



Long Man

Amy Greene

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From the critically acclaimed author of *Bloodroot*, a gripping, wondrously evocative novel drawn from real-life historical events: the story of three days in the summer of 1936, as a government-built dam is about to flood an Appalachian town-and a little girl goes missing.

A river called Long Man has coursed through East Tennessee from time immemorial, bringing sustenance to the people who farm along its banks and who trade between its small towns. But as Long Man opens, the Tennessee Valley Authority's plans to dam the river and flood the town of Yuneetah for the sake of progress-to bring electricity and jobs to the hardscrabble region-are about to take effect. Just one day remains before the river will rise, and most of the town has been evacuated. Among the holdouts is a young mother, Annie Clyde Dodson, whose ancestors have lived for generations on her mountaintop farm; she'll do anything to ensure that her three-year-old daughter, Gracie, will inherit the family's land. But her husband wants to make a fresh start in Michigan, where he has found work that will secure the family's future. As the deadline looms, a storm as powerful as the emotions between them rages outside their door. Suddenly, they realize that Gracie has gone missing. Has she simply wandered off into the rain? Or has she been taken by Amos, the mysterious drifter who has come back to town, perhaps to save it in a last, desperate act of violence? Suspenseful, visceral, gorgeously told, Long Man is a searing portrait of a tight-knit community brought together by change and crisis, and of one family facing a terrifying ticking clock. It is a dazzling and unforgettable tour de force.

Long Man Details

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Author : Amy Greene

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From Reader Review Long Man for online ebook

Julie says

Long Man by Amy Greene is a 2014 Knopf publication.

I had never heard of this author or this book until recently when I saw a list of the top most suspenseful books on BuzzFeed. Since I was not familiar with it, I decided to check it out of the Overdrive library.

I usually enjoy southern literature and 'get' the vernacular, dialect and way of thinking, even in a historical setting. So, I was immediately drawn in by author's rich literary prose, the powerful, emotional story that unfolds in which a community, and one women in particular, struggles against the government and progress which leads to stunning consequences.

Yuneetah, in the Tennessee Appalachians, is a dried up town, but when the government comes in to build a dam and a power plant which would provide much need relief and jobs during this depression era, it means the town will have to be sacrificed. Thus begins a power struggle for the land Annie Clyde had hoped to one day pass down to her daughter, Gracie.

While Annie steadfastly refuses to relocate, her husband, James, who has always hoped for a better life up north, continues to try to change her mind, which has caused a rift in their marriage and may bring them to the brink of separation. But, in the blink of an eye everything changes when Gracie disappears.

While this book certainly belongs in the top most suspenseful books of all time, with a tense, taut, race against time to find a missing child before the town is flooded, there is a lot more to this story, and hopefully readers digest those finer points as well.

The author did a magnificent job with the characterizations, building the emotional levels to a peak right along with the suspense. The residents of this community are proud, but often beaten down by circumstances, and change. Some were fine with moving on to an easier, better quality of life, while others fought hard to keep the land that was rightfully theirs and meant something to them, for no other reason that it belonged to them, held memories, and was all they had in the world to give to their descendants, which means more than an easier way of life or progress.

It's an age old story about the power of nature versus progress, but is also about family, relationships, and community.

This is not necessarily the most uplifting, feel good story you will ever read, but it ends with an inkling of hope and forgiveness, and will stay in your consciousness for a long time after reading the final passages.
4 stars

Margitte says

This book, once again, captured my heart and soul from the very first moment I met Sam Washburn, the government agent for the Reservoir Family Removal Section, in East Tennessee who was driving to

Yuneetah where he was to meet up with Annie Clyde Dodson. She was opposing the electricity company's plans to dam the Long Man river and provide electricity to towns desperately in need of job opportunities and better living conditions for the region. Annie had trouble distancing herself from her departed ancestors and family who would be buried under a lake of water, if they were not excavated and their graves relocated somewhere else. The town would be flooded, its history erased, its stories scattered in the winds, and its families spread out over the vast landscapes of America.

Only a few days remained before she would be forcibly removed and her land confiscated by the Tennessee Valley Authority. Her husband James already left to find a job and the relationship was not the same after that. Their three-year-old daughter Gracie would lose her heritage and history, never to know the beauty of the Appalachian mountains.

All the inhabitants already left, glad to get out of debt, and leaving the farms where they could not survive anymore, due to price drops, topsoil being washed away, and the timber overcut. 1936 saw Yuneetah already dead. It slowly perished long before the dam was planned. But three women refused to give in: Annie, her great aunt Silver Ledford, and the reclusive family friend, Beulah Kesteron, who had an estranged adopted son Amos.

Sherif Ellard Moody was as much part of the close knit community as the rest of them, growing up and attending school with the very people who had to leave. He vowed to stay on in his job until the very last inhabitant was relocated. His story was as connected to the main characters as their family bonds, yet he was forced to stand on the sidelines, watching families getting destroyed and history drowned in a promise of prosperity.

Then Gracie mysteriously disappeared. Suddenly old wounds, bad memories and forgotten grudges surfaced, as it started to rain and the river started showing signs of overflowing its banks and destroying what little was left of life as they knew it.

Closing this book was like turning my back on dearest friends and walking away with a feeling of loss. What an atmospheric, riveting tale it was. Southern magic. Southern Soul at its finest.

RECOMMENDED!

For interest's sake:

Another two of the most profound books I have ever read in the river-flood kind of genre, both written in the melodic voices captured so brilliantly in southern prose, were:

Sugaree Rising by J. Douglas Allen-Taylor

The Tilted World by Tom Franklin

It was not only brilliantly written, but also emotionally potent.

Michael recommended these two books with the same theme to me:

Bucking the Sun (Two Medicine Country #4) by Ivan Doig

Good Day to Die by Jim Harrison

I haven't read them yet, but I sure hope to do so.

Francisco says

I'm not exactly sure why I feel proud of Amy Greene but I do. It's a very strange feeling to feel proud of an

author and the work they just accomplished. I can understand admiring the work of an author, or kinship with an author. But I feel pride. Pride on so many levels. Proud of the way the author challenged herself, of the way she reached for something deeper (and therefore harder) than her last book (where she had already set a very high standard). Proud of the way she pushed narrative technique into a non-stop flow of consciousness (from various minds) and of careful description so that it was hard to take a breath and she did this not to impress but to immerse me the reader into the living experience of the book and of the lives in the book. The Tennessee Valley Authority has finished a dam and a small town will soon be at the bottom of a lake. This is a story about an event that engulfs the few people who remain even as they wait for the inevitable flood. Some don't want to leave the only place they and generations of their own have known as home. Others have found a way to stay resigned to the isolation created by the water. Within the short period of time before the waters rise the lives of these people intersect and are torn apart and their histories and loves and hatreds, their innate goodness and meanness, are laid bare. There they are, these handful of recognizable souls- right at the edge between a disappearing way of life full hardship but also full of simple honesty and grit and a more complex electric world, more well lit and comfortable maybe but also, poorer. So much has gone into creating this novel with its layers of meaning, it's subtle connections, and most of all so much has gone into the careful creation of persons with realistic virtue, with a kind of raw nobility that draws you out into something a little more expansive than before, something a little better than before you started reading. I'm very proud of you Amy Greene.

Connie says

It was 1936 in East Tennessee, and the Tennessee Valley Authority had completed the building of a dam to bring electricity to the area. The town of Yuneetah was being flooded, and the heavy rain was accelerating the rise of the water. The federal government had bought up the farms along the river, and almost everyone had been relocated except for Annie Clyde Dodson. She had Cherokee ancestors, and will not give up her strong ties to the land that she wants to pass down to her daughter. Her husband is tired of the backbreaking work of farming the depleted soil, and wants to move north to work in a steel mill. Then their three-year-old daughter, Gracie, and her dog vanish. Amos, a one-eyed hobo, had been seen in the area and is under suspicion in the disappearance. It's a race against time as they search for Gracie while the rain pours down, and the flood waters rise.

Yuneetah's residents are the working poor whose families had lived in the isolated mountains for generations. The rains washed away the soil in the higher land, and flooded the lower areas. Some people welcomed the chance to settle their debts, and move on during the hard Great Depression years. But their history was being taken away from them as their homes and farms were destroyed, and their families' graves were moved. Although economic progress was eventually made in the area because of the TVA, the holdouts did not trust the "men in suits" running the government project.

Amy Greene's writing is beautiful with a strong sense of place, and an Appalachian Gothic atmosphere. The plot moves slowly, but builds in suspense. Love of family, and mistrust founded on past events both are important elements. But this is very much a character-driven novel. I was very impressed with the well developed, unforgettable characters with interesting back stories. By the end of the book, they felt like real people, rather than characters in a novel.

Diane Barnes says

Amy Greene is quite a writer. I did not read her first novel, "Bloodroot", but it was recommended to me by

several friends. This was the June selection for the group On the Southern Literary Trail, so I decided to take the plunge into the Tennessee country that she knows so well.

It was a good decision on my part. The author knows her area and it's people well, and depicts it all with a realistic and loving description of the land and the characters. This novel takes place over 3 days in August of 1936 in the midst of the depression. The TVA is releasing floodwaters from the dam in Yuneetah, TN on the 3rd day, and a 3 year old girl disappears. Her family was the last holdout in the valley, refusing to be relocated. We are taken on an emotional roller coaster as the sheriff, relatives and townspeople search desperately for the missing child.

There are quite a few characters here that are one of a kind. Gracie's mother Annie Clyde, her father James, two mountain women who live alone, almost hermits, one of them Gracie's great aunt. They figure largely in the novel, as does a drifter, Amos, come to take a last look at Yuneetah before the flooding. Is he involved in her disappearance? The sheriff thinks so. Ellard is a sheriff with baggage and a past but who does his best to serve the people of the dying town.

This is a rich novel with believable, very human characters, well-written and suspenseful. I'm a fan.

Suzy says

This story takes place over a few days in July/August of 1936 and begins with an ominous momentum created by the impending flooding of the Long Man River valley by the Tennessee Valley Authority. It's the height of the depression but the locals are somewhat insulated from the outside world . . . until the government tells them their lives need improving through the miracle of electricity. We meet a small group of holdouts who are bumping up against the deadline to evacuate, people who are rooted to where they've lived for generations and who are resisting leaving to the bitter end.

Greene has written a rich novel, weaving in the history of the area by telling these peoples' backstories as well as portraying the historical and very personal consequences of this massive government undertaking. It's not often that you encounter a book that is so beautifully descriptive of the people, the emotions, the landscape, the water-water-everywhere urgency of this situation. I felt that I was right there with this handful of characters, living breathlessly side-by-side over the last two weeks. The ending was heartbreakingly poignant, reminding us that people and things are not always what they seem and that life goes on and takes us where it will.

Dale Dickey was outstanding, telling us this story in the best southern story-telling tradition. We could have been sitting on a front porch somewhere.

Sara says

I am trying to think what I can possibly say about this wonderfully moving novel by Amy Greene. If writing should show and not tell, Greene had perfected the art of showing to the point that it becomes living inside her characters' skins. It is 1936, the TVA is about to flood the town of Yuneetah, Tennessee, and all its inhabitants must leave. Obviously, some are reluctant to go, but none as much as Annie Clyde Dobson. She determines to stay to the last possible moment and then her three year old daughter goes missing and cannot be found, and she may have stayed too long.

The cast of characters is so complete and so believable. The plot is tightly woven, with the anxiety at fever-pitch even for those above the line, who will be allowed to stay in the homes they know. Greene knows these people and this place, and because she does, we know them as well. They are depression era families, farming the land, living in the mountains, independent and strong. They are loners who don't really want to be alone but don't know how to be with anyone else. They are suspicious of outsiders, loyal to what they know, and superstitious because it is the knowledge that has been passed from the generations before that make them who they are.

I followed this story with an ache and a worry and a wrenching sadness. I cried (actual tears falling from my eyes so that it was too blurry to any longer read and I had to put down the book and walk away and dry up). I loved every inspired moment of this read and then I wanted to open the book and relive this again.

This is why I love Goodreads so much. I would never have found this book alone. I would have skirted over it and what a loss that would have been.

Elyse says

Absolutely mesmerizingliterary and suspenseful....*masterfully* written!!!

I kept wonderingHow old is Amy Greene? There is talent....and then there is TALENT!!! The prose is breathtaking gorgeous!!!!

This historical fiction takes place Tennessee, 1936. The Tennessee Valley Authority took farm land from people who had lived their for decades. The huge dam that the TVA built, brought electricity to many people who had never had it.

However, the dam was about to flood...it was no longer safe.

"The people of Yuneetah where losing more than their property. They relied on each other. If a house was taken by a flood they rebuilt it. If a man got sick they worked his crops. If he died they rang the death bell and the whole town came to see what needed doing. It hurt them to part not knowing when or if they'd can meet again. But grieved as they were, most had no bitterness about leaving. They believed they were doing it for their country, the same reason they signed up to fight in wars. It pained

Beulah to see them going but she understood. She was 85 years old. Through the generations she had witnessed it again and again. What remained in the end was the rocks in the trees and the water running it's course. To watch from her lonesome cabin made an ache in her chest, but there was just as much hope in it. Yuneetah might be dying out but those leaving on the road would surely take some of it along to the new places they settled. Even the river would go with them in jars of water they took in there radiators and dampen their parched throats. All the electric lights in the world couldn't blind them enough to forget what they brought out and passed along to the babies she wouldn't's birth. Wherever they ended up, they'd still hear Long Man rushing in their sleep".

Annie Clyde Dodson, her husband James, and their three-year-old daughter named Gracie wouldn't leave. Annie wanted to pass the land to her daughter. Even if the police drag her out, she wanted her daughter to see that her mother never gave up a fight....for what she felt was right, (hers). Things changed fast though... a couple of days before the Dodson Family would have been forced to leave, Gracie and their dog goes missing.

Amos is the prime suspect. He's been labeled a troublemaker, and a drifter.

No more!!!! ... (sorry, no spoilers) ... JUST READ IT!!! Wonderful!!!!

Spectacularly lush descriptions....
Gripping storytelling...
Authentic and intimate...
Written with compassion....
Rich, rare,...first rate!!!! Highly, HIGHLY recommend!!

Tom Mathews says

Long Man is a poignant tale of life in an Appalachian town during the Tennessee Valley Authority's evacuation of large swaths of the state to create reservoirs for hydraulic power. Even though this depression-era program provided power to millions of Americans, it was done at the expense of thousands of Appalachian hill people whose families had lived on the land for generations.

While the pace of the story was somewhat slow, Amy Greene's prose was beautifully rendered in the storytelling tradition of the Appalachian hill folk. It is a story that is meant to be read aloud. To this end, narrator Dale Dickey delivered a magnificent performance to the point where I could easily imagine that Annie Clyde Dodson was reaching through the decades and telling me the story in her own words.

Sue says

Overall, a powerful, often poetic book. The story itself is definitely powerful--about power-less people being forced into life-altering decisions. Set in Tennessee at the time of the Tennessee Valley Authority whose goal was to rein in the power of water, bring electricity to the poor but at the expense of the livelihoods of farmers throughout Appalachia. Occasionally the prose itself seemed to wander in its descriptions of place, the author unable, perhaps unwilling, to rein in her lengthy ramblings. At times I found this moved smoothly but at others it left me almost annoyed and wanting less detail and more story. I do find Greene is an excellent writer but I wanted more control. Could it be that her prose was reflecting the loss of control evident in the landscape and people she was drawing? I wonder as I write this review.

Overall, however, this is a very effective story of a small community being broken, people being divided and separated not only by the on-coming water but by individual and group actions that threaten lives and livelihoods. You will come to care very much about Gracie, Annie Clyde and James if you read Long Man and you will wonder about the many historical families who lived their lives in the hills and valleys of the Appalachia of the past.

Jeanette says

Very languid and woodsy novel in which there are NO characters that could be confused with having the IQ of a rocket scientist. The water is rising and our protagonist does not want to leave. But the new dam will

insist toward the changes not desired, regardless. There are moments of high danger and worrisome loss, but all is at a slow pace and with relentless plot progression toward a maybe life "not in this spot". The 3 main characters are cranky and insular, for the most part, IMHO. It's written well but there is too much redundant wording placed entirely within morose mood sets. Because of that I could not grasp any depth to these characters. Identity seated within their "home place" farm, for sure. So they suffer for progress. The sheriff seemed like the only one with positive self confidence or any longer term sensibility toward the physical realities or possible practical solutions. Not just in Tennessee, this was a common outcome; "seeking" elsewhere for livability was endemic in that particular decade.

Sad book. So although I wanted to keep reading (but could COMPLETELY put it down for something else)in order to find out where they went and if Grace was going too- it was not a 4 star for my own enjoyment at any point. Some wit would have helped.

John says

The Appalachian community of Yuneetah, Tenn., is dying. Inch by inch, the town will be soon submerged by a reservoir of water created by a dam on the Tennessee River. The Federal government developed the TVA in the early 1930s to provide flood control and economic development to the economically-depressed Tennessee Valley. The development of the dams, like the one on this novel's fictional Long Man River required the displacement of many families in Yuneetah. One of the residents resisting the relocation is the novel's protagonist, Annie Clyde Dodson, suspicious of governmental agencies, is unwilling, sometimes through the use of a rifle, to pack up her family and leave the property her family owned and worked and its surrounding mountains. One evening, during an argument with her husband, James, who was attempting a last-ditch effort to urge Annie to accompany him to Detroit for available work, the two discover that their 3-year-old daughter and dog have disappeared. Annie believes that her daughter was taken by Amos one-eyed vagabond who was raised near her home and as has recently returned to the area. Annie and her daughter had encountered Amos in their field that afternoon and he had taken a fancy to her daughter. Soon a search party has been formed to search for Amos, and hopefully Annie's daughter.

Although I enjoyed Amy Greene's previous novel, **Bloodroot**, set in a similar locale, **Long Man** is better. Ms. Greene evocative prose reflects the fact that she grew up in the foothills of the Great Smokey Mountains. Her portrayal of Yuneetah, its residents and environs have such authenticity that the reader are no longer strangers to these people or the community. I believe Ms. Greene's literary novels will eventually be considered classics alongside the likes of William Faulkner and Sinclair Lewis.

Ron Charles says

Rivers make capricious neighbors. For several years, I lived and taught in Elsay, Ill., a small village on the Mississippi across from St. Louis. Watching the sun melt into the water as I drove along River Road produced a daily Emersonian epiphany.

But in the winter, sheets of ice pushed giant shards high into the air, and the river looked cruel. We could hear frozen plates moaning like a watery earthquake that went on for weeks. And in the spring, the river sometimes rose over the highway and seeped into the village. More than once, our house, which sat on piles about 18 inches high, was completely surrounded by muddy water (which eventually rotted out the floors). Other homes, some of which dated from before the Civil War, required a thick wall of sandbags to keep the river away. In the early 1990s, during a terrible flood, neighbors and students from the nearby college worked day and night to save a few stone houses. But the water was patient and relentless, and, one by one, the sandbag walls failed.

I felt immersed in that futile hope again this week as I read Amy Greene's new novel, "Long Man." Greene has taken the tale of a Tennessee town condemned by flooding and infused it with remorse and panic to produce an unusually poetic literary thriller.

The story opens in the summer of 1936, deep in the Depression that has already swallowed farmers across the country. The little town of Yuneetah couldn't be more removed from the strategies and concerns of Washington, but one of President Roosevelt's plans is about to obliterate these people's homes and dissolve a community that has survived for generations: The Tennessee Valley Authority has dammed the Long Man River to brighten the whole region with the miracle of electricity. Farmers on the edge of starvation have gladly sold off their land and dispersed to better opportunities.

That process is largely complete as "Long Man" begins, and Greene offers an Appalachian version of "The World Without Us": The church sits godless and silent. Fields sink into soggy caverns. Considering the ancestors they're leaving behind, young descendants imagine their dearly departed washing out of coffins, "femurs sailing on eddies, skulls rising toward the surface seeking light after centuries buried, the unleashed river rushing in to fill burrows and trenches like mouths open to drink its alluvial silt."

But Greene focuses this intense novel on one mother — "a dangerous woman" — who has refused to move, even as the water rises. Annie Clyde Dodson tried starting a petition among her neighbors, but this area has been depressed since the Civil War, and they were grateful for the government cash. Annie has been brandishing a rifle to scare off the appraiser and the caseworker. She can't prevail, of course: The dam's gates are closed. "Yuneetah was already dead," Greene writes. In three days, the sheriff plans to drag her away in handcuffs, but the rain may sweep her away even before then.

Annie knows all this, but she wants her 3-year-old daughter, Gracie, to see that she fought for her 40 acres. "From the time she realized she was expecting, she had dreamed of her child roaming the fields in summer," Greene writes. "Annie Clyde couldn't bear to think of Gracie not knowing the closeness to God she had found in this valley." That futile devotion to a hallowed place and a primitive way of life provides the story's mournful base melody. "The farm was part of her," Annie thinks. "She knew the lay of its land like her tongue knew the back of her teeth." Her father planted alfalfa and wheat in these fields. "Losing the farm would be like losing him all over again."

But soon that fear of loss is submerged in a much deeper one. While cooking her last apple pie, Annie feels something amiss: "Where's Gracie?" she asks her husband. He knows their daughter must be playing in the yard with the dog, but "he felt the first inkling of worry." He and Annie run around the house in the rain. They check the barn. Reminding themselves of other times when she played hide-and-seek, they struggle to control that spring of terror every parent knows: "There was no sign of Gracie."

All the energy Annie put into saving her farm immediately triples into finding her daughter, and anyone who can't match her devotion is liable to be burned away by the force of her fury. She understands the politics and the finances of this search. Why aren't the newspapers sounding the alarm? Why isn't the dam being opened to reduce the flooding? "What if her last name was Lindbergh?" Annie asks the power-company man. Whose missing baby is worth turning over every stone — and whose isn't? In these searing pages, it's

impossible not to feel the anguish in this mother's rage.

But Greene wisely modulates that panicked pace by periodically shifting the novel's focus to a few other characters remaining in Yuneetah. Chief among these is Amos, a one-eyed homeless man who has just wandered back home. He was raised by a mountain woman who makes medicines from wild herbs and tells the future with a string of bones around her neck. Although she's happy to see her old foster son, his timing is disturbing. Amos was always erratic and capable of shocking acts of revenge. Could he have snatched Annie's only child?

Among the most alluring characters is Annie's aunt, a skittish, almost feral woman who has lived alone in the woods for years. The town sheriff still pines for her, though he knows she's hopelessly out of reach now. As the story moves along, Greene repeatedly fades into the past, filling in the complicated relationships between these neighbors and relatives, friends and rivals.

In summary these mountain folk sound as hackneyed as the Country Bear Jamboree, and as the rain falls and the river rises, the potential here for melodrama is high. But Greene is too fine a writer for that. As she works in the stylistic territory of Bonnie Jo Campbell and Ron Rash, her sentences seem to rise up from the soil of this harsh, beautiful land. She gives voice to the aching desires of unsophisticated people who possess a complex, profound understanding of themselves and their doomed way of life.

With an engrossing blend of raw tension and gorgeous reflection, "Long Man" washes all kinds of horrors to the surface: dreadful secrets and lifeless bodies. The cost of progress seems impossibly high as it submerges this forgotten place and threatens to drown a mother's last hope.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/enterta...>

Tammy says

Wow! This novel just blew me away! Gorgeous descriptive writing of the Tennessee countryside, where I have lived for 53 years. The author describes the setting and the characters so vividly, you feel as if you are there, talking with them on the front porch. I listened to the audio book and I plan to purchase this in hardcover so that I can savor it in print.

Jaidee says

5 "earthy, transcendent, mind-blowing!!!" stars.

2016 Silver Award -2nd Favorite Read (Tie)

I am in shock. I am in awe. I am overwhelmed. I am immensely moved.

This book was sheer perfection in every way.

Based on historical events this takes place over a few days in 1936 in East Tennessee in a village called Yuneetah that is meeting its death due to the building of a dam and the bringing of electricity.

Events collide- a drifter returns, a little girl disappears, an eccentric aunt confronts her past and future, a

sheriff protects, a young city man marvels and respects and learns about the wisdom of the hardworking poor, a mother is brave and steadfast, a father that aches with loneliness and longing. A village that nobody cares for but for its inhabitants provides them with scarce material sustenance but plenty of spiritual nurturance. Wisdom of the disenfranchised. The loss of community for the sake of progress.

Ms. Greene writes with a maturity and a splendor that I have barely witnessed. I am in love with her writing, her observations, her beauty and the gift that she left us with this novel.

"Walking beside Amos as if nothing had happened was bittersweet. It occurred to Beulah that love was so often a burden. She knew that it was the last time she would ever be with her son, whichever one of them departed first. She tried to push off the weight of her sadness and appreciate his silent companionship...."

or

"He would stand under the shade trees until it felt like he'd never left. He would clear away the leaves drifted against the door. He would sit on the unswept floorboards letting home sink back into him, listening to the crows cawing in the locusts and the of Beulah Kesterson's goats carried downhill. He would go squirrel hunting. He would see if he could make corn bread taste like his mother's or at least somewhat close, as hers was the best he'd put in his mouth....."

Nostalgia, longing, immense and ugly beauty. Wow just wow.

You were guided by an angel when you wrote this Ms. Greene. Thank you so so much.

To end off...I want to link you to a song. This song is a close approximation of how I felt when reading this.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKpy1...>

Zoeytron says

This story fiddled with my heartstrings. There is a beautiful cadence to the prose, the words rising and falling in a soulful rhythm telling a tale of a lost child, and a mother's fierce determination in the face of a lost cause. A story of love that can't be returned, turning that love into a burden in the end.

The year is 1936 in the small farming community of Yuneetah. In the interest of progress (jobs, electricity, and whatnot), the Long Man river is being dammed by the Tennessee Valley Authority and the homes, crops, and surrounding woods are being flooded. Working for the Reservoir Family Removal (this name has such an awful connotation) section, the government representative has done his job for the most part, buying out the weary, worn down farm folk. Family by family, they are reluctantly pulling up stakes and moving out of the area. As the relentless water creeps ever closer, a small handful of holdouts come to crisis.

Camie says

Feisty Annie Clyde Dobson, her husband James, and their daughter Gracie, are among the last holdouts as their long held family home and land in Yuneetah, Tennessee on the banks of the Long Man River are about to be dammed and flooded by the government to bring electricity to the area. Just before looming eviction young Gracie turns up missing and the search for the missing child sheds a whole new light on the

crisis. Based on actual events this is a beautifully written, though somewhat slow paced, book which will be very relatable to anyone who has first-handedly witnessed the often heartbreaking struggle between making progress and trying to preserve history. 4 stars

Dem says

2.5 Stars

I choose to read **Longman** by Amy Greene in audio format as I had a few long car journeys over the past couple of weeks and thought this would keep me entertained during the Journey.

To be honest I was disappointed with the pacing of the novel and while the narrator was good I found the book very depressing in tone and was sorry that I had chosen the audio format for the book as it just did not do the story Justice.

I had previously read and loved *One Foot in Eden* which is pretty similar in that it is set in the Appalachian mountains and tells the story of how a farming community are forced off their lands in order to build a Dam. I love books set in the Appalachian mountains and wish I had chosen *Long Man* in paperback as I think I would have got much more from it.

This is a relatively short novel at 288 pages but 10 hours of audio seemed an eternity when listening to it. I found myself tuning in and out as I seemed to get bored of the story. I thought the book was wonderfully descriptive in places and overly descriptive in other places and sometimes I think you just got to call a spade a spade. I also had a problem with the novel going back to each of the characters' past and giving their back stories which just when I thought the story was progressing the author would go back in time with each character and while I know this was important in the conclusion of the novel it did grate on my nerves.

I do think my problem with the novel lies with me not enjoying the audio format and I think I will purchase this in paperback one day and give it another shot as the writing is beautiful and I feel this book has so much more to give.

Carol says

A Gem!

The Hook - Thoroughly enjoyed *Bloodroot* so welcomed the opportunity to read another book by Amy Greene.

The Line - *It occurred to a character "that love was so often a burden".*

Another character states *"He thought of her at that last molasses making, dancing in the firelight. Nobody could take their eyes off her because she was hope right there in the middle of them."* This excerpt sums up what I felt as I closed this book. Hope.

The Sinker – Briefly *Long Man* is the story of a few Appalachian families that refuse to leave their homesteads when the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) decides in 1936 to dam the Long River and flood the town of Yunetah. Despite the impending floodwaters, Annie Clyde Dodson has nothing but this mountaintop patch of land to leave her daughter, three-year old Gracie and is holding out. When Gracie goes missing, the need to stay till she's found is all the more paramount.

Long Man is not a graphic novel but is one of the best examples of graphic prose I have read in a long time. Amy Greene has written a novel that transforms the black and white of the written page into a lush depiction of person, place and thing. I saw the land, the hills, the valleys, the river, the dam. I saw the characters, as each is introduced, in their clothing, their homes, living on their land and going about their daily lives. Their faces came alive allowing me to see them, to know them, to feel their needs, pain, joys, loves, sorrow and hope. The birds, the plants, the trees, even the dirt, the roots and waterbeds jump off the pages; nature in all its glory. Like a trickling brook this story builds to a roar. If you've ever wondered why people choose to ignore evacuating during a mandatory evacuation, Long Man may bring understanding.

The Random House audio edition is narrated by Dale Dickey who brings the flavor of the locale to its reading.

Diane S ? says

I finished this yesterday and have debated whether to rate this book 4 or 5 stars. I went for five because this book was very thought provoking and left me in a pensive mood. The characters are amazing, the atmosphere immersive and the writing brilliant. Not a thought or word was wasted, not an action was wrong, everything in this book has meaning.

Yuneetah, Tennessee in the 1930's, a small Appalachian town now about to be flooded, making the way for a new dam. The residents displaced from the place they call home, in most cases from farms that had been handed down throughout generations. A hard life, especially during the depression, but these people pitched in and helped each other.

A man from the TVA, will learn the hard way that displacing people has way more meaning than is first thought. A young woman, who wants only to protect her young daughters birthright. An Old woman named Beulah, who reads bones and who takes in a young boy, who becomes a drifter. A woman named Silver, who is this drifters only friend and a sheriff who wants only to do the best for those under his protection.

All will learn a difficult lesson during these dark times, when a young child goes missing, a lesson about what all goes into making a home and a family. A novel about loyalty and honor for long held family traditions. A novel about the importance of family and friends and about how a community has much more meaning than houses and farms about to soon be under water. In short this novel makes us really see the people.

As Ellery the sheriff thinks, " He would try to remember what he must have known once, what he guessed all of Yuneetah had forgot. How a fresh crewel-work of snow dressed even the dustiest of their farmyard. How leaves shaped like the hands of babies sailed and turned on the eddies of the river. How an open meadow sounded when then stood still. How ripe plums tasted. How cucumbers smelled like summer. How lightning bugs made lanterns of their cupped palms. These things they hadn't lost. But, like Ellard they had grown too weary to see them anymore."

A novel that teaches us not to take things for granted, to see what one has before it is too late. Makes one think about towns that were and are no longer. A very brilliant and poignant novel
