

Review: Between Forest and Sky

by Jaimie Hall Bruzenak



Between Forest and Sky: a Fire Tower Journal by Sharon Stratton. If you have ever thought about volunteering or working on the road as a fire-tower watcher, I highly recommend this book. While the author was stationed in three different towers in Alberta, Canada, each was a different experience. In one she had very few visitors and had to have all her supplies and food flown in after placing a weekly order. Another she could drive to and had many visitors. As one might imagine, when your possessions for the summer are flown in by helicopter, you'll need to live a simplified life. In the Canadian system, her number of hours each day were determined by the fire danger level. Some days she made a few checks, others she spent 13 or more hours in the tower. She doesn't live in an RV while some RVers are able to live in their RVs while working at fire towers in the U.S., but there are many similarities.

We follow her adventures as she learns to identify and call "smokes" and explores the area around her towers with her two dogs. Changing weather and seasons bring new experiences. In fact, at one tower, she has a hard time getting out due to snow. Photos and species lists at each tower bring her experience alive for readers. If you enjoy getting out into nature or solitude, you'll enjoy this book. And, if you have ever thought you'd like to do this, her book will provide a reality check.

I found this in a book rack in a little roadhouse/fuel station in Alberta. It is available through Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1894974166>).