



Killing Raven

Margaret Coel

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When the body of a white man is recovered from a shallow grave in one of the most troubled corners of the Wind River Reservation, Father John O'Malley knows that if the murderer isn't caught quickly, this tragedy will only be the beginning. The victim's widow is already out for revenge. In the meantime, Father John's old friend Vicky Holden has just been hired as in-house counsel at the newly-opened Great Plains Casino. But trouble is brewing, as an angry group of protesters known as the Rangers is bent on proving the casino is a house of evil...and shutting it down for good.

As tensions rise, Father John and Vicky work feverishly to sort out the story. But when Vicky stumbles across some troubling evidence, she's suddenly caught in a dangerous game--with her own life at stake...

Killing Raven Details

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From Reader Review Killing Raven for online ebook

Ryan Mishap says

Fairly standard mystery fare, with the hook being that it is set on the Arapaho Reservation and involves an Indian lawyer, Vicky, and a Catholic priest, Father O- Malley (of course he's Irish and had a drinking problem, naturally), who have a bit of history.

The issue of casinos on reservations being run by outside corporations, corruption, cronyism, and more are brought into the story. A fifteen year old girl sees a hand coming out of the ground at a campground where her older boyfriend is trying to get sex. She runs off into the night. The body is of a white laborer in the oilfields, and his widow blames Indians. Could it be the Rangers--an anti-casino group run by a white vietnam vet (he's crazy religious war guy, too)? Vicky is offered a job working with the casino, but, under direction from the elders, she digs a little too deep into what's going on.

It was a good diversionary read, but I'm leery of the white author taking a people's culture and displaying in a mystery book. The bio for the author states that she is "considered an expert on the Arapaho" but that seems like a defensive statement--"no, no, see, unlike most white people, she understands, right?" Louis L'Amour was presented as a chronicler of how the old west really was, but his stuff is historically inaccurate crap, so I guess that is how far you can take a book jacket's blurb.

Donna says

This book was a solid 3 stars for me. The genre is 'mystery' set on an Indian reservation and dealt with gambling and the unsavory types that are drawn to that industry. I liked the characters. They were flawed, but had an overall intent to do good and they were guided by a strong moral compass. Their voice was strong and they were front and center throughout the plot, while the antagonists were more like pylons in a race causing the good guys to navigate through them and trying to avoid said antagonists. I wish they had had a stronger voice to amp up the tension a little more.

But overall, this was an enjoyable read.

Nancy says

Another in the Wind River series. This one opens when a young girl and her abusive boyfriend stumble on the body of a dead man at a remote and dangerous wild location on the rez. The young woman thinks her boyfriend might be involved or at the very least know who committed the murder. Father John is drawn in when he is called to the scene and later when he realizes this will be just the beginning of a tragedy since the victim's wife has sworn revenge. Vicky Holden, Fr. John's long time friend, has begun working for the Great Plains Casino on the rez at the request of Adam Lone Eagle, a colleague of hers. Very soon, Vicky becomes suspicious about the goings on at the casino. Vicky and Fr. John are each working on cases that finally intersect for a dramatic and action packed climax.

Jan says

The discovery of a white man's body on the Wind River Reservation has Father John O'Malley trying to keep the peace. Meanwhile, the newly opened Great Plains Casino--with Vicky Holden as its in-house counsel--is fighting for its life against an angry group of protesters. And when Vicky stumbles across some disturbing evidence about the murder, she's suddenly caught in a dangerous game--with her own life at stake.

Mieczyslaw Kasprzyk says

I enjoy Margaret Coel's books... it may sound demeaning to say that they are entertaining because there seem to be a lot of people out there reading in order to achieve a higher plane. I read for fun. Margaret manages to keep the pace in her stories steady, the chapters short, the suspense just intriguing enough. She also likes to tackle important issues. This time it's the gambling industry on Indian Reservations.

I enjoy Father O'Malley's company; he is a good pastor in a harsh world and the fact that he is strongly attracted to Vicky Holden adds that touch of ... well it's not self-doubt because he knows his vocation is sincere but it is another dimension to the individual. That plus his never-ending battle with alcoholism and trying to keep the Wind River Mission on its financial legs. The man is human. In this story Father O'Malley is called to a crime scene. He becomes concerned, first for the young girl who discovered it and then for the man the girl had originally thought was the victim. His search ("investigation" is too strong a word) leads him into the orbit of highly proactive protestors against the recently opened casino. Other issues linked to the gambling industry also become flagged up.

Vicky Holden also carries her crosses - an Arapaho woman trying to survive as a lawyer in a male dominated world. She is offered a post as a Contracts Lawyer for the casino and begins to suspect all is not as it should be.

This is a good, light read... sometimes that's all that one needs!

Emily Crow says

Arapaho lawyer Vicky Holden gets more than she bargained for when she is hired to go over contracts for the new casino on the reservation. The pros and cons of Indian casinos are handled well--on the one hand bringing much needed money; on the other, opportunities for gambling addicts and crime. On the whole, I found *Killing Raven* to be a decent suspense story, though not much of a mystery, as it was pretty clear who the "bad guys" were from the beginning. I would try another book by this author if the plot sounded interesting, but this one was just average.

Julieann287 says

A new casino and twisting tale of greed, manipulation combined with reservation life and politics of the Wind River Reservation. I enjoy reading fiction that relates to my general surroundings and local authors. Living near the Wyoming border in Northern Colorado, I love spending time with the main characters in this series. I would encourage anyone who enjoys murder mysteries to read it. I have enjoyed everything I have read by Margaret Coel. Her writing is compelling and satisfying. Helps fill the space left by my favorite writer Tony Hillerman.

Beth says

I began this book several months ago and got bogged down. Despite a rather dramatic start, it was initially difficult to become involved in the lives of the main characters (Vicky, an Arapaho lawyer) and Father John (a priest and member of AA). Their lives are intertwined, they love one another, and yet each of them must follow his/her chosen path. By the middle of the book things sped up considerably, the pace becoming that of a page-turner toward the end. Additionally, the underlying dialogue about gambling was fascinating. Gambling is part of the Arapaho culture, a comment on the uncertainty of life. The building of a casino on the reservation brought in much needed funds and jobs. On the other hand, gambling can become an addiction for many, taking food, land, shelter out of the hands of those who can least afford to lose it. It attracts loan sharks and crime. Coel does a good job in not taking sides in the debate but tries to present the arguments for each side with equal objectivity. I certainly plan on reading further books of hers --- hopefully with my acquired background into the characters' lives, the beginning will be zippier.

Jerry King says

2010

Catherine Nelson says

Something has to give with the Father John/Vicky Holden story arc. We're nine books in and the love-you-but-can't-be-with-you dilemma is growing tiresome. In truth, I find Vicky herself quite tiresome more often than not. Father John is the more interesting, engaging character, and is what has truly kept me reading this long. However, while I admire and respect his struggle to keep his vow as a priest, something needs to change with Vicky, and the sooner the better, or I fear that over used source of conflict will drive me away.

Wanda says

Story centers around the casino on the reservation. Vicki goes to work for the casino as one of the lawyers because her private practice is suffering. She starts investigating the goings on as some elders have asked her to look into things. One of the managers has employed lots of people who are his relatives or friends and are not qualified.

Meanwhile a body has been found and the search is on to find the killer. Father John is involved with helping the family and trying to figure out why the man was killed. He is also dealing with a lack of finances at the mission and the problems his parishoners are having with gambling problems.

Everything is connected and Vicki's life is in danger along with some other people. Corruption is rampant within the casino and the story examines the effects of having a casino on the reservation, both the pros and cons.

Joyce says

Good story, tribal casino's love and murder.. Oh and priests.

Penny Powell says

Loved it, quite a nail biter at the end!

Vida says

Coel is a good story teller. Like the Father John and Vicki characters.

Wanda Hargrove says

I really like this book. Another good addition to the Wind River Reservation saga. Vicky Holden gets involved with the new casino built on the Arapaho Reservation. She definitely suspects that something is going on, but has to wonder if the Lakota lawyer, Adam Lone Eagle, is also involved. Events draw her and Father John O'Malley into a murder mystery that leads them on a path that could kill the both of them. Throw in a man with a history of fighting for good reasons but using the wrong tactics to get his ideas across and the reservation is turning into a powder keg that might blow up at any moment.
