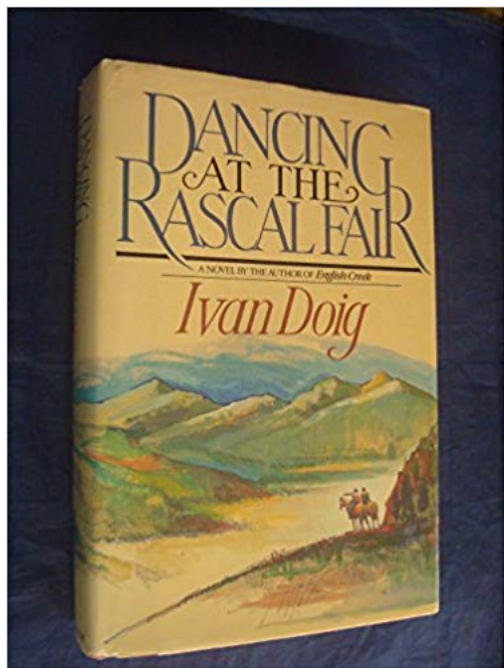
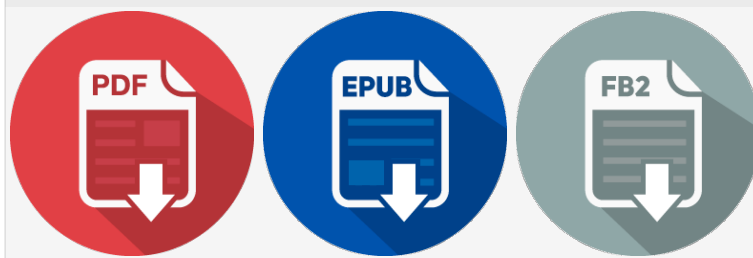


Dancing at the Rascal Fair *by* Ivan Doig



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From a Scottish port, nineteen-year-olds Angus McCaskill and Rob Barclay embark on a new life in America as homesteaders in Montana, in this novel of the uncertainties of friendship and love



Reviews of the *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* *by* Ivan Doig

Usanner

Even better than English Creek! Read this one first. IT is a page turner. One really gets folded into the story. The only weakness I found was I thought the "Affair" between Angus and Anna went on too long. He sounded like a teenager with his first love. Outside of that ther development of the characters and their xomplex interrelationships were spectacularlt presented. This is one oft the best books I have read recently. Doig is a master story teller.

Jox

I wanted to give this novel five stars for the power and beauty of Ivan Doig's prose, his lyrical descriptions of the settings, five stars for his finely drawn characterization of Rob, Angus, Lucas, and Adair. I was at times spellbound by the fineness of these elements. However, the narrative pace was slowed, almost painfully at times, by the lengthy details which caused me to skim through a few pages here and there. But Anna, unlike the other major characters, came across as wooden and even shallow. I found Adair far more interesting, and worthy of Angus' undying love, than Anna, whose only real asset was her beauty. I thought Angus possessed enough intelligence and depth of character to have figured this out for himself, but he never really did, but stubbornly clung to his idealized and pointless obsession with his unattainable first love. For a historical novel, the setting of Montana seemed like another character engaged in the struggle that drives the three major actors in the story. I would highly recommend this novel for anyone curious about Montana's climate, scenery, and history.

Akta

Loved this book and Ivan's writing style. I stayed up until after 3 am this morning to finish the book before my book club luncheon today. Enjoyed this time but lamented the rush that preempted the time to savor and reread his lyrical and poetic writing style. He uses it to good advantage transcending time quickly in sections requiring it and then delves deeply elsewhere in a manner that can have your hair on end, things are so tightly suspenseful. It was my first book by this author and I'm sure it won't be my last. The only negative from my experience reading his book was that I started with a library book but the typeface was so hard to read, I ended up purchasing the kindle version. Thought about dinging the book a star or two as a result but think it's the publisher that deserves the ding, not this incredible author and his very beautiful book.

Shadowbourne

It's been noted by other reviewers, and I agree that *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* is more than just a novel; it's a piece of literature. In fact, it's been a while since I read a book as well written as this one. Ivan Doig is a master at description, and this novel is peopled by interesting, well-developed characters. Plus, the historical setting, Montana during its settlement period in the 1890s and early 1900s, is one about which I knew almost nothing.

As with many literary pieces, there is a significant amount of symbolism going on, for the reader who chooses to notice: water, wheels, hands, the weather, etc. Fortunately, it's not necessary to analyze it to death to enjoy this well-told tale. In the end, while I was not very happy with the conclusion of the story, it was so well written that I'm giving it five stars anyway.

Burirus

Among his other works, Ivan Doig has written two trilogies. *Dancing at the Rascal Fair* is part of the Montana, aka McCaskill, trilogy, and although it was written as the second book in that series, it covers the earliest time period, 1889-1919. It makes sense to read it first.

As before, Doig paints a portrait of Montana in the early years of its growth and brings his characters to life in such a way that you feel you know them. He depicts seasons, time, and place poetically and allows the reader to immerse him/herself in those surroundings in all their imagery. The winters are forbidding, deadly ferocious; the winds whip through the pages; the smells of burning land pierce the reader's senses and burn the reader's eyes. You behold the beauty of the Rocky Mountains, the clear running rivers, the green spring grasses, and the vast, seemingly endless vistas.

I was completely caught up in this story of the early settlers and homesteaders in the Two Medicine country, their dreams, friendships, disillusionments, loves, and tragedies. Doig's writing is simply wonderful.....what separates literature from mere fiction.

avanger

This novel was so frustrating. I love Mr. Doig's style of writing and the first third of this novel was riveting. Then, Angus McCaskill doesn't get to marry the woman he loves. He spends the rest of the novel whining and pining for the woman he can't have rather than focusing on the wonderful wife he is married to. It's so irritating and completely ruined the rest of the novel. Skip this one and read 'The Whistling Season' instead.

Zahisan

I had read Ivan Doig before, but just discovered "Dancing At The Rascal Fair." I skipped his latest book because the character of Morrie rubbed me the wrong way. So I picked up this one, which somehow I had missed. There's just one caveat I have. The idea that not only did Angus love Anna through the years, but that the love never changed or waned, and that he was willing to hurt his wife and son with that knowledge, bothered me. Love doesn't endure that way, especially if it first happened at 19 and didn't work out. Angus didn't give his wife a fair chance by carrying on and on about his love for Anna. Also, as far as I could tell, she didn't reciprocate that love in the way Mr. Doig insinuates. She chose someone else, and though she sometimes (very occasionally) met Angus alone, there was no hint of her carrying the torch the way he did. I think only a man would have carried on with that plot point for so long. But overall, of course, I thought this was a wonderful book and a wonderful story.

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