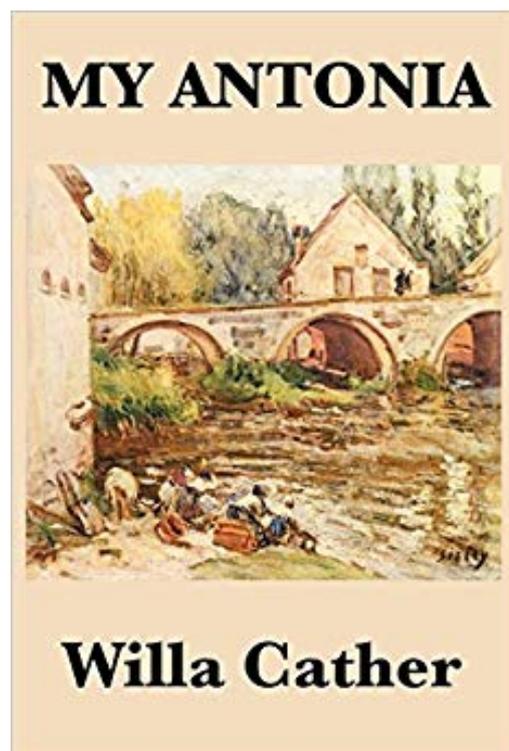


## My Antonia by Willa Cather



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**ISBN:** 1604594780

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**Author:** Willa Cather

**Book title:** My Antonia

**Pages:** 140

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My *Ántonia* tells the stories of several immigrant families who move out to rural Nebraska to start new lives in America, with a particular focus on a Bohemian family, the Shimerdas, whose eldest daughter is named *Ántonia*. The book's narrator, Jim Burden, arrives in the fictional town of Black Hawk, Nebraska, on the same train as the Shimerdas, as he goes to live with his grandparents after his parents have died. Jim develops strong feelings for *Ántonia*, something between a crush and a filial bond, and the reader views *Ántonia*'s life, including its attendant struggles and triumphs, through that lens.



## Reviews of the *My Antonia* by Willa Cather

### Gri

"My Antonia" is a very lovely novel authored by Willa Cather. It is about farm and town life in Nebraska near the end of the Nineteenth Century. The story is told through a male narrator and Antonia is a central figure throughout. Willa Cather made me love both this title character and the novel.

I have been reading Willa Cather novels in chronological order. This is the third of the so call Prairie Trilogy. I have found that these stories are not depended on each other and each can be read independently. I did enjoy all of them very much and am glad to have read all of them. I would say this is my favorite, however I liked all of them, and also particularly enjoyed "The Song Of The Lark". "The Song Of The Lark" is set in Colorado and the characters are different. It is markedly lengthier than "My Antonia".

I read this particular novel while at the same time listening to an audiobook narrated by Jeff Cummings. Antonia and others are native Europeans. Mr. Cummings was excellent and used accents that really added to my enjoyment of the reading experience. I feel I have a mediocre inner narrator and a professional narrator often adds to my personal reading enjoyment. However, Miss Cather carefully paints portraits of scenery with words. When I arrive at such a point, I stop and carefully read the words at my own pace and take my time to picture the landscape.

As a possible aside, I would like to mention that Willa Cather also authored one of the most poignant short stories that I have ever read. It is "Paul's Case". It is a short story, but it is not brief. It is set in Pittsburgh. Thank You.

### **Mr.Champions**

I can't think of another novel that captures the time and place as well as Cather's My Antonia. It's a wonderful story of an immigrant family settling in Nebraska, and the travails of the displacement and the introduction to the hardscrabble life of midwestern winters and poverty in the late 1800s. The writing is simple and utterly compelling -- direct but authoritative. Her ability to describe landscape is distinctive and extraordinary.

### **WinImmortal**

3.5 stars

This mini novel is the first in Willa Cather's Great Plains Trilogy and is the shortest of the three. The books are all different and can be read in any order; however, they all share a focus on the prairie landscape and on the women of this American frontier at the turn of the nineteenth century. The feminist component imbued in these stories was a trailblazer in its time.

The three books are as follows: O Pioneers! (1913), The Song of the Lark (1915), and My Antonia (1918).

O Pioneers! is set in the fictional town of Hanover, Nebraska, sometime between 1883 and 1890. It centers around the Bergsons, a family of Swedish immigrants who deal with both the hardships and triumphs of farming an untamed land with an uncertain future. The eldest daughter, Alexandra, is the central focus as she inherits the land—as well as the future of her three younger brothers-- when her father dies. She's a mere 20 yet embodies the true grit and vision it takes to deal with the unpredictability of nature and the risks of new ideas. This is a woman with convictions and she's determined to put in the effort and time it takes so her progeny will have better lives one day.

I think there are three things I loved most about this story.... watching the lives of immigrants transform as they reap the benefits of their hard-earned labor (particularly how the youngest brother has opportunities in education)... all the descriptive writing here... and the fact that it is centered around a woman of strength and intelligence who lives more for her land-related dreams than merely silly romance (not that's there's anything wrong with romance... I just love when historical females engage in something beyond their usual lot).

However, I think the novel is rather short and hasn't aged in the best way. Occasionally, I was bored. The narrative jumps 3 years into the future, and later, 16 years into the future. For me, the struggles

that went down in those spaces would have been interesting to read about. Just not a lot of development here. The ending is also a bit of a downer but that's pioneer life for ya, I suppose... and I woulda probably hated it if it had a fairy tale ending anyway.

It also reads like a Young Adult novel and I am gonna shelve it as such. The language is fairly simple and plain (as are the people therein). I mean, it's also written in a very descriptive manner, which I always appreciate... but I can see why this trilogy is often found in schools (I read *My Antonia* in high school yrs ago). It's historical but also very accessible for young minds. I could have read this one in junior high and understood it perfectly.

What's been especially interesting is reading about Willa Cather herself. Not just her own experiences with the American frontier or as a writer... but also her possible lifestyle/identification as a lesbian, or, some believe, even a transman. Fascinating!

### **felt boot**

An extremely well written novel, full of poetic descriptive prose. It felt so real to be immersed in this age of breaking soil in a new land, the courage and endurance of the people is so inspiring in times where we have it so easy with all mod cons and still find reason to moan about too much to do!!!

Wow, even remembering my young days, washing in a copper of boiling water, slaving over the hear for a whole day, instead of just using the washing machine and dryer... WOW how far have we come.

Great story

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