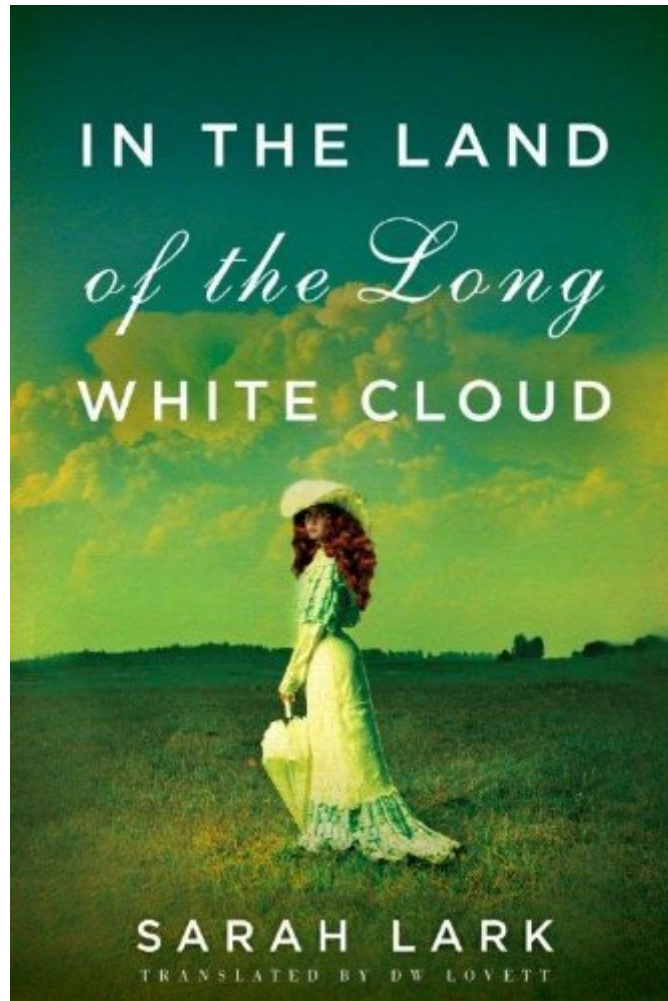


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In The Land Of The Long White Cloud (In The Land Of The Long White Cloud Saga Book 1)



Synopsis

Helen Davenport, governess for a wealthy London household, longs for a family of her own—but nearing her late twenties, she knows her prospects are dim. Then she spots an advertisement seeking young women to marry New Zealand's honorable bachelors and begins an affectionate correspondence with a gentleman farmer. When her church offers to pay her travels under an unusual arrangement, she jumps at the opportunity. Meanwhile, not far away in Wales, beautiful and daring Gwyneira Silkham, daughter of a wealthy sheep breeder, is bored with high society. But when a mysterious New Zealand baron deals her father an unlucky blackjack hand, Gwyn's hand in marriage is suddenly on the table. Her family is outraged, but Gwyn is thrilled to escape the life laid out for her. The two women meet on the ship to Christchurch—Helen traveling in steerage, Gwyn first class—and become unlikely friends. When their new husbands turn out to be very different than expected, the women must help one another find the life—and love—they'd hoped for. Set against the backdrop of colonial nineteenth-century New Zealand, *In the Land of the Long White Cloud* is a soaring saga of friendship, romance, and unforgettable adventure.

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Customer Reviews

It was very difficult for me to decide how many stars to give this book. I was vassillating between 3, 4, or 5 stars, and as you can see, five won. This is a long book (815 pages), and the pages are bigger than the normal size paperbacks you usually see. So this was not my usual 1 or 2 evening book! I alternately enjoyed and suffered through this book for about five days. The story centers around the lives of two young women who travel to New Zealand to meet their respective future husbands. The circumstances surrounding their marriage arrangements are, a lost poker game on the part of the wealthy young woman's father, and a personals ad answered by the other young woman (a respectable school teacher). The two women meet and become good friends during the boat voyage to New Zealand. Each woman has hopes and dreams, but of course the happy, comfortable lives they envision do not come to pass. There are animosities between their new families, but the women still manage to see each other often and remain friends. This is one of the few blessings in the story, as there are hardships, tragedies, and one difficulty after another. I didn't know whether to applaud their endurance, or become frustrated at their inability to escape their situations. The ending was somewhat satisfying, but of course it was also interlaced with tragedy. But by this time you pretty much expect that. So I guess it really wouldn't have been believable any other way. The reason I was leaning toward fewer stars, is mainly because I felt a little dark cloud around me during the days I was reading this book. Like most everyone, I have lived through my own difficulties and tragedies. So why on earth would I want to relive the fictional hardships of others?

This book begins in 1852 and ends in 1877 -- and yet the characters all speak as if they were stuck in 2007. I don't know if this is because of the translation -- but this book sets a record for incongruity. Consider the following: "Lucas inquired about the cultural scene in London." "Gwyneira was blown away when she heard about Laurie and Mary." "The wild seemed a cafeteria for him." "She called it their wilderness survival game." "It's such a wonderful party." James looked at her probingly ... "Spiced with a good does of schadenfreude," she sighed. And my favorite: "No, no that's for crazies who have nothing to lose. And back then, I already had Olivia and the boys - so I wasn't about to slug it out with giant fish that would have just wanted to get me by the throat. It makes me a little sorry for the critters." Incidentally, the word "schadenfreude," meaning delight in the misfortunes of others, first showed up in English in an obscure publication in 1852: R. C. Trench Study of Words (ed. 3) II. 29. "What a fearful thing it is that any language should have a word expressive of the pleasure which men feel at the calamities of others, for the existence of the word bears testimony to the existence of the thing. And yet in more than one is such a word to be found ... In Greek epichairekakia, in the German, 'Schadenfreude'." But here we have characters in New

Zealand using it in the 1860s. AMAZING. The word "cafeteria" entered American English (not English English) from the Spanish around 1839. I don't expect a book set in the 19th century to read as if it were written by Charlotte Bronte or Charles Dickens.

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