

Legend of the Lost

William Wayne Dicksion

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Young love on the American frontier in the 1870s could be as treacherous as a relationship in a back alley in a twenty-first-century inner city. Nostalgia buffs glorify the old Wild West as a place where integrity fought dishonesty and virtue competed with vice, but William Wayne Dicksion steps beyond this good or bad perspective. *Legend of the Lost* is realistic without being tragic. Inspired by a seventh-century legend about seven fabled cities of gold, this adventure novel delves into the paranormal, bringing to the forefront superstition, and hinting at an underlying curse.

Originally told by Catholic monks during the Moors' war against Spain, Dicksion's captivating rendition of the tale is a story of star-crossed teenage passion. Cindy and Alex are childhood companions destined to be lovers, but their discovery in a pond at the base of a waterfall may change their lives forever. At sixteen, Cindy is raped by two itinerant men, which changes the course of her life. She becomes self-destructive and loses interest in Alex, finding comfort in the arms of another man.

This book verges on a Biblical fundamentalist tone in its portrayal of Alex, as is evident in this passage: "Alex walked to his and Cindy's secret place and sat there thinking of all that had happened. With the exception of Morning Flower, every woman he had ever known had proven untrustworthy. 'Even the original Eve was seduced by Satan, and together they betrayed Adam,' he muttered to himself with a grimace."

Though Alex's attitude may have been typical of the nineteenth century, this trite characterization of the hero reduces the literary quality of the book. While the editing of the novel is mediocre, the author's sparse style holds a definite appeal for the reader who enjoys a fast-paced escape.

A native of Oklahoma, William Wayne Dicksion descends from pioneers of the early American West and lives in Hawaii. He is the author of numerous works of fiction.

Filled with contradictions and double standards, *Legend of the Lost* will appeal to those who prefer the gritty, often graphic details of existence more than a glossed-over account of everyday life. Though "fate" hovers in the background, waiting to lunge at the protagonists, in the end, it is free choice and not determinism that guides their actions.

JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (April 1, 2011)

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