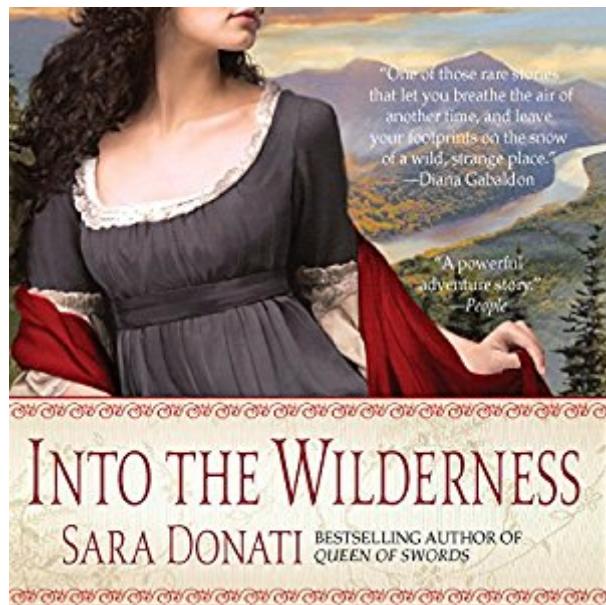


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# Into The Wilderness: Wilderness Saga, Book 1



## **Synopsis**

Weaving a tapestry of fact and fiction, Sara Donati's epic novel sweeps us into another time and place...and into the heart of a forbidden affair between an unconventional Englishwoman and an American frontiersman. It is December of 1792. Elizabeth Middleton leaves her comfortable English estate to join her family in a remote New York mountain village. It is a place unlike any she has ever experienced. And she meets a man unlike any she has ever encountered--a white man dressed like a Native American, Nathaniel Bonner, known to the Mohawk people as Between-Two-Lives. Determined to provide schooling for all the children of the village, she soon finds herself locked in conflict with the local slave owners as well as her own family. Interweaving the fate of the Mohawk Nation with the destiny of two lovers, Sara Donati's compelling novel creates a complex, profound, passionate portrait of an emerging America. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This is more than a book that you read, this is a story that you step into and take over. Anyone who loves Diana Gabaldon, historical romance, Daniel Day-Lewis in "The Last of the Mohicans" and/or thrilling adventures will LOVE this novel. I must correct some misinformation that the reviewer wrote, though. This story is NOT a sequel to James Fennimore Cooper's "Last of the Mohicans". Merely, some of his characters appear in this novel, along with Claire Fraser from the Outlander series by Diana Gabaldon. Rather, Sara Donati has weaved a story all her own using some familiar

faces. If you go to the official "Into the Wilderness" web page you can read yourself that Ms. Donati did NOT write this as a sequel to Cooper's novel. She actually had Michael Mann's beautifully directed "Last of the Mohicans" in mind more, she says. Also, the review contained another error: Nathaniel's first wife was NOT Mohican, she was (in English) a Mohawk. I don't mean to bash anyone's review because I love but I just didn't want any misinformation about this wonderful novel out either! Enjoy!

I feel the need to write a review for this book only because I felt some of the previous reviews were very misleading. To start with, I purchased this book for two reasons. (1) I am a fan of the Outlander series by Diana Gabaldon and this book was heavily recommended by other Outlander fans, and (2) I spent much of my childhood in and around Cooperstown, NY and so am familiar with the setting of the novel. I would normally find it a bit unfair for one author to be compared so heavily to another (especially one like Diana Gabaldon) but feel in this case the comparison is completely justified with Donati having Outlander characters written into her story. My biggest criticism of this book is that it's predictable and yet not really believable. An independent yet beautiful Englishwoman, determined to be a "spinster"? A sexy, rugged, buckskin wearing Indian (albeit white) man? Yawn. And they even start falling for each other the first time they meet.... double yawn. The characters are flat and poorly developed. So is the plot. So is the dialogue. I've enjoyed historical fiction my whole life and I think I might have enjoyed this book in my early years of high school. Maybe. I know this review sounds a bit harsh but I'm really disappointed by the fact that so many Outlander fans were enthusiastic about this book. Is there anyone else who enjoyed the subtle complexities of the characters, thoroughly researched historical events, and layered plot lines of the Outlander series? If so, then this book probably isn't for you. If you're just looking for a mindless romance to read at the beach and can overlook the poor character and plot development, then go for it. And yes, I would have given the same review if I hadn't ever read Diana Gabaldon's novels. The writing just isn't there. Bottom line: Read some of the one and two star reviews and not just the five star reviews before deciding whether this book is for you.

I know different people get different things from the books they read, but I honestly don't understand how any lover of romantic fiction could dislike this book. True, it's formulaic, but I don't mind a formula if the writing is good, and Donati is very good. She could often bring tears to my eyes, and was just as effective in helping me to see the great wilderness that much of the novel was set in. From the beginning, I found myself comparing it to Gabaldon's series (probably because of her

recommendation on the cover), which could have been very unfair as I think her books are among the best historical fiction I've ever read. But I must say *\_Into the Wilderness\_* comes out well by comparison. I ended up caring as much about Elizabeth and her Nathaniel as I did about Claire and her Jamie, and that says a lot. Sometimes I did feel that Elizabeth and Claire were a lot alike - perhaps almost too much - but I do so enjoy a strong woman character. Elizabeth is definitely "writ large," but I'm glad when I run across a heroic female character for a change who takes her destiny in her own hands. Since I could not put it down from the time I began reading it, I enthusiastically recommend this novel and I eagerly look forward to the sequel!

4.5 stars? Really? I'm glad I bought the Kindle edition so I can hit Delete instead of having to take the paperback to Goodwill. This book has taught me that I need to ignore enthusiastic reviews that state "Outlander fans will love this book!" I'm narrowing my focus for books that Outlander fans who don't typically read historical fiction or romances will love. Deborah Harkness' All Souls trilogy blew me away, and I was very skeptical. I'll keep looking for happy discoveries of that caliber. With its cardboard characters, stilted dialogue and trite characters, *Into the Wilderness* felt like a paint-by-numbers take on the past. Like the Old Masters of the art world, Gabaldon transforms our view of the world -- the very atmosphere -- around her characters, and every sensory, plot and character detail builds onto a vivid base. Plus every Outlander book is a page-turner and Gabaldon is never smarmily PC. Her books are full of characters who piss, grunt, sweat, get drunk, suffer, love, hate, have orgasms, feast, starve, lie, sacrifice, grieve, murder, rape (not pretty, but part of the human experience, alas) and experience their worlds with all their senses. Give me characters are three-dimensional the minute they show up in the story. Give me narrators whose experiences of the world and reactions to events fascinate, entertain and sometimes horrify us. Give me nuance give me genuine humor, give me added insight into the actual historic events and personages of the past. Show me what it was like to live in the past, warts and all.

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