

The Cost of Living

Daisy DeMay

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Reviewed by Tammy Ruggles for Reader Views (08/2023)

5*- An emotional and powerful journey of restoration

"The Cost of Living" by Daisy DeMay is an impactful dystopian drama that will leave an impression on you from beginning to end. Imagine that you would have to start all over after losing the things that made you who you are, including an abusive marriage where lies and manipulation were the norm. This is the new challenge for the central character, Sarah. She is broken, but two others, Adam and Sam, want to help her find her way again. The question is, do they end up helping her or hurting her? Surviving after disaster is one of the driving forces of this novel, and well-conceived, allowing for a lot of drama and character development to occur.

The author is a strong writer, able to wring emotions from readers with ease. The opening scene sets the stage for the conflict that will unfold. The differences between Sarah and her husband Kyle as they experience a storm show how disconnected things are between them. She can see the beauty in the storm, he can't; though he is right about its destructive force. The themes of death, loss, and grief are heavy, but they do make a memorable impact on you as you read.

I like that dialogue drives a lot of the story, and it feels fresh and natural. You may not have experienced the things that Sarah has, but there are parts of the storyline you can relate to, like dealing with dark times, searching for hope and healing, not knowing who to trust, and trying to find your way back. Sarah has a lot on her plate to deal with, and it's fascinating to wonder how this will all turn out for her. We see Sarah's character change and grow over time.

The author's strengths lie in telling the emotions of the story, allowing the characters to handle difficult situations, and working towards resolution. I also like the surprise turns along the way, even within the characters. They keep you guessing, and you aren't sure what could happen next, so this isn't a predictable plot. The first-person point of view makes you feel even closer to the story and the characters. If you are in search of a drama that grabs you and makes you feel for the characters and situations, "The Cost of Living" by Daisy DeMay should be your number one choice.