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Stop the Train!

Geraldine McCaughrean

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Stop the Train! Geraldine McCaughrean

"There will be no Florence Station on the Red Rock Railroad Line. . . . From here on out the trains won't be stopping at Florence. Ever."

In 1893 Oklahoma's northwest is opened up to settlers by government decree, and Cissy Sissney and her family rush to join the tens of thousands of land runners intent on staking a new claim to their future. The Sissneys and two dozen other folk are the first settlers to arrive at the map-born town of Florence -- nothing but a double plot of sun-baked land, an empty space waiting to be filled.

Night has scarcely fallen when the trouble begins. A slick, oily-haired man drifts from campfire to campfire, offering -- on behalf of the Red Rock Railroad Company -- to buy out claims for $50 dollars apiece. Several weeks later, after all settlers but one refuse to sell, the president of the railroad lowers the boom. There'll be no more trains stopping at Florence. And without the railroad the town can't survive. So it's up to Cissy and her friends, family, and neighbors to come up with ways -- fair or foul -- to stop the train before they are all forced to abandon their homes forever.

From the incredibly versatile Carnegie medalist Geraldine McCaughrean comes a rollicking, beguiling tale of clever shenanigans and heartwarming faith in the promise of a new land.

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