



Shelter from the Storm

Mia West

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Dear Author,

I've never thought much about taking a wife. Eligible women are scarce here. When Ma died, it took all of our energy to keep the farm going. Pa died last year and I have help in the field but it's not enough. A year of living alone has made me long for the sound of a voice besides my own and a warm body to help stave off the night chill. So I finally put in an ad for a mail order bride. And she's on the next train. She seems perfect. She can cook, clean, tend a garden, and read and write. Maybe too good to be true. But I'm desperate and can't help but hope.

Photo Description:

The photo for this prompt shows a muscular young man wearing a cowboy hat, bandanna, leather work gloves, jeans, and belt. He is looking at a white horse, whose bridle he grips. The man's eyes are shielded by his hat.

This story was written as a part of the M/M Romance Group's "**Love is an Open Road**" event. Group members were asked to write a story prompt inspired by a photo of their choice. Authors of the group selected a photo and prompt that spoke to them and wrote a short story.

This story may contain sexually explicit content and is **intended for adult readers**. It may contain content that is disagreeable or distressing to some readers. The M/M Romance Group strongly recommends that each reader review the General Information section before each story for story tags as well as for content warnings.

Shelter from the Storm Details

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From Reader Review Shelter from the Storm for online ebook

Trisha Harrington says

Between 3.5 and 4 stars!

I'd love more. Daniel and Isaiah were really likable characters and I would love more of their story because this didn't feel like enough.

Meep says

Thanks to the author for participating and offering this freebie.

A very nice little story. Both the characters are interesting and it has a nice feel to it - but I was left wanting there to be more. Not smut, but more of their interactions. It's in the form of a letter so we're being told rather than seeing. I wasn't quite ready to leave their haven.

~☆~Dœni(ela) ♥ ?? love & semi-colons~☆~ says

The story is told in the form of a letter that Daniel Cooper writes many decades after he sends for a mail order bride in the summer of 1837 and instead receives a lithe young man of Cherokee decent named Isaiah.

I really liked Isaiah, who pretends to be a woman in order to gain passage out West. He's kind and not afraid to work hard.

Parts of the story came alive: Daniel watching Isaiah masturbate by the stream; Daniel bathing Isaiah.

But I wanted MORE: more showing, more character development, more on-page interaction, and definitely more steam. There is one brief masturbation scene and one kiss; it would have been lovely to watch these two men explore each other's bodies and see the passion and tenderness between them.

Ann says

I'm a sucker for historical stories and make it about a lonely farmer or cowboy and I'm aces!

Shelter From the Storm by Mia West totally did it for me. I loved how the story was told. It's in the form of a letter written to a newcomer to Stormy Ridge (Daniel's farm) and tells the story of Daniel and his mail order bride. It gives the letters recipient the whole story and a chance to accept or deny the gift that is being offered with eyes wide open to their history.

My favorite thing was Daniel's voice. He's the epitome of the gentleman farmer with good manners, humility and grace. He is also prideful, which he is the first to admit, but it's in the most charming of ways.

His words were spare but held a wealth of meaning. He's becoming smitten with his Isabel and the life they are creating on the farm. She's everything he could have asked for and more. Something about Isabel isn't quite as advertised, but Daniel is willing to turn a blind eye to most things and is voluntarily clueless to what others are seeing. Isabel is the perfect balance of light to Daniel's more stoic nature and I enjoyed reading about their little moments together as they settled into the routine of farm life.

As their 'trial period' is coming to end, Daniel can't deny he's got to do a little investigating and imagine his surprise when he spies on Isabel and discovers that she is, in fact, a he. He expects to be put off by the knowledge but he's a pragmatic man and can't deny that Isabel/Isaiah makes him happy (and apparently horny). His only concern is Isaiah's motives. Isaiah puts Daniel's concerns to rest quickly after a rough Sunday afternoon away from the farm. Isaiah is the victim of a few bigoted townsfolk and Daniel's reaction was fierce and perfect. Their interaction as they open themselves to one another with complete honesty for the first time was so damn sweet and I absolutely loved it.

The obvious love between these two men and the world they created at Stormy Ridge was such a tease in that I just plain wanted more. I loved everything that happened here but would read the hell out of a full length story about these characters and their world.

Anna K?avi?a says

Short and sweet.

Heather C says

Loved this! Wish it would have been longer because this was such a sweet story and Daniel and Isaiah were absolutely adorable! Looking forward to more from the upcoming Stormy Ridge series.

Optimist ?King's Wench? & MANTIES Champion says

Charming

I was charmed and I'm not much on westerns or cowboys, for that matter.

The crossdressing tag is what got me. That stockings scene...

The tie in with the farm was probably what I liked best.

It's been awhile since I took American history, but this seemed historically accurate, especially the language.

A sweet, feel good morsel.

Thanks to the author and her team for participating in the LOR event.

SheReadsALot says

3.5 Stars-- Clever

This was a different way to tell a story. I enjoyed the format of using a letter to share a glimpse of Isaiah aka Ms. Isabel, the cross-dressing mail order bride of Daniel the lonely farmer.

I think it could have been more developed - Daniel's naivete mainly. It was refreshing to read him learning anatomy lesson via Isaiah in the creek/lake/nighttime bathing and stroke.

Would I have minded Daniel throwing Isaiah against the first log cabin and fucking that ass until the cows literally came home?

No.

But it wouldn't have fit the vibe the story was going for.

It was sweet, it read historically accurate and the dialogue didn't read modern in the least. And kudos for making the cross-dressing feel authentic without turning the story into a porn show.

I liked the bit of Native American history intertwined with American history of the late 1800's. I don't think the HEA for homosexuals in Stormy Ridge could have happened as smoothly but it's fiction.

My thanks to the author and the team behind this event. :)

Kristan says

3.5 stars

Written as a letter to potential employees of the Stormy Ridge ranch, Shelter from the Storm is a sweet snippet of a time where men sent for mail order brides, and the Cherokee were being forced out of their lands.

Daniel Cooper is lonely and thinks to ease the feeling by posting for a fiancée. What he doesn't realize is it's not so much a wife he wants, but a partner. And he gets that, but not in the form he expected. The moment Isabel arrives in response to his ad, Daniel knows there's something different, but never questions it, and refuses to examine. With Isabel's revelation that she's actually Isaiah, Daniel takes the opportunity to grasp what he wants, and a relationship begins.

There's a beautiful moment where they discuss sleeping arrangements, and it all comes back around. I loved that moment, and I wanted more. While I enjoyed the fact that this was essentially a letter, I would love to

see this as a full blown story to experience. I want to witness those fleeting looks and gentle interactions.

Daniel's voice was so charming, and this was a short, sweet read.

Thank you to the author for participating in the Love is an Open Road event.

V says

3.5 stars

Very lovely story, perhaps a sequel in the future?

Lori says

I really wasn't sure what to expect with this story & prompt. As a short story, I think this worked really well though.

Thanks for this DRitC offering.

Ameena says

Thanks to the author for the effort and participating in this event and offering this freebie.

The prompt was promising but the real story was a disappointment to me.

Trix says

[I was left a bit unclear if Isaiah just got into a fight with those men after church or if something worse happened. How much did the rest o

Amy says

Very sweet story. I'm not sure I liked the "letter" format. I think I would prefer a more traditional third person narrative. But I enjoyed Isaiah and Daniel and love the concept behind Stormy Ridge. I look forward to more from this author :)

K says

Taking the form of a letter written sixty years from where the start of the story is set, it tells how Daniel

came to order a bride by post, and Isabel came into his life. Only Isabel was in fact Isiaiah, a Cherokee who was trying to escape the government land clearances of his tribe's land. Though Daniel has is suspicions about Isabel/Isiaiah from the start, it's only once it's all out in the open do the pair start a relationship - but that is not detailed in the story. The importance of this story seems to be the set up of a gay friendly ranch in the late 19th century - and the author is clear in her intention to write other stories about this ranch - though whether historical or modern day it's not clear.

This was an okay story, but didn't really seem much more than a scene setting prologue to the future works.
