This Is A Stunningly Haunting Tale About The "Worst Environmental Disaster In American History!"

Before global warming, there was dust. In the 1930s, dangerous black storms swept through the Great Plains. Created by drought and reckless farming, these lethal storms were part of an environmental, economic, and human catastrophe that changed the course of American history. In riveting, accessible prose, an acclaimed historian explains the causes behind the disaster and explores the Dust Bowl's impact, from a rich cultural legacy to the visionary conservation that would finally offer hope to the Plains.

Features:
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My Personal Review:
The ominous black cloud crept across the landscape. It wasn't just any cloud, but was one that carried so much destruction with it, that it was dubbed "black blizzard." Drought had hit the great plains and ultimately it would be considered the "worst environmental disaster in American history." It was something that many looked at as a freak of nature, but looking back in time it was something that could have been totally avoided and began with the innocuous destruction of a "keystone animal," the buffalo. The buffalo was the one animal that so many others depended on in order to survive, but no one could foretell the maelstrom that would arrive. In 1886-87 the "Big Die-Up" began. In the 1920s the "Great Plow-Up" began and more than 5,260,000 acres of grassland were lost to the plow. Disaster was coming.

The grass roots that had held the soil were no longer there. Seasonal crops like corn and wheat soon depleted the soil and their shallow root systems would hold nothing beyond their season. The ground cover was gone and the dust began to swirl for "farmers had sown the seeds of a unique tragedy--a tragedy totally beyond their experience. The Dust Bowl." People began to suffer and die of unusual things such as black lung and the grit from the dust would cut into their lungs. In the 1930s, 250,000 boys and girls joined the ranks of the hobos, roaming the
countryside in search of food. Photographer Dorothea Lange went in 
search of the people and her photographs became a haunting reminder of 
a disaster that didn't have to happen. Too many people suffered and died 
needlessly.

I was very impressed with this book from the first page to the last. 
Somehow I was not expecting this book to tie into the ecological 
consequences of the dust bowl starting with the decimation of the buffalo 
herds. When I looked at the covers, I expected nothing more than another 
Steinbeckish type book discussing the Okies, Black Sunday and the New 
Deal. According to the author this book blends two stories: the ecology of 
the Great Plains and how people "invited disaster." This blend provided a 
stunning new look at the dust bowl and the horrific consequences that 
happen when land is misused. Toward the end of the book an eye is cast 
toward China and hints at how they are inviting ecological disaster. The 
sepia toned photographs are simply amazing and add just the right amount 
of cement to make this book a masterpiece. In the back of the book is an 
index, a glossary, notes, a bibliography and additional recommended book 
resources.

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