

Cloud of Witnesses

by Jane Hertenstein

Some glad morning, I'll fly away.

Who cares if he's "gifted." Roland Tanner wants to escape his life.

He's stuck in a broken-down trailer in the hills with his family, the sorriest characters he's ever met.

At his new middle school, his classmates only see him as a hillbilly.

He has a secret crush on Patty, but so does his friend Hassan, the new kid from Iran.

But then comes the Iranian hostage crisis of 1979. And Roland's father's health takes a turn for the worse while he's away in jail.

Will Roland accept the cloud of witnesses—the saints and sinners all around him—and realize that his future can be whatever he makes it?

Author: Jane Hertenstein

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Grade level: 5–8

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Perfect for fans of Erin Entrada Kelly, Sharon Creech, Cynthia Rylant, and Firoozeh Dumas

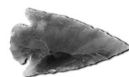
A quiet, humorous book about coming of age in the foothills of the Appalachians

Themes include being an outsider, acceptance and friendship across cultural lines, family life, grief, loyalty in adversity, bravery in the face of defeat, empathy, overcoming bullying

Explores the qualities of a hero in his/her journey toward self-discovery

About the Author

Jane Hertenstein is a prolific author of fiction and creative non-fiction for adults and children. She enjoys long-distance bike touring, waking up early to work, running along the lakefront, and working with the homeless on the streets of Chicago. Her latest book, *Cloud of Witnesses*, is based on her experiences substitute teaching in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains in southern Ohio.



Golden Alley Press

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Protagonist: Roland, 13-14 year-old 8th grader

Secondary characters: Patty, a smart, sassy, independent girl;
Hassan, an Iranian transfer student

Setting: Rural Ohio during the Iranian hostage
crisis (1979-1980)