

Minnesota Cold

Synopsis & Treatment

LOGLINE

Minnesota Cold is a provocative novel that projects current events into a frightening potential future with death panels, genetically engineered children, the enslavement of the worker class and an environment totally controlled by the industrial and political elite. A brilliant synthesis of historic events and calculated probability, it has all of the twists and turns of a spellbinding thriller.

SYNOPSIS

Seen through the eyes of 75-year-old Sallie Dodge, matriarch of a large family living in a suburb of the twin cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul. ***Minnesota Cold*** begins in 2035, in the aftermath of a nuclear war, which triggers a period wherein sheer survival is a luxury. Chaos, fear and deprivation lead to the total demise of democracy and free speech. Flashbacks to the early 21st Century suggest a time when apathy and ignorance resulted in the seduction of the masses by charismatic personalities; and political debate was reduced to mere partisan theatrics; a time when the “national interest” was solely represented by the military, the corporations, financial institutions and other business elite.

The political system formed after 2015 controls all aspects of life and death. Resembling the labor camps of WWII, marginalized sectors of society become slaves to the industrial complex. Death panels, rationed medical care for the general public, and secret scientific advances that guarantee rejuvenation and extraordinary life spans for the privileged few, exist in this Orwellian world.

As the story begins, Sallie learns that she has been designated for early termination. Falsified medical records, which claim that she is in failing health, allow the resource allocation board to identify her as *excessive*. The intrigue heightens, when Sallie realizes that her own daughter has instigated the termination, in order to make room for her son and his lover to claim her space in their residence. Not ready to die or willing to acquiesce to the ruling factions, Sallie begins a long and painful journey that includes by great personal loss and devastating revelations.

Clues to the mystery are revealed, when Sallie discovers a letter from her deceased husband, informing her that assistance and protection have been provided. Secret passwords allow her to determine who is to be trusted. Turning to her son, a local doctor for help, Sallie learns that she is in nearly perfect health and that only state ordered medications are compromising her strength and mental stability.

Through her son she is introduced to Benjamin, a doctor and researcher, who masquerades as an instrument of the government. To ensure her safety, they devise an ingenious plan to stage her death. For weeks after her public funeral, Sallie lives underground in a secret wing of the doctor’s residence. Rejuvenation medications, altered facial structure, distorted fingerprints, retinal implants and other physical

changes, along with a new identity, finally allow her to leave the area and seek refuge in Canada.

Nothing is easy for Sallie as she and her companion, Benjamin's daughter, travel via snowmobile through the bitter cold of a Minnesota December. When a raging blizzard and a dead snowmobile battery prevent them from continuing, they seek refuge in an abandoned cabin in the North Woods. As the days turn into weeks, their meager food supply and wood to heat the cabin diminish. Sallie's companion attempts to seek help, but does not return. Weeks later Sallie ventures forth on foot. Delirious from malnutrition and nearly frozen to death, she is eventually rescued and brought to safety in Canada.

Much to her surprise, Doug Dodge, Sallie's "late" husband and Benjamin, her new friend and protector greet her as she awakens in the hospital. She soon learns that they are part of a group of revolutionaries called North Star, who seek to overthrow the corrupt government in the Minnesota territory. Sallie is drawn into the movement as one of its leaders. Learning more and more about the atrocities committed by the elite, she finds herself on a mission to rescue the oppressed and restore civil liberty.

A former anti-war and anti-gun activist, Sallie questions her values, when she realizes that an overthrow of the government could not be achieved without shedding the blood of both the guilty as well as some innocents. Euphemistically referred to as "collateral damage," by leaders of previous wars, it pained her to discover that this senseless slaughter seemed unavoidable. Ultimately, the freeing of the enslaved, the liberation of the masses from government oppression, and the restoration of a more democratic way of life made it a price she believed was worth paying.

Minnesota Cold challenges us to think deeply and critically about the world in which we live and the possible outcomes that await us. It is both a highly entertaining story as well as a philosophical examination of our values. Are we equating freedom of opinion with the ability of the upper and upper-middle classes to dominate the marketplace of ideas? Have the social and economic elite, shaped our perception of reality and the range of political and social possibilities that exist? This well-crafted plot begs the question: "Is this fiction or is it a glimpse into a probable future?"