

Purple Palette for Murder by R J Harlick

5 stars

A unique, northern Canadian, Meg Harris mystery that crosses intercultural boundaries and enfold you into the life of the Algonquin community.

With her husband, Eric Odjik - Grand Chief of the Grand Council of First Nations, under arrest for murder and her stepdaughter - Teht'aa Bluegoose, in hospital near death, Meg Harris is convinced the two crimes are linked, and not in the way the police believe. She must overcome her fear of leaving her sanctuary of Three Deer Point and fly to Yellowknife to prove his innocence. In her search for justice she finds a tangled web of family secrets and greed that she must unravel if she is to free the only man she has ever loved. Fragments of an ancient embroidery give her clues that guide her on her way and lead her to a remote Dene hunting camp where all is not as it seems and she meets members of her husband's family that she has not met before.

Throughout the book, I could sense the author's love for Canada's untamed wilds and the people who inhabit them. The novel highlights the plight of FASD - foetal alcohol spectrum disorder amongst the Algonquin people and the abuse that many children suffered at the Catholic residential schools they were forced to attend. It also brings to life the ancestral use of oral maps and the rich culture of story-telling to keep the history of a people alive. After reading the book I definitely want to read the other books by the author - her story telling takes me to places that I would love to visit but know that the only way I shall visit them is in my imagination as I create pictures with the words that are written. Her book allowed me to mingle amongst people with whom I would be very at home and to be part of the rich Algonquin culture.

Saphira

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.