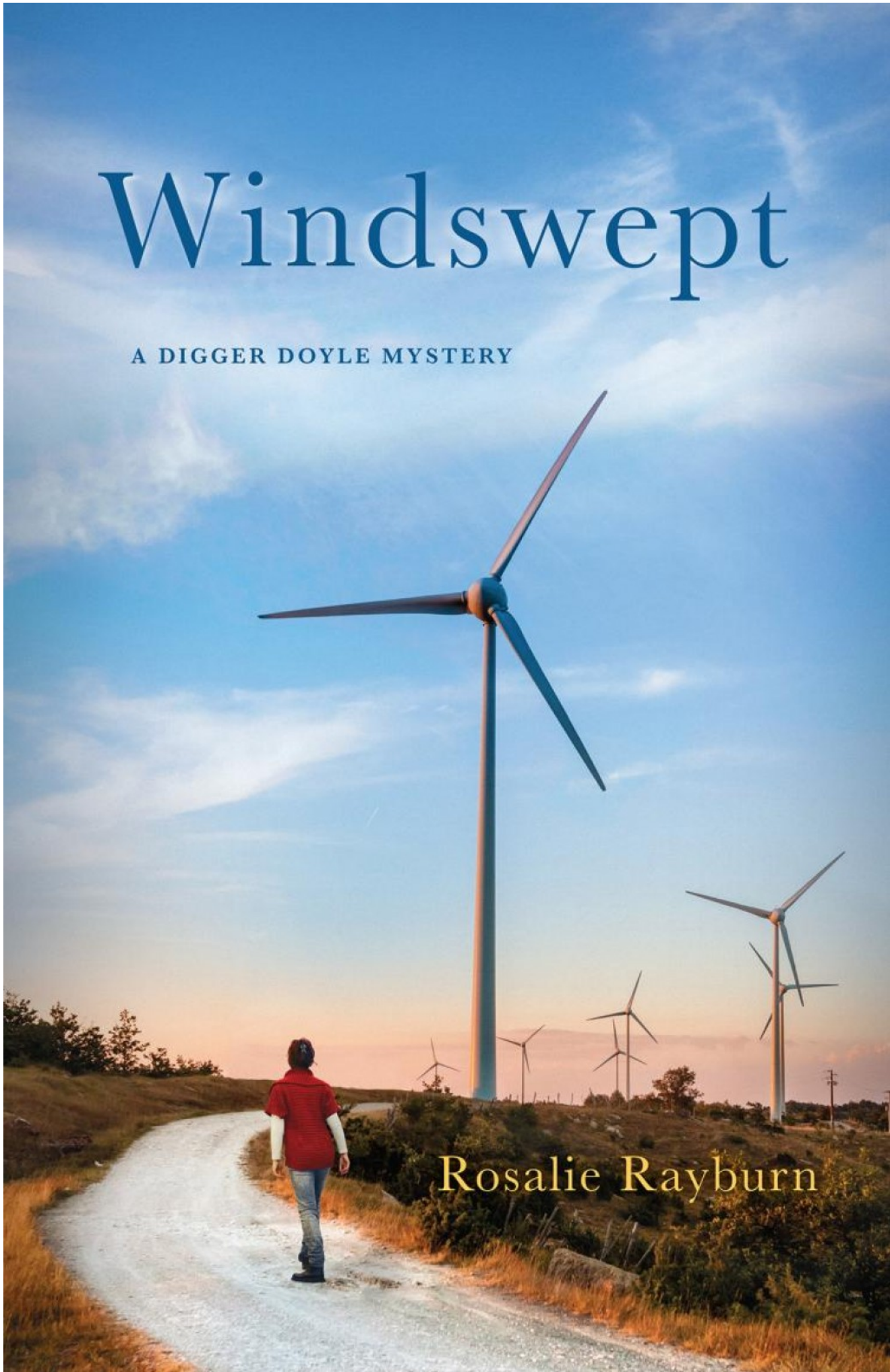


Windswept: A Swift, Stunning Mystery Where the New Mexico Wind Uncovers Old Secrets

Windswept

A DIGGER DOYLE MYSTERY

Rosalie Rayburn



Long Island, New York Apr 6, 2025 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Few contemporary mysteries manage to blend old secrets, current politics, and personal stakes as deftly as Rosalie Rayburn's [Windswept](#). The third installment in Rayburn's *Digger Doyle Mysteries* reaffirms her reputation for crafting page-turners that thrill you with carefully laid clues and then tug at your heart with disarming emotional depth. Readers familiar with the series will recognize Rayburn's signature blend of suspense and social commentary, as seen in [The Power of Rain](#) and [The Sunshine Solution](#).

A Death on the Windy Plains

Set against the vast, windswept expanse of New Mexico, *Windswept* opens with a jarring discovery: state representative Carmen Lawlor is found lifeless at the base of a towering wind turbine. At first glance, the situation seems tragically straightforward—did she fall? Jump? Or was she pushed? But make no mistake: Rayburn quickly peels back layers to reveal a complex underbelly of corruption, environmental tensions, and chilling past events that refuse to stay buried.

Our guide through this storm is Elizabeth “Digger” Doyle, an investigative reporter whose sense of justice is as unrelenting as the New Mexico wind. Though readers of the first two installments will already be well-acquainted with her tenacity and strong moral compass, *Windswept* reveals a more vulnerable side of Digger as she grapples with her wife's grief, her own uneasy memories, and the sobering truth that not everyone in the corridors of power is who they appear to be.

A Protagonist Worth Rooting For

Digger may remind readers of a modern-day Kinsey Millhone—intelligent, sharp-tongued, and refreshing human. When she probes Carmen's mysterious death, Digger is simultaneously drawn into an older cold case involving a missing teen in a treacherous lava-bed region. The way Rayburn threads these two stories—one all over the headlines, the other almost forgotten—reveals a masterful grasp of suspense and pacing.

Yet it isn't simply what Digger discovers, but why she refuses to let either mystery lie dormant. In her dogged pursuit, Digger stares down developers, politicians, and weary townsfolk, earning trust and making enemies in equal measure. It's compelling to see our heroine navigate her professional drive alongside her personal ties: Carmen was a mentor to Digger's wife, newly minted politician Maria Ortiz, and the emotional fallout pushes Digger deeper into the investigation.

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The Power of Place

Rayburn's descriptive prowess shines as she transports readers from Albuquerque's bustling streets to the quiet Eastern Plains, where wind farms stand like futuristic sentinels. This is New Mexico unvarnished—gorgeous open skies, swirling dust devils, and the hint of danger that lurks just out of sight. The relentless wind becomes a metaphor for the unstoppable momentum of both renewable-energy advocates and their well-funded adversaries.

I particularly admired how Rayburn captures an entirely different side of the state in the remote lava fields of El Malpais. These petrified rivers of stone, scattered with jagged fissures and hidden pathways, echo the story's atmosphere of secrets half-submerged. Every stark feature of the land intensifies the sense that this puzzle is far older—and more personal—than any political spat.

A Fierce Collision of Politics and Emotion

Far from an abstract debate over fossil fuels versus clean energy, *Windswept* makes the stakes deeply human. Carmen Lawlor's push for renewable energy ruffles the feathers of powerful oil-and-gas interests; the tension Rayburn depicts is rooted in reality. You can practically feel the boardroom whispers and the campaign pressure—and sense the unseen hands that might want Carmen silenced.

But politics is merely one driver in Rayburn's plot engine; personal entanglements are the other. As Digger follows the money trail, she uncovers tangled histories that turn friends into suspects and pit trust against ambition. Crucially, Rayburn remains even-handed; we see the human foibles on all sides, whether they're environmental activists, hardened lobbyists, or community members simply trying to get by.

Why *Windswept* Soars

- **Layered Mystery:** The question of Carmen's death is just the starting point. Rayburn deftly interlinks it with a decades-old disappearance, forcing readers to confront the uncomfortable reality that sometimes the past never truly leaves us.
- **Authentic LGBTQ+ Representation:** Digger and Maria's marriage isn't a plot gimmick but a genuine portrayal of love, trust, and stress under enormous pressure. Their dynamic enriches the story rather than overshadowing it.
- **Vibrant, Realistic Setting:** The New Mexico landscape isn't just window dressing; it amplifies each twist. The mesmerizing wind turbines, the punishing dust storms, the ominous lava fields—each locale adds fresh dimensions to the suspense.
- **Characters Worth Knowing:** In addition to Digger and Maria, we meet sharply drawn side characters like Nancy Harford, a seasoned reporter with a penchant for conspiracies, and Manny Begay, whose moral center contrasts with an often cynical profession. Each stands at the crossroads of personal conscience and political opportunity.

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A Resonant Finish

Windswept strikes that rare balance between unraveling a puzzle and delving into the messy truths of human nature. By the time Digger unearths the final, shocking connections, it's clear that Rayburn's fascination with secrets—especially the kind forged in youth and concealed by adulthood—fuels this novel's most powerful revelations.

Fans of Louise Penny's psychologically rich mysteries or Attica Locke's politically charged thrillers will find much to admire here. Yet Rayburn's voice remains distinct and compelling, anchored by a heroine whose backbone is as steely as the wind turbines dotting the horizon.

In short, *Windswept* isn't just a mystery; it's an immersive reading experience that leaves you questioning how well you know the people you trust—and whether the past ever truly lets anyone go.

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