

The Roan Stallion: Legend of Big Heart: Book 2

Alfreda Beartrack-Algeo

7th Generation (Feb 28, 2023)

Softcover \$9.95 (128pp)

978-1-939053-48-0

In Alfreda Beartrack-Algeo's novel *The Roan Stallion*, a thirteen-year-old hopes to tame a wild horse.

Alfred Swallow watches his aging grandfather cut the scope of his farm. Without Alfred's missing father, the work is too much for him. Hoping to help, Alfred hires out at a neighboring ranch. En route, he spies a roan, a symbol of great magic among the Lakota. The stallion spooks at Alfred's scent and charges; just as they are about to meet head-on, a tornado pulls them into the air, twisting them up then dropping them back to earth, leaving Alfred scraped and the horse caught in a wire fence. Alfred rescues the horse and begins to earn his trust. In so doing, he develops a plan to use the horse to help his family.

Packed with action, each chapter covers a major event that's narrated in direct language. Alfred's motivation is clear: he wants to protect and honor his family. And the articulation of the chemistry between the horse and boy shows a relationship both physical and metaphysical, enhancing the idea that working with animals is a gift.

The story is set forty years after the death of Chief Sitting Bull, during Prohibition. Its cast ranges in a corner of southwest South Dakota on a reservation. There, Alfred and his younger brother Elmer are schooled in the ways of the Lakota people. Their actions, and those of their friends and elders, are informed by those traditions and culture in compelling ways. Alfred's medicine bag signals danger, his spirit helper flies above him, and the racism of local officials and neighbors affects his everyday life.

A Lakota teenager hopes to help his family in *The Roan Stallion*, a novel that starts with a tornado and ends with a coming of age.

CAMILLE-YVETTE WELSCH (January / February 2023)

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