



## The Boy Who Ran

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The sole survivor when his village was massacred, the boy spends his days alone in the woods, feeling more kinship with the animals than with the people who took him in but never really accepted him.

THE BOY WHO RAN is a middle grade novel about a Native American orphan trying to find a place in the world. It's written like a parable, following the boy's struggle to be seen and treated like one of The People.

Until now, he's been satisfied to live in his own world, not really paying attention to what the others did. He's had one overwhelming obsession: to run faster than anyone else and to do so in absolute silence as he moves through the forest, like a ghost.

It's been seven years since he was found hungry and bleeding by a hunting party after escaping the massacre. The villagers think his mind is broken and as half animal—they don't know exactly what to do with him but are kind hearted and make sure he's fed and sheltered.

The story is set six thousand years ago in the mid-archaic period in North American.

One editor called it's feel and tone a cross between *The Giver* and *Hatchet*.

Winner Gold Medal 2014 Independent Publisher's Book Awards in Juvenile Fiction Category

Bronze Medal, 2014 Moonbeam Children's Book Awards, Pre-Teen Cultural / Historical Fiction

## **The Boy Who Ran Details**

Date : Published November 13th 2013 by Woodland Park Press LLC

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Author : Michael Selden

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## **From Reader Review The Boy Who Ran for online ebook**

### **Callie says**

\*\*Goodreads First Reads Winner\*\*\* This was a well written book that people of all ages can enjoy. the struggles of a boy different from the tribe, coming into his own has a great message. you can almost see yourself running along with him through the woods.

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### **Monnie says**

Abandonment, fear, jealousy, loneliness, anger, self-reliance, bullying, love, acceptance, responsibility. All those feelings and emotions and more are dealt with in this book, a winner of the 2014 IPPY Gold Medal for Juvenile Fiction. Because of the age group targeted (and because the story sounded interesting), I agreed to read and review it when I was offered a copy at no cost.

The story, which takes place 6,000 years ago, centers on a young boy who was the sole survivor after everyone in his village was massacred by an invading tribe. His only memory is that of an injured woman - most likely his mother - uttering a single word as she carried him to the edge of the forest: "Run." as she After spending considerable time in the woods, he finds another group of people who take him in, albeit grudgingly. Although he is given shelter and food, he always feels those things are given grudgingly and that he's an outcast.

Throughout several years, he never utters a word - always moving in stealth, wandering in and out of the forest in which he's more familiar and content and where he practices his considerable skill as an exceptionally fast runner. Then, as he watches other young boys in the group being taken under the wings of elder-teachers to learn hunting skills and what their responsibilities will be as adults, he decides to follow along (surreptitiously) to acquire that knowledge for himself.

Revealing much more would spoil the fun of reading it for yourself, but suffice it to say I'm quite sure (as the mother of four grandchildren who passed through this age group, albeit quite some time ago) that most youngsters will relate to the boy's experiences and find the book enjoyable.

I will say, though, that the ending - an epilogue - could use a bit more fleshing out. Without giving too much away, it seems to me that for a new family member to appear out of nowhere with no explanation of how many years have passed or how that new member came to be there gave me pause - and in this day and age, I'm pretty sure it would elicit questions even from a first-grader. Also, at least in the Kindle edition, the paragraphs are way too long and need extra spacing between each new one to make reading easier.

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### **Kirsty says**

I won this book through Goodreads First Reads. Review to follow.

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### **Lorna Francis says**

What a beautifully written and intriguing novel! First, I must say that the cover image was amazing, a beautiful reflection of the story. I loved the way Michael Selden drew the reader in, taking me on the boy's journey to find his own gift of speech. It is a beautiful and inspiring tale of a lone survivor of a native American camp and his communication with nature. Despite being thought of as different, and not being accepted, the youngster is keen to learn and loves to run. Carefully he follows older boys and their teachers into the forest and whilst remaining hidden, learns techniques to track animals among other things. Alone in his silent world, he is unaware that he is sparking the interest of others and this leads to unexpected confrontation.

The boy finds not only his voice but a place in the community, family and love. This book is guaranteed to touch the heart of every reader.

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### **Brianna says**

An excellent read! I simply could not put it down, so it made for a nice two hours of reading.

This story follows one exceptional young boy whose mother is suddenly killed by bloodthirsty marauders and, after being instructed to run, is discovered unconscious in the forest by a band of hunters from a tribe nearby. He is taken in--though not accepted--by the community and lives as a mute in near-isolation for seven years until one day, they discover that he possesses intelligence, character, and skills beyond what they could have ever imagined. It is a tale of friendship, of acceptance, of character, of patience, and of what it means to become a man in pre-Columbian America.

I found myself really rooting for the boy (often referred to as "the strange one" by tribe members) within twenty pages in much a way as I did when I first read J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* as a child. I believe this novel will appeal to middle-grade students and adults alike--and especially by readers who share the boy's quick wit and logic.

Teachers, take note: *The Boy Who Ran* would also make a great supplemental book for any history/social studies unit on American Indians. It is an entertaining read, as well as an educational one, since the author refers to and defines many tools, weapons, foodstuffs, and customs practiced by the American Indian people during the pre-Columbian era.

The only quibble I have is that the author's added information about customs and historical details occasionally detracted from the narrative flow--these would be better presented as footnotes. I doubt, however, that this would bother a student while reading. Otherwise, I certainly recommend this book and look forward to reading more from author Michael Selden!

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### **Jori says**

#### **Good story.**

I liked this book a lot. It was very simple, without a lot of bells and whistles, but easy to read. The story of "boy" tells of a young boy's struggle to belong and still maintain his own secret talent, while figuring out

where he came from. The author does a good job of relating this; although it moves a little quickly, there are many historic references that give color and background to the tale.

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### **Louise White says**

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The mother's final words and the circumstances of his abandonment continue to haunt and guide him. Taken in by a tribe, they fail to see beyond the boy's silence and strangeness as he lives with his grief and loneliness. He

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### **Sayantoni Das says**

Review by : [www.wordscantfathom.wordpress.com](http://www.wordscantfathom.wordpress.com)

How can a book be sooo good? I mean, just how? I was literally hooked to the book starting from page one to the very last one.

The story is set six thousand years ago in North America, when the sole rule of survival was hunting. The boy has no name. And the others who do have names like Gray Wolf, Morning Hawk and the likes. I enjoyed the premise a lot where the boy feels more at home in the forest than in the village. He's completely alone, yet he shares a strong bond with everything around him.

Content with this silent life, he cared less of how everything worked, but oneday his perspective changes. He follows Red Sky, a hunter into the forest and that's where he learns how important hunting is for surviving. Even though he is taken for a nutcase who doesn't speak, he endeavours to become a hunter someday and learns from afar without them knowing.

Being an introvert myself, I could relate to the boy in so many ways. Like when his silence is misunderstood, and the way he feels about the world. I learnt a lesson or two when the boy discovered how everything is just a way of our perspectives. I would like to quote a sentence from the book that I really liked.

" Something cold and hard and distant inside of the boy was beginning to soften and he grew to accept that most the isolation he'd experienced was his own fault."

His introspection led the way to a deep realisation that eventually helped soften the edges of his reality. And then came those moments he spent in the forest and interacted with animals both wild and calm. I swear I had to hold my breath while I read. That's when I realised I much I had fallen in love with the book. While my hands are quivering to give away a spoiler or two, I won't. I can't ruin your reading experience, that's just not right.

There are 5 Star reads, and then there are 5 Star reads like this! This book is way above any ratings, so I'll just go straight to the point where I recommend this to each and every one of you out there, reading this review. It deserves way more attention than it already achieved, so if you are looking for your next read, get this one! It's that good!

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### **Rita says**

I received this book through Goodreads First Reads.

What can I say about this gem of a book. I picked it up and started reading and could not put it down again. I just needed to finish it. The story was fantastic and realistic from start to finish. It had me standing next to "The Boy" all the way through. The imagery was great. I forgot where I actually was.

The writer was able to place me in the head of the boy and the other characters as well. At one point I thought I knew where and how it would end. And I was gratefully amazed that I was wrong.

I recommend this book to any one of any age. There is a life lesson in it and is perfectly written.

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### **Pooja says**

#### **Steals the heart.**

Six thousand years ago, set in North America, The Boy Who Ran accounts a gripping tale of a young man who got abandoned and then rescued by a tribe.

The haunting memories of his lost mother always trigger the deepest sentiments and bring out the most silent and devastated creature in him. The boy is wrapped up in the circumstances of morose, oddity and isolation.

His only way out from this predicament is to spend time in the forest near his village. He runs, plays and keeps himself occupied. Failing which, he will be again served to the maw of rejection.

With wisdom and quick judgement, he gains the worthy knowledge.

The Boy Who Ran is an excellently written story that sometimes shakes your grounds. Courageous and 'should be safeguarded' - are the words I'll define this book for me.

Narration is detailed and intriguing. A book about the American-Indian history, was both educational and enjoyable. The cover picture embellishes the feel about this book.

In mere 160 pages, it proved itself to be an attention-getting novel.

No wonder that The Boy Who Ran has won numerous awards.

Recommended for people of every age.

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### **Archit Ojha says**

#### **In 160 page, Nailed it!**

A boy is abandoned, left on his own. Thankfully a tribe appears in his rescue. But can they really save him? From feeling lonely, angry, devastated, scared and hatred?

The Boy Who Ran beckons you on a voyage that a very few gets opportunity to. Enlightening and captivating. Well researched and the flow of the story was balanced and fascinating.

In order to get knowledge, he has to learn much more that will come in his way. This book is a perfect read for readers of every age.

I would not unveil much as to not spoil the experience for other readers. It is a quick read so the readers will find it difficult to put it down. Touching, inspiring and delightful. Narrated beautifully.

**Verdict: Anybody will love it!**

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**BlaiddDrwg says**

I have received a free electronic copy of this book for an honest review. THANK YOU.

The actual rating: **1,5** stars.

My heart is breaking. Literally. I hate to give such low ratings for books I'm receiving for free but this time I have no choice.

I've read half of this booklet on my own. And I gave up. Unfortunately I was bored. And then I thought about my kids (well, not literally my kids, I'm a part time nanny for 3 kiddos). This book is meant for children, and just because I don't like it doesn't mean that kids won't. So I gathered my pupils (I had to pay them with sweets so they will listen to the whole story and give me some opinions, little bastards). And unfortunately kids confirmed my thoughts.

But let's start from the story itself. Book is telling a story about young boy who survived the massacre in his village. He remembers only to run. *Run* the woman told him, the deadly wounded woman who probably was his mother. Boy spends first years of his new life mainly in forest, watching animals, learning their behaviour, observing surroundings as he doesn't feel accepted by The People from his new village.

Well, story itself sounds pretty okay, the ending is comforting but that's it. I've written down everything that kids said, and I think their opinions will be the most honest ones (I've written down what kids **exactly** said, I didn't set right grammar nor improved their vocabulary). Every one of them was supposed to finish two sentences "I liked it because..." and "I didn't like it because..."

Tishia (5 years old): *I didn't like it because it was boring, and nothing happened, and there was too little talking* (she meant dialogues) *I liked it because I like the boy because he was nice and no one liked him but he was okay and I liked animals*

Jamie (12 years old): *I didn't like it because I've read other books about Native Americans and they were better because nothing happened and it was too long* (he explained me later that he wanted to say that if this book was written in 20 pages it wouldn't change the story itself and would be more interesting) When I asked Jamie what he liked he said: *nothing*

Victoria (12 years old): *I liked it because it is important to tell people that you can't bully someone because*

*he's different and you have to respect them anyway. I didn't like it because it was too long and half of the things was unnecessary and if it was shorter it would be better and I liked when you've read us "The Ugly Duckling" story because it was shorter and better and told the same story about bullying and Duckling was amazing (and then Tishia and Jamie made me to read them "The Ugly Duckling" again.)*

Well, I can't argue with kids. I really like reading ya and middle grade stories (I find them way better than adult novels) but just not this one. I completely understand what kind of story author wanted to write, a story about acceptance, forgiveness, bullying, finding the right place for oneself. And it could be great, adorable story, but unfortunately, for me, it wasn't. I have to agree with my little friend Victoria: classic fairy tale "The Ugly Duckling" is telling, more or less, about the same problem, it's just way better than "The Boy Who Ran".

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### **Stacie says**

The Boy Who Ran gives an exciting glimpse into the life of a Native American boy and his struggle to find acceptance among a new tribe.

A violent massacre in their village leaves his mother fatally wounded and in his haunting dreams he can still sense her fear as she instructs him to RUN. Homeless and alone the boy finds refuge with a new tribe, but as an outsider he is never really accepted into their tight nit community. He has never spoken and prefers to spend time by himself in the forest. He knows The People think little of him and in turn he has never been grateful for the many years of food and shelter they have provided. One day the boy sees a hunting lesson being taught to some of the other boys and he becomes intrigued. It's at this moment he realizes his life must change.

The Boy Who Ran is such a fascinating story and the author's exquisite attention to detail makes it easy to imagine all the boy experienced in his young life. I like that the story teaches readers to never judge a book by its cover. The People assume the boy is a mute and animal like. He is shuffled from one family to next and never feels like he belongs. He overhears their mean comments and feels their coldness. But, when they take time to notice him they discover he has much to offer.

This is an exceptionally well written and enjoyable read. I highly recommend picking up a copy.

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### **AK Mama Reads says**

A really great middle-grade read! I was impressed with the scope of the story and historical accuracy. A lovely work of fiction centering around a Native American boy with animalistic speed, "The Boy Who Ran" will leave you breathless and wanting to tromp around your back yard through a pile of leaves.

\*\*\*I received a free copy in exchange for an honest review.\*\*\*

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## **Darby Karchut says**

The Boy Who Ran by Michael Selden is a terrific middle grade read. It won the 2014 IPPY Gold Medal for Juvenile Fiction.

It has all the things I look for in a book: a protagonist to cheer for, a nicely drawn story arc, and a unique "voice". But even better, The Boy Who Ran also taught me some things about the daily life of the hunters-gatherers of North America (6,0000 years ago). As another reviewer pointed out, it is a bit like Clan of the Cave Bear, but for children.

This book would be a great addition to any elementary or middle school library. Highly recommend.

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