



The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre (Great Episodes)

By Ann Rinaldi

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“Carefully researched and lovingly written, Rinaldi’s latest presents a girl indentured to John and Abigail Adams during the tense period surrounding the 1770 Massacre. . . . Fortuitously timed, a novel that illuminates a moment from our past that has strong parallels to recent events. Bibliography.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Historical events aren't as neat and tidy as they appear in history books, nor are they dissimilar from modern happenings (i.e., the Rodney King case), as Rinaldi (*A Break with Charity*) ably demonstrates in this painstakingly researched tale told by a young servant in colonial Boston. Rachel is 14, bound as a nursemaid to the children of John and Abigail Adams, at whose house she sees many of the town's "movers and shakers" (one of the book's few faults is its jarringly anachronistic language). When British troops are sent to Boston to keep order, Rachel--despite her increasingly anti-Royalist sentiments--takes pity on Matthew Kilroy, the young sentry posted at the Adamses' door. Their relationship gradually blossoms, but Rachel, who has embarked on an ambitious program to educate herself and who rightly fears "getting into circumstances," refuses to demonstrate her affection in more than verbal terms. Lonely, frustrated, underpaid and reviled by the citizenry he was sent to protect, Matthew explodes during a riot on March 5, 1770, after which he and his fellows are tried for murder and manslaughter in the deaths of five colonialists. How Rachel acts according to her newly awakened social conscience and sense of self-worth makes for engrossing and educational reading. However, readers may object to Rachel's sense of guilt over Matthew's sexual frustration, and to her pronouncements on "good breeding." Ages 10-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 6-9-Through the eyes of Rachel Marsh, an indentured servant in the household of John Adams, Rinaldi shows readers the events leading up to the Boston Massacre. Rachel is an orphan in search of a "place," and in the course of her duties as nursemaid to the Adams's children, she comes in contact with many of the movers and shakers of colonial Boston. She also meets a young British soldier who ultimately will stand trial for his life as a participant in the massacre. The story moves along briskly, and details of life in 18th-century Boston are woven into the narrative. The political unrest, the differing views of the patriots and loyalists, and the constant threat of mob violence are also well portrayed. An author's note provides an interesting glimpse of the way a historical novel is constructed. However, Rachel's reaction to being disowned by her thoroughly nasty Uncle Eb is difficult to credit, given her earlier decision to cut him out of her life. Equally murky is her relationship with Private Kilroy; readers will readily understand his frustration. In the end, readers may be carried along more by the drama of the historical events than by the vacillations of the heroine. Entertaining, but not compelling.

Elaine Fort Weischedel, Turner Free Library, Randolph, MA

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 7-12. Rinaldi's latest historical novel, which takes place in 1770, is told from the point of view of 14-year-old Rachel Marsh, an indentured servant in the household of John Adams. Rachel feels lucky to have the position, believes she is well treated, and greatly admires Abigail and John Adams. Although not political herself, she worries about friends who support rebellion and have told her that a time will come when she will have to take a stand. It is only when she meets Matthew Kilroy, a young, argumentative British soldier who has been sent to Boston as part of a peacekeeping force, that Rachel begins to question British domination of the colonies and to see herself as an American. When Matthew is arrested for his part in the Boston Massacre, Rachel, who's convinced he's caught up in a political war not of his making, defies convention and the Adamses' wishes and visits him in jail. Although the act costs her her job, she knows she has done the right thing. Rinaldi provides a vivid picture of colonial life and the pre-Revolutionary War

period, including the disagreements among various American factions and the frightening actions of mobs and British retaliation. Because the issues she raises--the role of peacekeeping forces, the use of violence to achieve political goals, and the courage required to take a stand--are as significant today as they were at the time, this will be a wonderful selection to use in language-arts and social-studies classes. *Chris Sherman*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patrick Lyon:

In this 21st one hundred year, people become competitive in each way. By being competitive now, people have do something to make them survives, being in the middle of typically the crowded place and notice simply by surrounding. One thing that oftentimes many people have underestimated it for a while is reading. Sure, by reading a e-book your ability to survive enhance then having chance to remain than other is high. In your case who want to start reading some sort of book, we give you that *The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre (Great Episodes)* book as nice and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Charles Green:

That book can make you to feel relax. This particular book *The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre (Great Episodes)* was colorful and of course has pictures around. As we know that book *The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre (Great Episodes)* has many kinds or style. Start from kids until teenagers. For example *Naruto* or *Private investigator Conan* you can read and think you are the character on there. Therefore , not at all of book usually are make you bored, any it offers up you feel happy, fun and rest. Try to choose the best book to suit your needs and try to like reading which.

Susan Dixon:

As a scholar exactly feel bored to reading. If their teacher asked them to go to the library or to make summary for some guide, they are complained. Just very little students that has reading's soul or real their pastime. They just do what the trainer want, like asked to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading very seriously. Any students feel that reading through is not important, boring along with can't see colorful photos on there. Yeah, it is to get complicated. Book is very important for yourself. As we know that on this period of time, many ways to get whatever we wish. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore , this *The Fifth of March: A Story of the Boston Massacre (Great Episodes)* can make you sense more interested to read.

Timothy Montgomery:

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