



The Mask That Sang

Susan Currie

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Cass and her mom have always stood on their own against the world. Then Cass learns she had a grandmother, one who was never part of her life, one who has just died and left her and her mother the first house they could call their own. But with it comes more questions than answers: Why is her Mom so determined not to live there? Why was this relative kept so secret? And what is the unusual mask, forgotten in a drawer, trying to tell her? Strange dreams, strange voices, and strange incidents all lead Cass closer to solving the mystery and making connections she never dreamed she had.

The Mask That Sang Details

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From Reader Review The Mask That Sang for online ebook

Piers Calvin says

Read and reviewed for educators at my work - nice little read with important life messages and historical lessons throughout.

Najwa Warrach says

I received a free NetGalley e-copy for a review. I loved this book. This was such an amazing experience to read. This follows Cass who is a 12 year old girl who's Mother inherits her Mother's home. In the home there is this mask that Cass finds and the story just goes from there. It has some supernatural and dream elements BUT it also talks about issues prevalent in the Aboriginal communities for a younger audience. This book touches upon bullying, residential schools, drugs and alcohol as well as, generational trauma. I LOVED it so much that I purchased myself a copy and I cannot wait to read this book to my kids when they are of the age. 5/5 stars.

Carla Johnson-Hicks says

I really enjoyed this book. The story is about Cass, a 12 year old girl whose Mother inherits her Mother's home. She does not want to accept the inheritance as she was abandoned when she was young and brought up in foster homes. Cass convinces her that she wants to live in the house as they have never lived in the same place for any length of time. Cass was also bullied in her present school and this was a way to get out of the situation. Cass finds a mask in a drawer in the bedroom she has claimed as her own and hears it singing to her. She also begins to have some strange dreams. Meanwhile at her new school, she meets a Native boy who is being bullied and teased by a rich boy. She befriends him and his mother explains about Spirit Masks. When the mask is not where she left it, a mini adventure occurs. This book deals with bullying, poverty, residential schools, drugs and alcohol dependence. There are some supernatural aspects in this story surrounding the mask and the Native American spirituality which assist in telling the story of Cass and her family. The fact that the issue of residential schools did not just affect the residents but generations that follow is demonstrated in this story. This is a good story to assist children in understanding the residential school issues that is so relevant today. The author did an amazing job with this story that she wrote echoing her own discovery of her roots. The publisher generously provided me with a copy of this book via Netgalley.

[Shai] Bibliophage says

The Mask That Sang is a completely engrossing novel which addresses not only about bullying that happens in schools, but it also narrates that it exists even in a more larger extent, e.g. in indigenous people. Oppression to the native tribes in America, how the suffering these people have to endure through the hands of their tormentors, and how they were able to heal after was discussed on this book.

The author, Susan Currie, used the Iroquois healing mask as origin of her novel and from that, the fictional story of Cass, her mom and her grandmother's story was born. The sounds and dreams that Cass experienced once she possessed the false mask were quite intriguing; and it will make readers to look forward to reading on what could they mean.

Apparently, Currie made an excellent job writing this, as this book won the Second Story Press Aboriginal Writing Contest. I commend the author for coming up with this novel that must be promoted to schools and educators, as this book gives a brief look about the aborigines; their culture and their history.

Wunderdrugged says

This title is nominated for the 2018 Hackmatack Award in the fiction category.

What a powerful story! Currie tackles issues of racism, reconciliation, and identity in the First Nations community in this novel, which has an intended audience of ages 9-12. However, I think that people of all ages could benefit from reading this story. It does a great job of examining how the policies set up by various agencies over the years have had a very negative impact on the First Nations peoples, and created a cycle that we are still struggling to break out of. I particularly enjoyed the arc of the Ellis character, and how Degan seemed to intuitively know what was going on in that house. I also liked how the teacher was motivated by a genuine desire to help and was not romantically attracted to Cass's mom. My favourite thing about this book is that it happy/sad ending that brought on cathartic crying session. It was a quick read, definitely doable for the lower end of the age range and engaging enough to keep the attention of the older kids. Would definitely recommend!

BG says

I wish there would've been more books like this when I was growing up. This would've been a great book to read in class and not only because of the awesome way it introduces you to native aspects but also because of the bullying aspect. This book was really very well done. I can't really think of anything that was bad about it.

Marilyn B says

To be honest, this was the book that was selected for my local children's reading competition that I wanted to read the least. But it may have been the best. (The reason I had to read all of them is that I'm a school librarian and my students are reading the book and want me to quiz them in prep for their competition.) As a children's book this really worked in terms of keeping some very complex social issues (the aftermath of residential schools, racism, poverty, abandonment, etc) simple enough to understand while not throwing a child into a depressive cycle. You understand the problems and that they ARE problems but you can feel the hope too. The mystery of the mask and why it sings isn't overly mysterious but perhaps that's because I am an old grizzled adult. I think the grade 4s and 5s in my reading group wouldn't necessarily know what is going on right off. I think the cover art is a shame because I would have never picked this as a book to read and that would have been a shame. Because it's really quite good.

Margi says

What a wonderful book! This is a children's book, but it tells a very difficult, adult story in a gentle, thorough way. I couldn't put it down.

Cee says

The Mask that Sang is a story whose main theme of bullying is done in a way that middle grade readers will be able to identify with. Cass is an only child living with her Mother who grew up in the foster care system. As they struggle to find work and fit in at school, Cass finds a false face, a mask carved by a Cayuga elder. Cass is spiritually connected to the mask and can hear magical singing and begins to have vivid dreams which lead her on a journey of self-discovery. This novel can be used by teachers as a way to introduce discussions about the Residential School system and for readers who are interested in the current need for Indigenous people to heal and reclaim their heritage and teachings.

Laura says

First let me say that I much appreciate what Second Story Press is doing. This book was published as part of a series of books written by people who were First Nation. I think these sorts of books are very important, and I appreciate what they were trying to do.

I also appreciate that this book deals with bullying, and how to deal with bullies, which is also something children have to deal with, unfortunately.

The problem is, the book was not as good as I had hoped it would be. It was a little too easy for all the things to happen.

So good concept. Good outcome. The story was just not as well written as I had hoped, and at times I was a little bored by it.

Thanks to Netgalley for making this book available for an honest review.
