



## Blankets

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*Blankets* is Craig Thompson's account of growing up in a religious family in Wisconsin. The novel tells two primary stories: one, about Craig's coming to terms with his religious beliefs, and the other about Craig's first love. It is this love for a girl, Raina, whom he meets at a Christian youth camp one December that is the bulk of the novel.

After camp they keep in touch and eventually, after Raina tries in a fit of desperation to see him one snowy evening, they decide to spend two weeks together at her house in Michigan. Craig learns all about Raina, her divorcing parents and the adopted siblings that Raina has to take care of. Raina also gives him a present when he arrives: a blanket that is made of patterns that remind her of him. He is moved by Raina's gesture; in return, she suggests that Craig draw something on her bedroom wall. He is unsure, but as they grow closer over the following two weeks his uneasiness disappears and he draws with his heart.

*Blankets* is also about Craig's coming to terms with Christianity. A local minister wants Craig to be a minister himself, but Craig is not sure about this (even though his family would approve). He struggles with the pros and cons of religion throughout the novel, both privately and in Raina's company. He believes in religion, but as more of a personal relationship between him and God rather than something that is taught in church, and he is unsure how to reconcile the two.

Thompson's autobiographical approach (or the appearance of one) draws the reader in and is similar to J.M. DeMatteis' and Glenn Barr's 1994 graphic novel *Brooklyn Dreams* (only nowhere near as depressing). Thompson's writing and drawing styles are easy on the eyes and a delight to read.

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