

True to Heart Trilogy Media Kit

Author: Carmen Peone

Genre: Young Adult/Historical

Books: Change of Heart, Heart of Courage, Heart of Passion (coming fall of 2019)

Blurbs:

Change of Heart

ISBN: 1732335613

Pages: 252

After fighting with her sister, Spupaleena bolted from their Sinyekst lodge into the dead of winter. She didn't know where she was going but knew she could no longer live at home. Haunted by the deaths of her mother and baby brother, she ran until she'd run too far. Upon discovering Spupaleena's body, Phillip Gardner, a trapper, brings her home to his cabin. His wife, Elizabeth, does her best to help heal Spupaleena, although with a broken heart and a mangled body, she is not likely to survive. But when Phillip doesn't return from a trip into Hudson Bay's Fort Colvile, a pregnant Elizabeth and a weak Spupaleena are forced to find strength in each other. In this story of hardship, grief, and eventual hope, Spupaleena learns all she needed was a change of heart.

Heart of Courage:

ISBN: 1-7323356-2-1

Pages: 258

Spupaleena is a Sinyekst Indian, the only one brave enough to challenge tradition. Girls in her village are of the tender age to marry, but that is the last thing on her mind. Her dream is to race and raise horses in anticipation of selling them to Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Colvile in Washington Territory.

But her father has other plans and arranges for his daughter to care for a three-month-old baby whose mother is gravely ill in hopes she will settle down and behave like the rest of the maidens in their village.

Pregnant Elizabeth Gardner is torn between encouraging her Sinyekst friend's vision, knowing she possesses a raw talent, and convincing her closest friend to change dreams due to threats and incidents that impend her safety—even at the strain of their bond.

As friendships and family relations constrict, resentment turns into forgiveness, and fear turns into courage, one young maiden learns what it means to be truly depended on by another. This story from

award-winning author Carmen Peone will grip your heart as you ride the rugged trails along the Columbia River into boundless Indian Country.

Heart of Passion: (coming fall of 2019)

Excerpts:

Change of Heart:

She would never see him again, and it was all her fault. His toddler's face seemed to appear in the orange and blue glow flickering in the pit. The flames danced low to the ash-covered earth protected by a circle of rocks, revealing his dark, thick hair and round eyes. The fire in Spupaleena's family's tule-covered lodge along the upper Columbia River crackled like the pain that sizzled in her chest. She perched next to the fire on her tule-mat, beside the heat, ready to decide once and for all if she was indeed to blame.

Her belly twisted at the guilt that pricked her insides—even three years later. She blinked. Yes, it was her fault. Fresh bruises on her upper body and arms were all the proof she needed.

Perhaps joining her father soon to hunt small game would chase away her sorrow. At least for a while. He'd asked her to go with him before leaving to check his snare trap lines. How fitting it would be to have the noose around her neck. After all, the rabbit was her namesake, and any blame cast belonged to no one but her. She blinked back tears and sucked in a deep breath. She smudged, ready for her Creator Koolenchooten's, judgment.

Flickering flames in the middle of the lodge reminded her of that day. That warm June day that poked her chest—the season of camas root. Spupaleena's brother had been in her care, but an upcoming canoe fishing trip distracted her. Her father had talked about it for days and after much persistence on her part, she was included. Her net needed repair.

She placed a small log on the fire as memories stacked in her mind, digging their claws into the back of her shoulders. She rubbed her neck, winced at the pain. The scent from her sage bundle spiraled toward the lodge's center hole. She lifted the bundle, waving the smoke over her body. Her eyes closed, and she sang in a soft tone. When the song ended, a bird's call entered her thoughts.

A hawk called from behind them that day. The brown-winged bird dove into the icy river lined by hills, mountains, and trees, gathered a salmon in his sharp talons and flapped away. "*Yow tell huh, atshint.*" She instructed her youngest brother, Raven, to look at the bird from a grassy spot where they stood to dry off from an afternoon swim. With her back to him, she pointed to the sky but no one answered. Water splashed behind her and she twirled around, smiling.

He was gone.

Spupaleena dove in from the drop-off and searched, hollered for help, dove again. Numb, she screamed for help and went back in, fishing around until her fingers found his body. She dragged him out, his face blue. "Raven!" She shook his wilted body. But there was no movement. No reaction. His frigid frame lay in her lap, limp and breathless. "Raven..." Hot moisture stung her eyes.

Trembling fingers clutched her throat. She shook her head, slow at first, unable to stop the tears from flowing. "No!" She tipped her head to the heavens and rocked back and forth as sobs came hard and fast. "Not Raven..." She allowed deep moans to lurch out of her until there were no more.

That was the day her smile disappeared.

As she blinked, she forced the memory further into the abyss of her mind, shoving it down so deep she was certain it would never haunt her again. She would accept Koolenchooten's punishment, whatever that may be. Rosehip tea couldn't soothe the anguish, but she took a sip anyway. She grimaced at its tepidness on her tongue and eased a hot rock into the wooden cup. Would her heart ever heal? *Even if you forgive me, Koolenchooten, I am not sure I can forgive myself.*

Heart of Courage:

Spupaleena cringed, led Rainbow to the river for a drink and to soak her hot legs, and mustered the courage to face her father. She had finished her chores so why was he angry with her? Hopefully by the time she was ready to speak, his mood would soften. Once Rainbow seemed to have her thirst satisfied, she led the mare to her father.

"You were gone all day again."

"*Kewa*, but my work is done. Was there something else you wanted from me?"

"Do we have enough roots for the winter? Soon it will be time to pick berries. Most of the women take pride in making sure their families are well fed and clothed. When will you join them?"

"I—I...soon." She toed the dirt with her buckskin-covered toe.

"That is not the answer I hoped for." He looked past her and waved someone over. An elder of the village with a baby in her arms halted beside Spupaleena. The soft but wrinkled face smiled, her beady eyes sparkling. She held out the baby who appeared to be a few moons old. Chubby brown arms waved in the warm breeze, feet kicking the air.

Spupaleena took a step back.

Skumheist motioned to the squirming bundle. “Take her.”

“Me? Why? *Loot!* I cannot...” She squeezed Rainbow’s lead rope, her body yearning to flee. What would she do with a baby? She could not train. *The race. Three sunsets.* She shook her head like a dog after a swim.

Skumheist stood, tore the baby from the old woman, and shoved her in his daughter’s arms. He shoed the bent-over woman away. With a chuckle, she waddled toward a lodge and picked up a cedar basket and root-digging stick made of wood and antler. Blue Jay appeared from inside the lodge and took the old woman by the arm. She gave Spupaleena a sorrowful glance before leading the old woman toward the hills.

“Blue Jay?” Had her childhood friend known this was going to happen? Why hadn’t she warned her? Growing up they’d been like sisters. Surely, there would be no secrets between them.

“It is time for you to learn the ways of our people. Your mother has been gone for a long time now. I have failed you, let you come with me as if you were a son. No more. She is now yours.” With a nod he moseyed away.

“But...” A roving little hand slapped Spupaleena’s face. The infant giggled, dark, round eyes looking at her. “*Mistum!*” Her father’s back faded into the village. “How will I feed her?”

Heart of Passion: (coming fall of 2019)

Bio:

Carmen Peone has lived in Northeast Washington, on the Colville Confederated Indian Reservation since 1988 with tribal member husband, Joe, gleaning knowledge from family and friends. She had worked with tribal elder, Marguerite Ensminger, for three years learning the Arrow Lakes- Sinyekst-Language and various cultural traditions and legends. She owns and trains her horses and competed in Mountain Trail Competitions. With a degree in psychology, the thought of writing never entered her mind until she married her husband and they moved to the reservation after college. She came to love the people and their heritage and wants to create a legacy for her sons and their families.

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Website and blog: <http://carmenpeone.com/>

Goodreads: http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4862063.Carmen_Peone

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Amazon Author Page: http://www.amazon.com/Carmen-Peone/e/B00A92O4R4/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1451363711&sr=8-1

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Reviews:

Change of Heart:

Best book I've ever read about Native Americans. It's respectful and admiring of their culture while not slipping into cheap hostility to all Caucasian characters OR sentimentalizing about the pagan religion of Native American tribes. Spupaleena's emotional journey as she learns to find God and forgive herself and her sister was told with sincerity and sensitivity. Also her physical journey was described with blunt honesty. Carmen Peone doesn't try to shock the reader with tacky images of blood--but she doesn't pretty up just how horribly beat up Spupaleena must have been after her injuries.

Elizabeth and her husband were also admirable characters and well shown. But Spupaleena took over the story. I have rarely seen an "angry teen" character handled so well. She didn't come across as a brat, or as insincere in her rage--she came across as being like a temperamental colt. Growing up is just going to be very hard for her.

Outstanding western story about growing up and coming to terms with the mistakes of your past.

—Hannah, Goodreads Review

Heart of Courage

Great book for young girls that love horses. The book has a lot of lessons about how to live a good, clean life. I'm not one who generally reads just for pleasure, but Heart of Courage is one of the best books I've read. I couldn't put it down and finished it in one day. I would recommend it to parents for their kids to read. It's great to see clean books these days.

—Andrew, Amazon Review

Heart of Passion

Young people will find the heart and courage of Spupaleena as gripping as ever. Heart of Passion is a great story of faith and determination. The richness of culture and language, the strength of faith, and the girl who fights for her dreams...Peone fans will not be disappointed.

—Jim Boyd, Singer/Songwriter, Colville Tribal Member

Tags:

Carmen Peone, Colville Confederated Tribes, Northeast Washington, Native American Culture, Native American Legends, writers, Young Adult Fiction, horses, horse racing, Indian relay