



Yellow Hair

Andrew Joyce

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Through no fault of his own, a young man is thrust into a new culture just at the time that culture is undergoing massive changes. It is losing its identity, its lands, and its dignity. He not only adapts, he perseveres and, over time, becomes a leader—and on occasion, the hand of vengeance against those who would destroy his adopted people.

Yellow Hair documents the injustices done to the Sioux Nation from their first treaty with the United States in 1805 through Wounded Knee in 1890. Every death, murder, battle, and outrage written about actually took place. The historical figures that play a role in this fact-based tale of fiction were real people and the author uses their real names. Yellow Hair is an epic tale of adventure, family, love, and hate that spans most of the 19th century. This is American history.

Awarded Book of the Year by Just Reviews.

Awarded Best Historical Fiction of 2016 by Colleen's Reviews

Andrew Joyce is the recipient of the 2013 Editor's Choice Award for Best Western for his novel, Redemption: The Further Adventures of Huck Finn and Tom Sawyer.

Yellow Hair Details

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Author : Andrew Joyce

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From Reader Review Yellow Hair for online ebook

Pamela Beckford says

Yellow Hair is an epic tale - a tale of love, loss, and a people's destruction. I immediately connected with the characters. Andrew Joyce has a way of storytelling that engages the reader. I was hooked from the first page until the very last page.

I have read other books by Joyce and I would say this is the best one yet. Believable characters, engaging storytelling, and a desire to keep reading/learning. I was sad when this book ended.

Not just a coming of age story, but so much more. Yellow Hair suffers loss after loss, but also love. He navigates both the white man's world and the Indian's world.

I highly recommend this book, especially if you enjoy historical fiction.

Vigilant Reader says

Title – Yellow Hair

Author – Andrew Joyce

Genre – Historical Fiction, Western

498 Amazon Pages

Rating 5 stars out of 5 Posted 1/14/17

My impressions: naive settlers, scumbag white officials, noble Indians, murder, torture, genocide.

The story begins in 1850 with a wagon train of settlers leaving Westport, Missouri on the Oregon Trail. The settlers are from various locations east of Missouri. The main focus is on the Ariesen family, particularly twenty year old, blond haired Jacob. The early portion of the story was the only part I took issue with. Eight families traveled in one of four columns. The background of each of those eight families was told in more detail than I felt was necessary given the fates that awaited them. You be the judge.

The primary plot begins when Jacob comes down with cholera and against all odds survives. Due to circumstances I'll forestall he is alone on the prairie. From there the story of Yellow Hair evolves.

In Jacob's weakened and delirious condition he is found by a party of Dakota Indians. A female warrior named Fighting Woman assumes responsibility for him and takes Jacob to her tribe. He recovers and is accepted and adopts the ways of the Mdewakanton band of the Santee Sioux of the Dakota nation. When danger befalls the tribe he becomes a fierce warrior.

Over the next forty years Yellow Hair and the Indian nations reel under the lies and mistreatment of the Federal Government and its agents. Promises are broken and details of treaties are changed after agreements are made and signed by both sides. As settlers pour into the North Central area of the United States land given to the Indian tribes by treaty agreements is stolen by the government and the Indians are confined to smaller and smaller areas. Finally, the Natives rebel and attack the hated Army Blue Coats. Many of the settlers and Indians are friends until battles break out and atrocities occur on both sides.

If you have any knowledge of the Indian Wars between 1850 and 1890 you can guess the final outcome.

The plot appears to be based on actual history and I highly recommend it.

The editing and sentence structure are good.
The plot, character development, details and research are excellent.

This review was provided in exchange for a free book.
Vigilant Reader Book Reviews.

Victoria Zigler says

On the one hand, this is a great book, with an interesting plot, filled with fascinating historical facts and a wonderful cast of characters. On the other hand, there's too much telling and not enough showing, and the way the book was written meant I alternated between feeling like I was reading a textbook and a fictional novel (either of which would have been fine, but the constant shift from one form to another was off-putting).

Colleen M. Chesebro says

Yellow Hair is an action-packed epic saga sharing the life story of a man coming to grips with his destiny. From the first page of this book, the reader is thrust inside the life journey of Jacob Ariesen, a young man whose family was looking for a better way of life in California. Leaving Massachusetts behind, and heading west on the Oregon Trail, the Arisen's meet up with a wagon train headed to California in the mid-1800's and set out toward gold country.

Most of the travelers were Eastern businesspeople, and they weren't prepared to face the hardships on the trail. Careless errors of judgment by the pioneers results in the deaths of many family members. The people were greenhorns and had no clear idea what they had gotten themselves into. Throw in a crippling bout of cholera, and you have a clear picture of the tribulations suffered by the brave folks who traveled West looking for a better way of life. In the blink of an eye, Jacob's entire family is wiped out, and he becomes the sole survivor.

With the dead and dying all around him, Jacob Ariesen becomes infected with cholera, and his days are numbered. Help is at hand, when a prophetic Native American woman, named Suni, finds her destiny with the fair-haired Jacob. Suni nurses him back to health, and she calls him, "Yellow Hair." With no family of his own, Yellow Hair embraces the Dakota tribe who adopts him. He learns to speak the native languages of the Great Plains Indians and lives his life as a member of the Dakota tribe.

Jacob Ariesen, a.k.a. Yellow Hair takes his place in history framed by the U.S. government's policy of placing the Dakota Sioux Indian tribes onto reservations after breaking treaty after treaty with the native peoples. The rest of the story belongs to Yellow Hair, told from his point of view.

I felt both sides (Native American and Whites) were portrayed as accurately as history could allow. The difference is in perspective, when you the reader, have the chance to witnesses the historical events through the eyes of a white man who considers himself to be an Indian.

I thought the author, Andrew Joyce, was entirely fair in his depiction of all the events. I never felt one side was glorified over another. The historical facts are woven in between the author's interpretation of the events

making history come alive.

History has a way of repeating itself, and I was quite moved with the parallels between the novel, and real life events unfolding at the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation and the Dakota Access Pipeline. I must admit I shed a few tears at the brutality of humanity on both sides of the spectrum.

I enjoyed this book from start to finish and could not put it down. And, as the author reminds us, "This is history," which means many of these happenings are hard to swallow from a humanitarian point of view.

This is one of my favorite books from my expanding library of Andrew Joyce novels. If you love historical fiction set in the American West, you will love Yellow Hair.

Character Believability: 5

Flow and Pace: 5

Reader Engagement: 5

Reader Enrichment: 5

Reader Enjoyment: 5

Overall Rate: 5 out of 5 stars

Peter Walsh says

WOW !!! A very necessary insight into American history, which would be a hugely, worthwhile inclusion in any school curriculum ... The Genesis of the Wild West as only Andrew Joyce can tell it ... Gripping, from the very start, a tale of survival, faith and destiny, colored with empathy, admiration and love for a stolen culture ... Amazing indigenous peoples who still stand together today at Standing Rock, against insurmountable odds ... A spirit such as that will never be broken ... It leaves a rustle in the trees and a rhythm in the Dakota rivers which will remain forever ...

Linda Bethea says

Andrew's excellent book engaged me from page one. I normally read right through, but Yellow Hair gave me so much to ponder that I took my time in order to digest fully. I have ancestors who were Native American and others who were involved in the Indian Wars. This strange dichotomy tugged at me as I read. I ended up feeling guilty as though I had been personally involved. It leaves me feeling more responsible socially.

N.N. Light says

I'm a big fan of historical fiction. Why? I get to experience history and when it's done right, reading it changes me as a person and I see the world in a whole new light. I'm fairly familiar with the atrocities foisted upon the Sioux Nation in the 19th century through my schooling and my childhood friends (Sioux) but in Yellow Hair, Andrew Joyce unveils what really happened.

“This is American History,” states Joyce and I applaud him for using real names and events while weaving his protagonist throughout. Joyce’s research is spot-on and historically accurate.

Yellow Hair is a book every single American (and Canadian) needs to read. Joyce plunges the reader into history and instead of being a passive observer, the reader is suffering right along with their Sioux brothers and sisters. This is the real history and we cannot stand idly by and have history repeat itself.

Another fantastic gem from Andrew Joyce and I highly recommend it, especially if you love historical fiction!

Favorite Character:

Yellow Hair. Not since reading Jane M. Auel have I been so connected to a historical fiction character as I did with Yellow Hair. He’s the vehicle Joyce uses to show the reader the real American history and I got to experience everything Yellow Hair witnessed. The most amazing thing is that Yellow Hair really existed and after reading this, I still feel him with me.

Favorite Quote:

“The coming of the White Man would forever change the fortunes of the people of the plains— more often than not for the worse. Very few White Men had a positive influence on the Indians. But there were a few. One of those men was Jacob Ariesen.”

My Rating: 5+ stars

This review first appeared: <https://princessofthelight.wordpress.com>

Angela Richter says

A Fair Story.

While I enjoyed the story of Yellow Hair, out was not an exciting page turner as expected. A fair read.

Susan Jones says

"Cultures Clash"

A few of my thoughts from reading Yellow Hair. If you are interested in the Sioux tribes and their interactions with the settlers and military of the times, this is a must read. Yes, it is historical fiction, but fiction based on facts, and imbued with the feelings and personalities of mankind, from both sides of the equation. The roles of the protagonists and antagonists are interchangeable and the author must be given credit for his ability to depict equally the humanity, compassion and dignity of mankind, alongside the frailties of human nature, sometimes driven by inhumane customs. There are no judgments delivered in the story as to which side was right or wrong. The story simply portrays how the characters might have felt and reacted, caught up in the maelstrom of history.

Emily says

The concept behind Yellow Hair piqued my interest right away, and the book did not disappoint. (In fact, I also then purchased the print copy to add to my library.) The wonderful blending of fact and fiction held my interest not only to, but actually beyond, the end of the story; the protagonist (Jacob-turned-Yellow Hair) and his woman-turned wife (Sunie, aka Fighting Woman) felt increasingly like good friends as Joyce developed their characters, and the story stayed with me long after I read the last page. As historical fiction, this is a story of old deception that is, unfortunately, also relevant given the events in North Dakota concerning the indigenous peoples and their righteous protest against the pipeline. I try to review books without giving away the actual story, so I will say only this in closing: The author's background research is solidly evident, the voice authentic. The facts surrounding this time in U.S. history is presented in a way that is easy to absorb but hard to forget. A compelling read!

Sally Cronin says

History is written by the victors - Now read the facts.

As a child of the 1960s, and with a father who was a huge Western fan, it was easy to get carried away with the dramatic and sweeping misinformation that was paraded before us. John Wayne led the charge across the plains and the common theme running through these Hollywood epics was 'the only good injun, is a dead injun!'

Then in my late teens I read Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee by Dee Brown and my love affair with many of the western films was at an end.

I had read the reviews of Yellow Hair and I was interested to read this fictionalised version of actual events. I was not disappointed and as I was introduced to the back stories of the white settlers, and their often very pragmatic and desperate reasons for heading into the West, I began to see how it was not usually a malicious intrusion and greedy land grab but two cultures being misled and manipulated by the US Government and those with commercial interests.

You reach a point early on in the book; having been introduced to the settlers in this wagon train, when you

are shocked into the recognition of how very dangerous their undertaking was and how unprepared the majority of them were.

Then begins the saga that becomes the story of a white man living as part of this besieged indigenous people, struggling to maintain their traditions and to survive the destruction of their way of life and the land that sustains them.

The list of injustices is very long, and the brutality of the clashes between the cultures, graphic and very disturbing. Peace was brokered time after time and promises were made that were only as good for as long as it took the ink to dry. You will be shocked at your sense of outrage as the behaviour of those in power and also saddened that these once proud and flourishing tribes should be so decimated in just 85 years.

Andrew Joyce does not pull any punches, but he presents the facts well and fairly. The thread that binds the story together, and humanises it, is the story of a young man with a foot in both cultures. Seeing the events and catastrophic impact on both settler and Indian through his eyes, will make you question much of the history written by the victors and then dramatised for our entertainment.

I recommend that you read the book for yourselves and you can find it here:

Grady says

‘This is American history.’

Florida author Andrew Joyce took a leaping chance on providing follow-ups to an American classic Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn - and oddly enough he succeeded! Joyce is an inveterate hitchhiker and doubtless that lifestyle has supplied him with the rich imagination he so freely offers in his newest book YELLOW HAIR that explores the history of American Indians, the Sioux Nation in particular.

Andrew sets the tone in his author’s note at the beginning of the book – ‘Yellow Hair documents the injustices done to the Sioux Nation from their first treaty with The United States in 1805 through Wounded Knee in 1890. Every death, murder, battle, and outrage depicted herein actually took place— from the first to the last. The historical figures that play a role in my story were real people and I used their real names. I conjured up my protagonist only to weave together the various events conveyed in this fact-based tale of fiction.’ So Andrew remains passionate about American history – our writers such as Mark Twain and now our American Indian heritage.

To take the reader to the roots of his story Andrew steps further back, describing the planet’s beginning as a sea covered globe followed by the recession of the waters and the emergence of life on land. ‘Eventually the first of the two-legged creatures arrived. They were a species that had developed elsewhere on the planet. They came down from the North carrying their homes on their backs and herding hitherto unknown species of four-legged animals. In only a short while, the offspring of the two-legs had populated the great plains of the continent. By then they had broken up into different tribes, and on occasion made war with one another. They hunted the buffalo, elk, and deer for sustenance. They scratched at the earth and planted seeds in the rich soil that had once been the bottom of a sea. They lived that life for 10,000 years until men from the South arrived. They wore iron helmets and iron upon their breasts. Their skin was white, not the color of a human being’s. They called the people of the plains “Indians.” They called themselves conquistadors and they brought with them an animal no one had ever seen before. It stood fifteen hands high and could be ridden long distances or used to carry packs.’ That is the quality and veracity of the story to come.

Andrew's prose is sophisticated and credible as he outlines this criminal history of our abuse of the Sioux Nation for 85 years. The 'Yellow Hair' of the title is Jacob Ariesen of Concord Massachusetts. As Andrew introduces him 'The coming of the White Man would forever change the fortunes of the people of the plains— more often than not for the worse. Very few White Men had a positive influence on the Indians. But there were a few. One of those men was Jacob Ariesen.'

His name became Yellow Hair and this in many ways is a novel that allows us to understand the agonies of the Indians but also the humanity of such few but significant men as Yellow Hair. The novel is rich in engrossing history and written in a manner that makes it a very fine novel.

Barb Taub says

They say that history is written by the victors. When that happens, it sometimes takes fiction to see the truth through the fates of individual characters. Gabriel Garcia Marquez used fiction in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* to tell the suppressed truth about the United Fruit Company's history of exploitation in Columbia. Thomas Pynchon used it in *Gravity's Rainbow* to deconstruct World War II victories (by fictionalizing the V-2 rocket that hit the Rex Cinema in Antwerp on December 16, 1966, killing 567 people, the most killed by a single rocket during the entire war).

Similarly, Andrew Joyce takes on a monumental task, as he tells about the forces that dealt death to settlers, native peoples, and government forces. And he pulls no punches, from describing the diseases introduced by early European arrivals (plagues which reduced North American population by as much as 90-percent), to the differences in cultures, to the profound conviction that white men held a fundamentally god-given superiority that justified every deceit and depredation.

Ostensibly, *Yellow Hair* is the story of Jacob Ariesen, whose father makes the decision to join a westward bound wagon train in 1850. Although friends warn them of the dangers from "savages", the forces which decimate the train are the harsh realities of a natural world. The former shopkeepers, servants, and city dwellers face a grim realization that they must maintain a grueling pace across the plains in a race where failure to make it through the mountains means freezing to death at the end—if the dust, thirst, accidents, drowning, and most deadly of all, cholera haven't killed them first.

Yellow Hair follows Jacob's life from boyhood, to the loss of his family, his rescue and adoption by the Dakotah who named him Yellow Hair. As time goes on, Yellow Hair is buffeted by the political forces, hatred, and history of the times, becoming both a witness and a victim.

One of the things I most enjoyed about *Yellow Hair* was watching how Andrew Joyce clicks through the tired old list of Indian tropes and methodically subverts them. For example:

* Indian Princess saves the hero: except the princess is actually a warrior who had a vision of the young white man she would first save and then teach.

* Coolest Names Ever: except poor Jacob gets handed the truth-in-advertising "Yellow Hair" and told he has to keep it even when the other kids are trading their childish names for cool monikers like Bear Claw and Crazy Horse.

* Tipi, tomahawk, and totem pole: except Plains tribes didn't carve totem poles, while totem-carving Northwest tribes lived in lodges. But in his wanderings, Jacob/Yellow Hair lives in both, after starting his

life in his family's peculiar semi-underground dwelling.

For most books I review, the first thing I consider is character development. But that's virtually irrelevant here. Jacob/Yellow Hair's role is never meant to be a study of one man's nature and character. The scale here is epic, and thus the 'characters' which develop, grow, and change are actually the political, social, and economic forces that motivate and are used as justification for the bloodshed, cruelty, and inhumanity. Ultimately, Yellow Hair is a mirror. "This," it tells us. "This is what we did. Despite what your history books told you, this is who we are."

There are a few things I didn't understand or appreciate in Yellow Hair. For example, all of the tense, time, and POV changes in the inserted backstories of the seven families accompanying the Ariesen's ill-fated wagon train were interesting and gave a broader outline of the myriad reasons that brought people to such an extreme step. But I still felt they interrupted the story, and might have been better placed at the beginning.

Another thing which I'm sure had an important point to make but I just found annoying was that Jacob's parents were never referred to by their first names until the last time each was mentioned. Even though I found the constant 'Mister' and 'Missus' off-putting, I have a feeling that this was deliberate, especially as it resonated against an overall theme of fathers and sons. Jacob lost his father to a stupid accident, but at each step along the way he acquires new father figures until he's ready to step into that role himself—only to have it become a reverse process of losing his 'sons'. I couldn't quite connect it, but perhaps this is meant to resonate with the image of the US Government as the 'Great Father' who cheats and murders his Indian 'children', and to contrast with the 'Grandmother' image of the Queen of England and her government's treatment of native peoples (at least as applied in Canada).

Overall, I found Yellow Hair to be an immensely readable epic. It was like reading about the Titanic—a fascinating, compelling, study of people for readers who already know about the inevitable disaster looming. The meticulous and in-depth research that went into the book—from studying the Lakota language to incorporating real people, incidents, and events—illuminates every page and conveys the powerful sense that THIS is the real history of the West.

Make no mistake—Yellow Hair is a long, often brutal tale filled with heartbreak, tragedy, and lots of buffalo chips. But despite the flaws I might see, I think this is Andrew Joyce's masterpiece. Not only would I give it five stars, but I would also recommend it without hesitation to readers looking for an epic story that is actually the real history.

I received this book for free from the publisher or author to facilitate an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

Tina says

A Native Truth Unveiled

In this gripping historical novel, Andrew Joyce threads the fictitious tale of a White man's life-changing events through the factual tapestry of the devastation suffered by the Plains Indians at the hands of the American government. The White man is Jacob Ariesen, who becomes known as Hin Zi or Yellow Hair.

It is Spring of 1850 in North America. Imagine you are a member of a wagon train of one hundred and forty-four White people going West in search of a better life. You encounter overwhelming hardship and are rescued by Indians. You are treated well and with respect.

Now imagine you are a Plains Indian. Soldiers invade your land at the behest of their government. They do not ask your permission. They do not treat you with respect. They look upon your people as savages and presume all you hold dear is theirs for the taking. They force you to sign their treaties, by which they trick you into selling acre after acre of your land in exchange for gold. You tell them you have no use of the yellow metal, but they deceive you into trusting you can use it to barter for horses, tools, food, and other necessities. They employ deception time and again when their Congress rewrites the treaties – without your knowledge or consent – and drastically cuts the agreed-to purchase price. They literally steal your land, upon which soldiers build forts and settlers build houses. The Wasichus (Whites) trap and hunt indigenous wildlife into near extinction, forcing you to become dependent on the American government for your very existence. You once were proud, fierce, and free. You now are demoralized, displaced, and angry.

In this sober and eye-opening tale, Joyce strips away the facade of righteousness brandished by White military and political figures, people whose names appear dominant in American history. He lays bare the greed and fear that fueled their ignorant beliefs and heinous deeds, not the least of which was the bloody slaughter and mutilation of women, children, and old ones.

Noted Native American figures, presented as one-dimensional savage people in White history books, become fully developed animated characters under the pen of Andrew Joyce. They jump off the page, grab and captivate the reader. Among these are Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse, who pull us into their world and show us first-hand the effects of severe hardship coupled with dehumanization.

This was the perfect book to read while traveling across the United States by train and following the Colorado River for 230-plus miles. I imagined covered wagons caught in deadly currents that drowned all life forms as they carried them downriver. I imagined the battle at Wounded Knee Creek. I imagined the Battle of the Little Bighorn fought on the banks of the river that lent its name to this historical event. But most of all, as the train moved through mountain gorges and territories not traversed by automobile or person, I imagined a time when life was lived by the seasons, close to Mother Earth. My heart broke as distant memories of such a life played across my mind like a slide show.

This book is a page-turner that kept me glued from beginning to end. It is very well-written and chock-full of engaging characters, be they honorable or deplorable. I appreciated the humor Joyce attributed to the Indians, which he sprinkled throughout the novel. This added an inherent humanizing dimension to the indigenous peoples of whom Americans learn so little in school.

I also appreciated that the author intermittently but consistently focused on Native American spiritual beliefs. My favorite line was: “It is a good day to die.” In what way is that spiritual? you ask. Well... You’ll just have to read the book and figure it out for yourself. Hoka hey!

Betty says

I received a review copy of this book courtesy of the author.

Yellow Hair is an epic novel detailing the history between the United States and the Sioux Nation. Throughout the 19th century, the Sioux were repeatedly manipulated, lied to, and cheated by a government power who saw them as less than human, with an insatiable greed to claim all the Sioux lands at any cost—continuing a centuries-old policy of taking whatever they wanted from Indigenous Peoples, and leaving death and devastation in their wake.

The story begins with a large group of people heading west to seek a better way of life. Included among them

is Jacob Ariesen, heading to California with his parents and siblings. But it's a lethal trip—tragic accidents, an Indian attack, and a deadly cholera epidemic leaves Jacob as the sole survivor, and he is at death's door when he is found and cared for by a Dakota woman named Suni. Once he is well enough, she takes him to her home and teaches him the ways of her people. Jacob chooses to stay with Suni and becomes known as Yellow Hair. As Yellow Hair, he experiences first-hand the treachery and deceit meted out by the United States, with one treaty after another being broken practically as soon as the ink dries, and feels the desperation and anger of his adopted people as more of their lands are stolen and they are starving from lack of food—setting into motion an unstoppable chain of events that leads to war, loss, heartache, and the complete destruction of their way of life.

There were many things I liked about this book—the use of the Lakota language, detailing actual events that have been lost to history, to name only two— all of which enriched the story in many ways. The portions dealing with the actual people and events were fascinating to read. For some readers, it may be the first time they hear about certain events, inspiring them to learn more and (as someone who loves history) that's a very good thing.

But—if I'm being honest—there were a lot of things that bothered me, as well. The repeated use of “as the whites count time” and other “as the whites...” phrases felt like overkill after a while. It felt like an unnecessary reminder.

Another thing that bothered me was the way the narrative would switch, without warning, from the fictional world of the story to detailing historical facts (sometimes decades beyond the time frame of that moment in the story) in a very non-fiction kind of way. It was almost as if I were reading two books—one fiction, one non-fiction— that had been merged together. I enjoyed reading those parts, but they always felt out of place... as if I were reading something best used as a footnote... and threw me out of the story.

The thing that bothered me the most (and prevented me from giving a higher rating) was ‘too much tell, not enough show’. This is the issue that made me hold off on writing my review for two days, because I dreaded addressing it. I enjoyed the book, but I never really connected emotionally to any of the characters, and I think that's because I was never shown how they were feeling. I read the words they spoke, but there was rarely, if ever, a strong indication *given by their actions* of what they were feeling inside. Sometimes (many times?) the words spoken by a character aren't nearly as powerful and meaningful as something they could be doing instead. Bear with me as I make up my own (not so great) example of what I mean:

Example A:

“What's wrong?” she asked. “Talk to me.”

He turned away and said, “I don't want to talk right now.”

Example B:

Her brow creased, and she bit her lip to stop its trembling. “What's wrong?” she asked, her voice shaking with the strain of keeping her fear under control. “Talk to me.” Her eyes silently pleaded and she reached out to touch him, only to be stopped cold by the sudden clench of his jaw and the narrowing of his eyes.

He gave her a scathing look and turned away, his back stiff with barely-repressed rage. “I don't want to talk right now,” he hissed.

Both examples use the same dialogue, but when descriptions of their actions and demeanor are added, it gives an additional depth to what they're saying, and creates an emotional connection. This is the sort of thing I'm always subconsciously looking for when I read, and I always notice when it's not there, because (for me) it leaves a void that makes the characters feel somewhat two-dimensional. Same goes for long passages of dialogue without actions of any kind. I need to know more than just the words they're saying. I need indicators of how they feel inside... and not by being told about them, but by being shown.

Despite the things that bothered me, I still enjoyed reading the book, and would recommend it to others who enjoy historical fiction, with the caveat that there were a few things that bothered me, but not enough to quit reading altogether.
