



She Who Remembers

Linda Lay Shuler

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In an ancient time of fear and superstition, she stood apart because of her unusual blue eyes. In a land of great stone cities and trackless wilderness, she sought her own unique path. But it was with the clan that accepted her—and in the heart of the magic man who saved her—that she found her ultimate destiny. Her name was Kwani. But legend would call her She Who Remembers...

She Who Remembers Details

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Doris says

This book is interesting because it gives context to the pueblo ruins in the southwest. It has flaws, but it is a fiction book and as I see it, this book was researched well considering what information is available for "pre-history". The list of references at the end of the book is impressive. Lyn does a great job.

The book has been engaging all the way. It is a long book about a young 16 year-old Anasazi woman and her adventures in her growth. If you like the subject matter and are willing to take a bit of time to read it, I recommend it.

Melissa says

She Who Remembers is the first book in the Kwani series by Linda Lay Shuler. A prehistoric fiction, it is compared to the Clan of the Cave Bear series quite often. And while I see some similarities, I don't think it's quite as engaging as that series.

Kwani is of the Pueblo, Anasazi actually. But because of her startling blue eyes she is accused of being a witch and driven from her home. It is during her wandering that she stumbles into the path of Kokopelli, a proud and mysticized trader that decides she is perfect for his mate. But Kwani may be meant for more, and will her love for Kokopelli hold her back?

I can't say that any of the characters in this book are really likable. They're all quite selfish actually. And Kwani I didn't quite understand. She's born an Anasazi, yet when she goes to another tribe they have to explain customs to her that are shared across the tribes. It seems like she should have known them all already. I can understand when she goes to tribes that are not Anasazi and having to learn the customs, but that wasn't the case all the time. Kokopelli was a jerk and definitely not how I had envisioned such a popular figure. In fact, I think men were done a real disservice in this book because most of them didn't have anything good about them and were seen as controlling. While I recognize that men play a stronger role in some cultures, it just painted too broad a brush on their personalities.

But as much as I complain about the characters in this book I do have to say that the plot was well done. It was engaging, hard to put down and really researched quite well for being fiction. I learned things about the Southwestern region that I didn't know before. And the journey was lifelike and exciting. So much of what Kwani had to endure was probably true to the times and realistic. There was a lot of sex, and some of it was quite graphically written (and there is rape as well) so anyone who doesn't like these topics in a book should probably steer clear. There is also some violence.

I'm definitely looking forward to reading the next book and hope that the character development is a bit better. Or that there's at least a likable one. The series has such a great premise that it could be something truly terrific with those aspects.

She Who Remembers

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395 pages

Review by M. Reynard 2013

More of my reviews can be found at www.ifithaswords.blogspot.com

Hillary M. says

we judge too quickly, don't we, about so much, about so many people. this story takes outcasts and gives them a chance to tell us their story, as well as the outcasts giving others the same opportunity. an amazing bit of literature!

Jen says

Really pulled me in from the begining, and I was surprised by who I got the recommendation to read this from. Great love story and wonderful look into the lives of native americans. I love the way she paints a view of how everything looks, and I have been to some similar ruins when I was younger so that helped me paint the picture in my mind. I was also very interested to hear some of the legends (not sure how true they are but fun to think about) and the description of Kokopelli. A little longer than it needed to be, a little too many loves for one women in such a short span of time, and a constant focus from here to find a mate/home/protector when she was very strong and didn't need all that as much as she kept professing it. Happy ending :) I was slightly annoyed at how easily opinions were swayed by the idea that 'the Gods spoke to' so and so. Anyone could create their own power and everyone's opinion could be changed at anytime with just a simple lie.

Clare O'Beara says

Kwani is a southwest-American girl whose father was blond with blue eyes, probably a Viking, and she has blue eyes. The story is entirely realistic about the bargains women had to make with men to get food and shelter.

When Kwani travels to a cliff dwelling town she sees how corn is grown to feed large numbers of people, the women doing the work of growing and grinding the corn, making pottery and baskets, while men hunt for a deer to add to the pot.

Kokopelli is a travelling musician whose flute is rumoured to bestow fertility. He is welcomed at all the settlements. When Kwani decides to go with him she is taking herself away from the jealous settled women and from some good friends.

At the time few books of prehistory were available and Jean M Auel called this the book of southwest America's prehistory. Of course it is only a part of the picture, and no great tribal movement is shown, but we do see fine depictions of the culture and people. I enjoyed this read and there are further books about Kwani's daughter.

Marisa says

This was a fantastic and engaging book that provides the context of the pueblo ruins in the southwest. Mixing fiction, myth and fact, Schuler has certainly done her research to create a compelling tale. Unlike some historical fiction, I never felt like I was receiving a dissertation, but rather the fact was cleverly woven into the story.

I went to Mesa Verde two summers ago and I think one of the motivating factors was actually having read this series. I'd highly recommend it to anyone interested in visiting that part of the country.

Warning: Sexual content and some explicit moments.

Who should read it? Anyone with interest in the history of the southwestern United States or planning to travel there!

See all my reviews and more at www.ReadingToDistraction.com or @Read2Distract

Angela says

Ever want to know who this Kokopelli guy is? You know the guy with the flute that's in so much native american art? Well, now's your chance. This books is a great mix of myth, fact, and entertaining fiction. I suggest it for anyone 18 and older. I think women would enjoy it more, as it focuses more on the female side of things. But I'd recomend it for men, too.

Keep in mind, if you decide to read this, that the first time I read it was in college. My Native American History professor had all of his classes read it. Ain't college odd?

Julie says

This novel was to be an "American pre history novel" about the ANAsazi Indians 1270 AD . I very much like well researched historical fiction and hoped for much from this book. The book jacket stated we would learn about KOKOpelli.

Oh what a disappointment. There was no clue that this would be A bodice ripper romp {really rabbit skins}. I didn't even find it amusing that Vikings were roaming the South west.
no from me .

Werner says

(I'm not reviewing this one as such, just explaining why I never finished it.) My wife and I started reading this novel together, back in 1989, because it got a glowing endorsement on the back cover from Jean Auel, and we both greatly like her Earth's Children series, and her wonderful protagonist Ayla in particular. Unfortunately, we both found Shuler's work to be in sharp contrast to Auel's. The reaction we both had (and I stated it at the time, though I don't recall the exact words), is that while Ayla comes across as a 16-year-old

woman, and an adult can relate to her as to a fellow adult, Shuler's Kwani is clearly a 16-year-old *child* -- even though she's in contexts where she badly needs to show a lot more maturity, and her culture would expect her to-- and her glaring childishness destroys any real possibility of relating sympathetically to her. This experience tended to leave me with a permanent distrust for laudatory blurbs for any given book from other authors; I've always suspected (though I never investigated it to confirm or disprove the idea!) that Auel and Shuler may have had the same publisher for their hardcover editions, and that the firm's management may have used their leverage to pressure Auel for an endorsement. :-(

Gaile says

Kwani had been born with blue eyes. because of that her tribe believes her a witch and she was exiled. She soon finds a protector and becomes She who Remembers.

Although the love making in this book is not described, there is much violence, most of it against Kwani. Kwani journeys far before her child is born, meets much evil but also four men who love her. (or think they do) One is Thorvald, another blue eyed one and a Norseman who wishes to take Kwani as a captive to Norway. Then there is Okalake, the father of her child, Kokopelli, the wanderer from the Toltec nobility who like Thorvald plans to be rid of her baby. Tolanqua, like Kwani has dreamed of the White buffalo and wishes no harm to her child. Events come together in the canyon where Kwani's child is born and Tolanqua nearly meets his death.

I really liked this novel of the Native Americans before the white man came except the white man had already come in the form of the North Men. It left me with more questions than answers. The Norsemen came and left, yet they do not appear to have left smallpox behind or any of the other diseases of the white man such as Columbus men left. Yet we have evidence that long before Columbus, the men of Norway were here.

Cait says

Very much like Clan of the Cave Bear except the first few chapters would've filled a whole book if it was written by Jean M. Auel!

Really enjoyed this, didn't want to put it down.

Didn't always agree with Kwani's behaviour and she seemed to get through men (Wopio, Ute, Kokopelli, Okalake and Tolonqua) but she was a compelling character.

Will have to read the sequels. Book versions seem a bit tricky to get hold of but there are cheap ebook editions.

Taylor says

Fun. Fantastical. A period fiction that takes you to a whole different world, set in a world I know - Southwestern U.S., only 800+ years ago - MESA VERDE. I picked this up right before going to visit the national park, and it completely changed my experience. I read all about and imagined Kwani's life - which the author took great care to craft from the best available archeology knowledge. So when I actually stepped

into Mesa Verde, I didn't see a ghost town of lifeless abandonment, I saw all the ceremonies, dances, kiva fires, and normal daily life that was the whole of "She Who Remembers". I knew how the inhabitants had dressed, what they ate from the surrounding landscape, their daily and seasonal practices/routines, and some of their beliefs.

The story itself was entertaining, and I LOVE her theory on Kokopelli and his wide-spread popularity! She posits that he was a traveling tradesman all the way from tribes in Mexico. He played his flute to announce his coming, and brought incredible goods. His magical ways and wares convinced people he was a god, and he played it up. There was even a viking in the novel too! I loved the female-centric power, and the interactions between everybody. A fun vacation read, and the BEST for a Southwest Mesa Verde vacation!

Tori says

I loved this book. It has been some time since I've read it, but I do plan on re-reading it. It is on my favorite's shelf and there is this novel's permanent place.

I love native american historical fiction, and this book was chock full of myth, fact, intrigue, heartbreak, etc. It is so easy to define with the main character as to me she felt like a real life person. Her character was written up and described so well.

I kept getting swept up in this novel, and to be frank was sad at it's ending. Isn't that the way with all great novels, the closer we get the end the more we want to stretch it out.

I would love to find more books like this one.

I will be editing this review in the future after I re-read, but let me just say that this is definitely on my top 10 favorites list, and I can't wait to check out some of the other novels by Linda Lay Shuler.

Jeanette says

Good read if you like books set from a historical angle. It reflects what the lives of early American Indians were like. It was rich in ceremonial traditions, hunting rituals, and described the landscape of the plains and deserts set around a story of a woman and the men who loved her. The author even worked in the Vikings making their way to the Americas and making markings and inscriptions on stones, which is now known as the Runestones in Heavener, Oklahoma. I have visited this historic site, so this made the book more interesting to me.

Férial says

Because she is blue-eyed, 16 y/o Kwani is considered a witch by her people and is thrown out of her clan. And here starts her ~~oh-so-boring~~ story.

The (very short) prologue was intriguing enough as it involved Norsemen (yay Norse people). My joy was short-lived though. Unfortunately, the Norse were only mentioned so that we understand Kwani's eyes color (you know, they came, they killed and they raped -hence the blue eyes some indians got-).

And then, the story went like this :

Kwani : I'm alone in the wilderness. I need a man to protect me.

Kwani : Oh I have found a man in that cave. He has a crooked-foot but I don't care really. Let's "open my legs" and he'll protect me.

Kwani : My new mate has met people and wants to trade with them. Only, they don't want to. No problemo. I'll open my legs. ~~what's a little legs-opening between friends, eh?~~

Kwani : The stranger was kind and did not share me with his friends. Yay. And he's agreed to trade with my mate eventually. Everything is perfectly okay.

...until one day "crooked-foot" leaves (because he wants to be back to his people). And guess what ?

Kwani : No. Oh no, no, no. I need a man to protect me. ~~seriously?~~ The Apaches are around and they might catch me ~~well, why don't you try a legs-opening if they do, mmm ? Might work~~

Kwani : Ah. Here comes Kokopelli the magician. The one whose seed is magic ~~Ugh!~~. He has found me in a ravine and has saved me from sure death. Now I have a man who will protect me.

Kwani : I feel ashamed. I am healed now and I have tried a little legs-opening but Kokopelli has rejected me. My cheeks redden when I think about it.

Kwani : Kokopelli is taking me to the Eagle clan. He says they'll accept me because he'll tell them to. He is an important man to them, see ? Girls in the clans where he travels to go over their head to please him so that they're chosen to be the recipient of his magic seed ~~*snort*~~

Kwani : Oh but I want him so much. ~~my young body has urges you know and it's been such a long time since crooked-foot.~~

Kwani : At last, I could experience Kokopelli's "baby-maker". My body is sated. Yay. But Kokopelli must go and he'll be back next spring. Oh, but what am I going to do without his protection ? ~~no kidding~~

Kwani : Ah but there's the Chief's son. Handsome this one, and Kokopelli's been gone for a long time now and, you know, my body has urges and his man parts swell when he is near me ~~blah, blah, blah...~~

And so on, and so forth...until I thought I would pull my hair out.

Well, at least I learnt what a *mesa* was. For that (and only that), I am glad I picked this book up.
