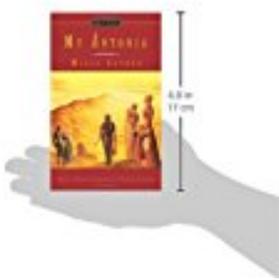


# [PDF] My Antonia

Willa Cather, Marilyn Sides - pdf download free book

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**Books Details:**

Title: My Antonia  
Author: Willa Cather, Marilyn Sides  
Released: 2014-03-04  
Language:  
Pages: 288  
ISBN: 0451466268  
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**Description:**

It seems almost sacrilege to infringe upon a book as soulful and rich as Willa Cather's *My Antonia* by offering comment. First published in 1918, and set in Nebraska in the late 19th century, this tale of the spirited daughter of a Bohemian immigrant family planning to farm on the untamed land ("not a country at all but the material out of which countries are made") comes to us through the romantic eyes of Jim Burden. He is, at the time of their meeting, newly orphaned and arriving at his grandparents' neighboring farm on the same night her family strikes out to make good in their new country. Jim chooses the opening words of his recollections deliberately: "I first heard of Antonia on what seemed to be an interminable journey across the great midland plain of North America," and it seems almost certain that readers of Cather's masterpiece will just as easily pinpoint the first time

they heard of *Antonia* and her world. It seems equally certain that they, too, will remember that moment as one of great light in an otherwise unremarkable trip through the world.

*Antonia*, who, even as a grown woman somewhat downtrodden by circumstance and hard work, "had not lost the fire of life," lies at the center of almost every human condition that Cather's novel effortlessly untangles. She represents immigrant struggles with a foreign land and tongue, the restraints on women of the time (with which Cather was very much concerned), the more general desires for love, family, and companionship, and the great capacity for forbearance that marked the earliest settlers on the frontier.

As if all this humanity weren't enough, Cather paints her descriptions of the vastness of nature--the high, red grass, the road that "ran about like a wild thing," the endless wind on the plains--with strokes so vivid as to make us feel in our bones that we've just come in from a walk on that very terrain ourselves. As the story progresses, Jim goes off to the University in Lincoln to study Latin (later moving on to Harvard and eventually staying put on the East Coast in another neat encompassing of a stage in America's development) and learns Virgil's phrase "*Optima dies ... prima fugit*" that Cather uses as the novel's epigraph. "The best days are the first to flee"--this could be said equally of childhood and the earliest hours of this country in which the open land, much like *My Antonia*, was nothing short of a rhapsody in prairie sky blue. --*Melanie Rehak* --This text refers to the edition.

**From School Library Journal** Grade 7 Up--In Jim Burden's accounting of his life with, and without, Antonia Shimerda, listeners are transported to the hardscrabble Nebraska prairie and the rural immigrant experience. When Jim first sees the Shimerda family, immigrants from Bohemia, disembarking from the same train that is taking him West to live with his grandparents, he has no idea the impact they will have on his life. Nostalgically, he remembers the good and bad times they had on their respective farms and creates his portrait of Antonia, an independent and tough survivor. The brief biography of author Willa Cather at the beginning of the CD explains how her life mirrors Antonia's life in many ways, helping listeners understand the context of the story. Patrick Lawlor's rich, fluid voice lends an air of sophistication to Burden, reinforcing the class structure inherent at the beginning of the 20th century. Lawlor's attempts to create voices for the characters often falls flat. Since the novel is Burden's reminiscence, it would have been better told in Burden's voice alone. Since *My Antonia* continues to be a staple in many English curriculums, this is a good audiobook for schools and public libraries to have available.--*Lynn Evarts, Sauk Prairie High School, Prairie du Sac, WA*

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