



The Silent Stranger: A Kaya Mystery

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Kaya's village is preparing for the powerful winter Spirit Dances when an injured stranger arrives. The young woman doesn't speak, and no one can reach her but Kaya's beloved dog, Tatlo. Who is the stranger, and why is she so silent and alone? Will she bring harm to the village--or take Tatlo away from Kaya? Kaya searches for clues about the woman-- but she must look deep inside her own heart to truly understand her. When she does, Kaya not only solves the mystery but takes a brave step toward growing up.

The Silent Stranger: A Kaya Mystery Details

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From Reader Review The Silent Stranger: A Kaya Mystery for online ebook

Julie says

We (Alyssa, Kara, and I) read the whole Kaya series (6 short and this last one a little longer) in Sept. and Oct. and loved it. I was entertained and educated throughout. I'm sold on the American Girl books. We're going to read them all probably by the end of the school year, if not by February.

Mike says

I really enjoyed reading this book. Historical fiction is my favorite genre in books and movies. The book was exciting, interesting, and easy to read. I was happy to learn a few things about the Nez Perce culture and native american culture in general. One really interesting thing is that native Americans of different tribes were able to communicate through sign language. A few times Kaya attempts to "throw" words with her hands to her mysterious visitor. I also really enjoyed the photos and historical information at the back of the book.

I finished this book a few days before my Kaiya was born. We were told about the book when we had mentioned our plans for naming Kaiya. It was such a surprise to hear that Kaya was a Nez Perce! (We live in Nez Perce country). It is was really fun to read about Kaya's people and think of them in the areas around our home. Soon after I finished the book I went to the Appaloosa museum and learned even more about the Nez Perce people and their beautiful horses. Kaya is short for Kaya'aton'my' which means "she who arranges rocks". She is a very thoughtful, kind, and adventurous character. I hope my Kaiya will be as well.

Callie Stillion says

Kaya meets a stranger and it's hands are burnt and everyone is afraid. Finally Kaya asks and her Grandmother says, 'Her spirit is most likely hurt and she needs comfort. Just leave her alone unless you find it necessary.' Kaya follows this... and then one day the stranger is missing. Can Kaya find her? Or is she now alone?

Ciara says

i got a big stack of american girl mysteries from the public library & have been reading them. i'm not sure what i think of them. on the one hand, it's nice to get another story about these characters beyond their six introductory books. it helps to flesh out their lives, personalities, habits, relationships, & environments. on the other hand, the mysteries seem to be a little bit complex for children & are often solved thanks to a deus ex machina.

this is the one & only kaya mystery. (she, josefina, & addy are sometimes referred to as "the forgotten three" because they so often get the shaft when it comes to new stories & products.)

plot: kaya is chillaxin' with her tribespeople when two of the boys come back from doing some kind of hunting or something. they have a young women with them. the woman is wearing unusual clothing, more like that of the tribes that live near the coast than kaya's people. & her hands are burnt. & she refuses to speak. kaya's people are able to communicate with her a little bit through sign language. they pretty much just offer to treat her burns & let her hang out with them until she figures out her next move.

kaya becomes obsessed with the woman, i guess because the woman seems sad. kaya is still mourning the death of her friend circling swan (i don't know about this--it must have happened in her introduction series, which i read more than ten years ago & don't remember), & she thinks circling swan would have wanted kaya to try to help the woman somehow. kaya is also trying to prepare herself to go on her spiritual journey which will culminate in accepting an animal guide & taking an adult name. she intends to take circling swan's name. she thinks that doing something to help or comfort the strange woman will help her build the character & maturity that is required for the next step in her own journey.

after observing the woman watching a hawk on a cliffside, kaya begins to call the woman hawk woman. hawk woman takes an unnatural interest in kaya's dog, tatlo. kaya tries to introduce hawk woman to another dog that doesn't have a master, but hawk woman only wants tatlo. one of kaya's friends suggests that hawk woman has mysterious powers & is using them to steal tatlo from kaya, but kaya decides to allow tatlo to accompany hawk woman on her regular jaunts into the woods because it might bring hawk woman some comfort.

but as time goes by, kaya becomes more & more uneasy. hawk woman has such a connection with tatlo, & she seems so unhappy. she also wakes up in the middle of the night screaming & is unable to be comforted at those times. kaya & some of the other people in kaya's tribe start having strange nightmares. kaya wonders if maybe hawk woman does have powers & could use them to hurt kaya or her people.

on the night of a big powwow, kaya notices that hawk woman & tatlo have gone missing again. she goes into the woods to look for them. it's snowing & she is able to follow their tracks up a steep hillside. as she is climbing, she encounters a huge wolf. the wolf & kaya stare into each other's eyes & kaya feels that the wolf is communicating to kaya. kaya believes that the wolf is chastising her for looking for hawk woman in anger & fear for what hawk woman may want with tatlo or her people. the wolf reminds kaya that hawk woman is hurting & that kaya will have an easier time comforting her like she claims to want to do if she opens her heart to hawk woman's struggles. then the wolf wanders off, which is a pretty lucky break for kaya. but how awesome would it have been if the wolf had just gone ahead & eaten kaya in like chapter nine? i would have LOLED.

anyway, kaya tracks hawk woman & tatlo into a cave. hawk woman has built a fire & is just chillin', looking sad. kaya sits with her & tries to be patient. hawk woman accidentally knocks a doll she is holding into the fire (there was lots of kaya wondering why a grown woman was carrying around a doll--but if a dis to all the adult american girl collectors out there) & basically has a nervous breakdown. kaya snatches the doll from the fire & returns it to hawk woman & hawk woman explains her story:

she was traveling through the countryside with her husband & baby. they stopped to camp for the night. a storm blew through. their camp was struck by lightning. their little tent/teepee deal caught fire. hawk woman's husband was killed in the blaze, & hawk woman burned her hands trying to beat out the flames. she couldn't find her baby & assumed it had died as well. this caused her to basically lose her mind from grief. she started wandering without any clear idea of where she was going or why. this is when she was found by the boys in kaya's tribe & brought back to kaya's people. her connection with tatlo stems from the fact that hawk woman's husband had a dog that looked like tatlo. when she first saw tatlo, she thought it was her

husband's dog, come to lead her to her husband & baby.

now that hawk woman has explained herself, she says it is time to move on. kaya returns to the powwow, where a visitor from another tribe is telling a story about how she was traveling through the countryside & came across a baby abandoned by the trail. its cradleboard was decorated like those of babies from near the coast, although the baby was found closer to kaya's people's land. the woman took the baby in & has been raising it as her own. kaya realizes that this baby must be hawk woman's baby. she saddles up her horse & goes after hawk woman. she brings hawk woman back to be reunited with her baby. kaya's elders tell her that she is ready to go on her quest to meet her animal guide & assume circling swan's name. oh, & kaya decides to give hawk woman (actual name: hawk rising) tatlo. which seems like a big deal because he is pretty key to kaya's introduction books. happy endings all around.

pretty lucky that other woman found the baby, huh?

Ashley says

Kaya's village is preparing for the powerful winter Spirit Dances when an injured stranger arrives. She doesn't speak, and no one can reach her but Kaya's beloved dog, Tatlo. Who is the stranger, and why is she so silent and alone? Kaya searches for clues, but she must look deep inside her own heart to truly understand.

About The Author:

Each night when Janet Shaw was a girl, she took out a flashlight and book hidden under her pillow until she fell asleep. She and her brother liked to act out stories, especially ones about sword fights and wild horses. Today, Ms. Shaw has three grown children. When they were small, she often pulled them in a big red wagon to the library, where they filled the wagon with so many books, they had to walk back home. Janet Shaw lives in North Carolina with her husband and their dog. She is the author of all the American Girl books about Kaya and about Kirsten Larson.

I find the Kaya books so much fun to read that I can't put them down. I read this one in about 4 hours time. Went to a concert I found I didn't care for too much and started reading this book, finished it by 10:45pm.

Rebecca says

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful:

Great mystery for Kaya fans., February 24, 2005

Kaya and her band of Nez Perce Indians have settled into their winter home in the Salmon River Country, and are preparing for the upcoming winter Spirit Dances. One day, two of Kaya's cousins find an injured young woman lost in the wilderness. They bring her back to the village. Kaya names the stranger Hawk Woman, and is determined to reach her. But Hawk Woman refuses to communicate and seems lost in her own world, and Kaya's beloved dog, Tatlo, seems to have abandoned Kaya for this strange woman. Kaya is worried that Hawk Woman may want to harm them, and so she decides to try and find out where the woman

has come from, and why she was all alone.

This is good historical mystery that fans of the American Girls Collection, in particular those that are special fans of Kaya, are sure to enjoy. It's a longer, more detailed story than the other American Girls Collection books, so readers who are beginning to outgrow the regular books will appreciate the added length. It can also be enjoyed by girls who haven't read other American Girls books but who love historical mysteries. I really enjoyed this book, and I look forward to reading the other books in the new American Girls mystery series.

Dani says

I read this six times five years ago

Kyra says

I really enjoyed this book. I love the Kaya series, so when I found this book at a mall I knew I had to buy it.

The book is about Kaya who is getting ready with her tribe Nez Perce for the spirit dances. The book begins with a woman that is injured and was brought by Kaya's younger twin brothers; Wing Feather and Sparrow. The stranger cannot speak, make signs, and her hands are burned badly. Kaya wants to help the stranger in any way she can, but the strange lady shrugs her help and sorrow away.

Overall, I give this book 4/5 stars. I loved all the characters, and loved the way the book was written. If you are not a big fan of slow books, I definitely recommend this book just cause it isn't slow and it is also historical fiction;

But, if you don't like historical fiction, I don't recommend this book.

Hot*cheetos*303 says

this book was very detailed. so it was like the author was painting a picture in my head!!

Kristine Hansen says

A stranger comes to Kaya's people but doesn't seem to want help, though she's obviously looking for something. Kaya resolves to find the answer of what this woman wants and why she keeps taking Kaya's dog. She grows up a lot in the process. Interesting story.

Becca says

This is a lovely little book-- exactly at my girls' level. Gripping and scary, but with a speedy resolution. Genuinely tragic but redemptive. Celebratory of Nez Perce culture but not fetishistic. Carefully researched and unafraid to include real Indian language and practices, but not pedantic. I liked this better than Walk Two Moons-- it had greater character warmth than a lot of other YA novels about 18th century American Indians. There's none of the "stoic Indian" voice, and the White colonial gaze is totally absent in the story.

Alice says

After finishing the Kaya series, my kids wanted more, so I got this through inter-library loan. This book is written on a slightly higher reading level than the ones from the series, with maybe twice as many pages. I had to explain a few vocabulary words to my 7 and 8 year olds, but they had no problem following the basic story. All of my children (7-12) enjoyed the story and its suspense. As a more experienced reader, it seemed predictable to me, but they were surprised at what happened and happy with the happy ending. I was happy to see them enjoying it and learning about the Nimiipuu Native Americans. I was also pleased with how Kaya's character had grown. When we had decisions or discipline type issues during the days we read this, we would talk about what Kaya would do and why. We talked about how we were glad that we were not afraid of Stick People or superstitions, and we talked about how we should emulate Kaya's respect for her elders, care for those younger or less able than her, and desire to serve others and help her family and tribe. She is a good role model, admitting her weaknesses and striving to do her best. I recommend this as a read aloud for elementary or a read alone for 4th or 5th grade level.

Amanda Kay says

Standard American Girl fare, although it is one of the first mysteries. It's surprising Kaya even has a mystery since she is so often shafted by the privileged young girls who would rather have Samantha.

Shaw has written all of the Kaya books and this is like a remix of them. The plotline includes the standards of Kaya mourning Swan Circling, one of Kaya's animals misbehaving, and Kaya asking her elders a crap load of unanswerable questions.

Decent, and a nice addition to Kaya's world. Three stars.

Jess says

Kaya's village is preparing for the powerful winter spirit dances when an injured stranger arrives. She doesn't speak, and no one can reach her but Kaya's beloved dog, Tatlo. Who is the stranger, and why is she so silent and alone? Kaya searches for clues, but she must look deep inside her own heart to truly understand.

emma grace says

On an old reading list...estimated to have been read in 2006.

I loved this AG mysteries....
