



## The Ghost Walker

*Margaret Coel*

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## **The Ghost Walker** Margaret Coel

Father John O'Malley comes across the corpse lying in a ditch beside the highway. When he returns with the police, it is gone. The Arapahos of the Wind River Reservation speak of Ghost Walkers—tormented souls caught between the earth and the spirit world, who are capable of anything.

Then, within days, a young man disappears from the Reservation without a trace. A young woman is found brutally murdered. And as Father John and Arapaho lawyer Vicky Holden investigate these crimes, someone—or something—begins following them.

Together, Vicky and Father John must draw upon ancient Arapaho traditions to stop a killer, explain the inexplicable, and put a ghost to rest...

## **The Ghost Walker Details**

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Author : Margaret Coel

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Genre : Mystery, Fiction

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## **From Reader Review The Ghost Walker for online ebook**

### **Mike says**

This is the second book in the Wind River Reservation series. I had read the first book and found it a bit difficult to follow. I found this book to have a much more readable style. I thoroughly enjoyed the story. Although some of the plot twists were easy to see others were sufficiently surprising to make the book a very enjoyable read. It convinced me to keep reading the series.

I recommend the book as a pleasant mystery to read.

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### **Cathy Cole says**

Margaret Coel's writing puts you right on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming-- and that winter wind cuts right through you while you try to piece together all the clues in a very satisfying mystery. While the setting is beautifully rendered, what holds all the pieces of location and investigation together is her superb cast of characters.

Father John O'Malley is a real, flawed human being who cares deeply for the Arapaho on the Wind River Reservation. He has taken the time and trouble to learn their history and their customs, and as a result his parishioners have learned to trust and value him as an important part of their lives. His friend Vicky Holden is a bit prickly and tends to be very reserved, but she's had a tough row to hoe-- escaping from an abusive alcoholic husband and working hard to earn a law degree. Now she's back on the reservation to help her people, but she straddles both worlds and conflicts can arise-- like the sudden reappearance of her daughter, who resents Vicky for leaving her father and making her own way in the world.

All the characters play against each other very well as the various threads of the plot begin to mesh together. Thankfully Coel adds welcome touches of humor to all the serious goings on of the plot, letting us watch the quick-thinking priest wheel and deal to get the people on the reservation the things they so desperately need. Especially humorous is the scene in which O'Malley cuts a deal with a car salesman.

Equally important amongst the murders, the setting, and the characters are the glimpses Coel gives us into Arapaho culture:

"Whites'll say Lester's my brother's grandson."

Father John gave a nod of understanding. There was no concept of aunt, uncle, or cousin on the reservation. Your brother's child was your child. Thomas and Mardell had no children of their own, but they were not childless.

It's a concept other cultures would do well to take to heart.

This is only the second book I've read in this series, but the further I get into it, the deeper I fall. Margaret

Coel knows how to write a feast for both mind and heart.

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### **Barb says**

I am on a voyage of discovery. I've collected all of Margaret Coel's books, and I'm marathon-reading them. This is an amazing series, and *THE GHOST WALKER* is incredible all by itself. So much research and study has obviously gone into the writing; the author is intimately familiar with the way of the Arapahoe people. At the forefront of this tale there is the inevitable conflict between the tribe and neighboring whites. *THE GHOST WALKER* introduces us to a corporation who wants to buy the land the Mission is on to build a recreation center which will probably turn into a casino. In addition, Vicky Holden's daughter returns from Los Angeles in the company of three white men, and Vicky is sure that Susan is on drugs. And a body is discovered in a ditch during a blinding blizzard. By the time the police are notified and respond, the body has vanished, although there are footprints and an indentation, so the police take it seriously. Arapahoe believe that if a body is not properly buried, the spirit becomes a ghost and causes problems in the area. Coel has interwoven these threads along with glimpses into the day to day life of the Wind River tribe. Even though this volume is now 20 years old, its relevancy to today's situation in central Wyoming remains. An excellent read.

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### **Susan McHale says**

I enjoyed this first book in the series. Much in the style of Hillerman and other southwestern writers, Margaret Coel is adept at painting a picture of life on the Arapaho reservation and the culture that persists. The challenges of life on the reservation drive the plot of this book and I found that fascinating. The only reason I gave it 4/5 stars is because some outcomes in this read are fairly predictable.

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### **Dr T says**

A pretty good story, although very derivative of the famous Hillerman Navajo mysteries. The action takes place with the Arapahoes of western Wyoming, and does a good job of fitting into the traditions and realities of Arapaho life on the Wind River reservation. The story revolves around an Anglo Jesuit priest who runs the mission on the reservation and his relations with the natives and his struggles with off-reservation powers. Threats of closure of the mission and its sale to a mysterious California corporation for development as a tribal (commercial) center gets the story rolling, and complicating factors keep adding to the mix, including murder, drug dealing and other crimes.

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### **KDawn says**

A good story. I liked the mystery and the interaction of the characters...

However I don't recommend listening to it. You can hear the pages turning and volume goes up and down. The reader (Stephanie Brush) is hard to listen to for me. Unfortunately, everyone sounds like a little girl. I think a male reader would be better since the lead character is a man, too. IMHO.

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## **Sue says**

This is the second book in Coel's Wind River Reservation series and is the second book that I've read. I have to say that I enjoyed *The Ghost Walker* even more than the first book, *The Eagle Catcher*. The mystery in *The Ghost Walker* was detailed and a nail-biter. There were a few times that I knew what was coming but most of the time events were a surprise as they unfolded. However, the strengths of Coel's writing are her characters, they are strong, complex and well-written, and her knowledge and descriptions of the Arapahoes and their reservation. I was cold just reading about the Wyoming winters.

I'm looking forward to the third book in the series.

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## **Leslie Conner says**

Great story, well written with difficult and complex problems.interesting discussion of current modern social issues and well developed characters. It moves so fast at the end. Well worth the slower beginning.

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## **June says**

The main characters are very sympathetic, maybe because of their faults. They still try to do the "right" thing. Escaping abusive relationships, leaving children, what we owe our children - how to help them, alcoholism... all very contemporary and universal themes. I have ordered the third in the series.

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## **Michael says**

Fr. John O'Malley, a Jesuit priest is pastor at St. Francis Mission at the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

On the way to a meeting on a snowy day, his car breaks down and while walking for help, he stumbles over a body partially hidden in the snow. When he reaches help and returns with the sheriff, the body has been removed.

He is also informed that there is a plan to sell the Mission and build a community center. The economic advisor for the reservation is behind the idea as is an attorney who seems sleezy.

The setting is well described with the large scale unemployment and problems with alcohol and drugs on the reservation. Some of the Arapaho's feel they want a community center and more jobs but others believe in tradition and leaving things they way they were.

When the body was removed, it set in force an Indian legend that a body that is moved, is like a soul between two places because of some bad thing about their life.

I enjoyed the well written story.

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## **Mark says**

Although the plot was a bit formulaic and contrived, this was an enjoyable read due to the setting and characters. I will continue to read in this series. I'm amused by the number of ways Margaret Coel describes the sky and the weather - a constant reminder of people's heightened awareness of the outdoors in this high prairie setting.

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## **Diane says**

I like the setting and the mystery was good. The characters were fine, but not very engaging. I kept comparing this to Tony Hillerman's mysteries that included a good amount of information about the Native Americans in the Southwest. Coel didn't get too much into the Native customs in this book.

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## **Randee Baty says**

I have to say, this is the first book I've read that's made me want to go put my coat on!

Father John is the priest on at St. Francis parish on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming and this book is set in the middle of winter. We start out with Father John having car problems in the middle of a blizzard and it just seems to get colder from there. When he gets out of the car to find help, he instead finds a dead body in a ditch. By the time he can get the police to the site, the body is gone. No one has been reported missing on the reservation so they don't even know who it was, much less how or why he was killed. The title refers to the Arapaho belief that because the body isn't buried properly, its ghost is now haunting the area. Father John is determined to find out who the body is as well as why the person was killed and dumped.

Along the way Father John, with his friend Vicky Holden, has to deal with the specter of his mission being closed, drugs and alcohol on the reservation, poverty and lack of jobs among the Arapaho and many other difficult but realistic issues. The social issues were handled as part of the story and I never felt like I was having someone's views forced on me. The mystery becomes clear as the story progresses and you'll probably figure it out before the end of the book but not a long way before the end. I liked this book a lot and will enjoy finding more of the series to read.

This author and series will inevitably draw comparisons with Tony Hillerman and rightly so as he was the inspiration for Margaret Coel to start writing from what I've been told. The two writers have quite different styles, however. I think that Hillerman focuses directly on the culture of the Navajo more while Coel weaves the culture into the story. I would say that Hillerman writes Navajo stories that are mysteries while Coel writes mysteries that happen to be Arapaho. I'm a fan of both writers and both series.

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## **Wanda Hargrove says**

During a blizzard, Father John O'Malley's truck breaks down. As he walks toward the highway looking for help and a ride to a shop he knows he comes across a body in a ditch. He reports it to the BIA police but things take a strange turn when the body is missing. The Arapaho believe that if the dead is not put to rest then it becomes a ghost walker and creates mischief. Father John can't help but wonder who the body was when he comes across a fact he can't overlook. An Arapaho is missing, and then a young woman is murdered who was the missing man's girlfriend. Things take a darker twist when a group wants to buy St. Francis mission and turn it into a recreation center. But Father John doesn't believe it and is now in the sights of a murderer.

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## **Jan says**

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