centers her story on the Bell family, and the novel is told through the point of view of different family members. Readers see the toll the hardships take on their bodies, minds, and spirits -- the oppressive heat as much of a burden as the *"oppressive sameness"* of life in what had become a God-forsaken place. The character development and relationships between family members -- husband and wife, mother and daughter, siblings -- was extraordinarily well done.

4.5 stars rounded up to 5.

Thank you to NetGalley and Henry Holt & Co for a galley of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Brina says**

I Will Bring Rain written by a goodreads friend of mine Rae Meadows is the story of the homesteading Bell family of Mulehead, Oklahoma. Set during the beginning of the dust bowl, I Will Bring Rain is a tale of bleak existence sprinkled with hope in a small community where people had moved with the promise of farming their own land. It is a story of perseverance during a difficult era in our nation's history, which I rate 3.75 stars.

Samuel and Annie Bell had moved to Mulehead along with the Fords and Jensens in the 1920s during the great land grab when the federal government parceled Oklahoma farmland to individuals. Samuel, a former sharecropper, and Annie, a preacher's daughter moved with the promise of starting their lives anew. They built up their farm and family, and as the story begins they have two children: Barbara Ann "Birdie" aged 15 and Fred aged 8, who is mute. As common on the plains at the time, they also had a daughter named Eleanor who died as an infant. Ten years later Eleanor's memory still haunts Annie, and her ability as a wife and mother becomes a key subplot to the novel.

As the dust bowl starts, many farmers pack up and drive west or south in search of a better existence. Yet, the Bells decide to stay. Birdie would like to follow her would be fiancé Cy to California but still has to finish school. Samuel dreams about a flood to wipe out the earth and decides to build an ark. Fred gets swept away in his father's obsession and helps with the construction. Meanwhile, Annie longs for something more than a impoverished existence and is temporarily smitten with the single mayor of the town named Jack Lily. Each family member becomes so enrapt in their personal life and projects that they do not see their other family members' problems that could threaten to unravel the fabric of their family.

Meadows weaves a tale of a family determined to survive on the land that was given to them. She creates memorable characters like Lily the mayor and his deputy mayor Styron who is always scheming ways to increase the town's economy. Meanwhile she employs vivid imagery to describe the Bell homestead and made me sympathize with their plight. By the middle of the book, I was pulling for the Bells to survive in their myriad ways and live through the dust bowl.

I rate this book 3.75 stars for Meadows' prose and memorable characters. Yet, I do not rate it higher because I was expecting more of a period piece about the dust bowl, and this story was more of a portrait of a family, with a little additional mention of the history of the time period. It was a fast read to finish out a month of memorable books, and I would recommend it to those people looking for a quick reading 20th century

historical fictional novel.

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### **Elyse Walters says**

"In two years, things had gone from good to broken for the Bells. They use to sit on the porch at the end of the day and he would dance like a chicken, his elbows out like wings, and Pop would laugh. Now at night all his father did was look at the sky and look at his bible and not talk and not talk some more".

Fred doesn't talk either...( literally)... He is 8 years old, mute....and sick due to the dust and storms. I loved this child ...youngest in the family. He's very observant- has a great heart, and much compassion.

Birdie, almost 16, is in love with Cy ...a neighborhood boy. She is filled with bright hopes and dreams.

Young teenage - first love ....not easy to forget!

Eleanor...was the child who was buried in a small cemetery behind the church three months after she was born.

Annie and Samuel Bell are husband and wife....parents of the above kids.

'Good to broken':

....I thought about this 'theme' during a morning hike....all the 'Good to Broken'.

The physical conditions of the Dust Bowl years in Oklahoma for the Bell Family were nasty!!! I can't imagine any family thriving -dancing - singing with such thorns in your flesh.

Samuel had a farming dream. Annie followed his dream....with love in her heart - and confident her husband loved her.

Things become complex with this couple. As Samuel's dream begins to wash away --he begins to feel as if it's because he is being punished for his sins. He becomes obsessed with thinking God has spoken with him ... and builds a boat to demonstrate his faith.

Annie's dreams began washing away when her baby died. Her dreams vanished even more as her husband changed ... (not romantically focused on her). Annie's eyes for the town mayor becomes an understandably but dangerous-red-flag-choice.

Annie has so much she needs to heal of her soul. From woman-to-woman, mother to mother ... I just wanted to reach out and hug her.

Annie saw so much life in her daughter...life she wanted for her...as much as Birdie wanted for herself. Yet, Annie was longing for passion, lust, and butterflies herself....

.....(pleasure to escape regretful feelings and inner distress).

This novel is about a family..(hardships - secrets- and disconnection)....but there are moments of real resilience and power within this tribe. My god it took perseverance to keep going.

It's also a novel about the community and respect of the land.

There's a scene in the story - where it becomes clear that magic tricks won't bring rain.

We are left with the message...that we must make behavior environmental changes.... adding our personal responsibility to do our parts.

A requirement of strength of heart and soul to survive, "I Will Send Rain", is a deeply human story. Rae

Meadow writes compellingly and does a terrific job bringing an era to life.

Thank You Henry Holt & Company, Netgalley, and Rae Meadows

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