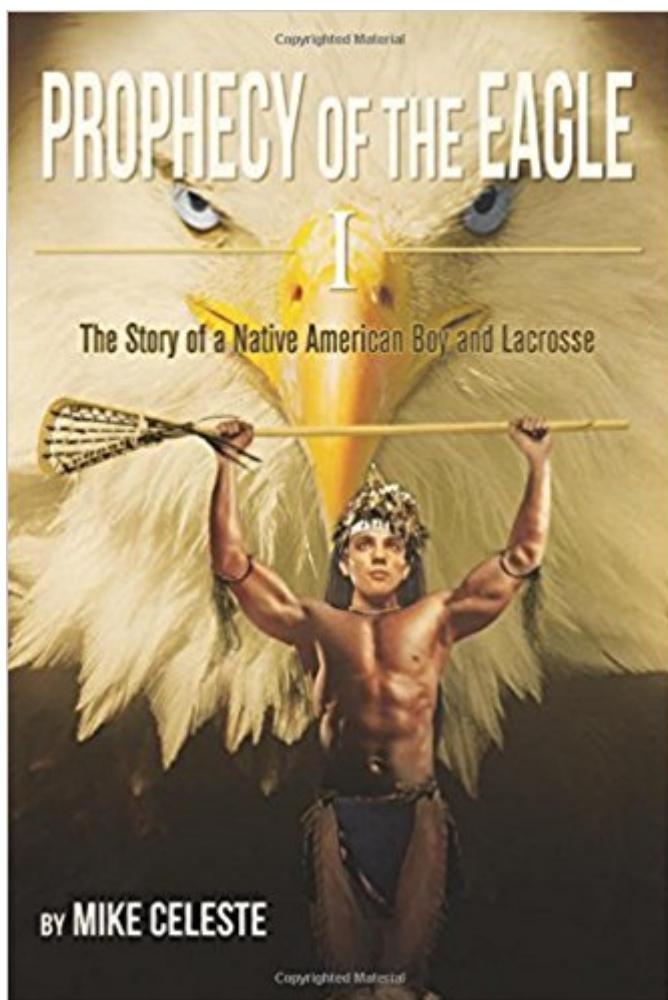


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Prophecy Of The Eagle I: The Story Of A Native American Boy And Lacrosse



Synopsis

Mike Celeste's Prophecy of the Eagle 1, the first of a two book series, is a powerful and unique coming of age novel about a Native American boy's journey into manhood using the lessons he has learned on the lacrosse field and with the love and tradition of his family and tribe. The story opens with Chief Pontiac's capturing an English fort in 1763 under the ruse of playing a lacrosse game. Pontiac's uprising is born of an ancient prophecy in which a giant eagle sweeps the white man from Indian lands. Pontiac's uprising is eventually quelled and the prophecy yet unfulfilled until...fast forward to 1910 in upper state New York where we meet our protagonist, Jake, a 17 year old Onondaga, who thinks of little other than earning the right to play lacrosse with the men of his tribe against the vaunted Mohawks during the Green Corn Festival, earning the respect of his grandfather, a chief, and winning the love of his sweetheart, Sarah. Proving his readiness to play in the game against the Mohawks by touching the tail of a deer in the hunt, Jake soon gets his chance to display his talents in his peoples' game, lacrosse, given to them by the Creator. But the game takes on deeper meaning as Jake copes with the challenges of love, responsibility, rivalry, victory and defeat and a sinister group that threatens Jake's journey on the path of becoming a human being and fulfilling the prophecy of the eagle.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A coming-of-age tale of a Onondaga youth applying the ancient lessons of lacrosse to the strictures of reservation life in turn-of-the-century New York state. Celeste's debut novel begins with an in-depth first-person account of Pontiac's uprising of 1763, wherein Pontiac explains

both the importance of lacrosse, or Bagadewe, as a rite of manhood and the existence of a prophecy that tells of an eagle, carrying a bloody stick, that will one day drive the Europeans from America. The story then jumps to the Onondaga reservation south of Syracuse in 1909, where the tale is taken up by Fallen Tree, a descendent of Pontiac and grandfather of the novel's protagonist, Jake Harwood. Jake's is a very different era for Native Americans than that of his famous ancestor: one of shrunken lands, poverty, Christian missionaries and Bureau of Indian Affairs agents. Jake, reared on the traditions of Bagadewe and Native resistance, must navigate school, love and social rivalries, learning to be both a Native American and a man. Ending in a cliffhanger, the book is the first volume of a duology; the sequel will detail Jake's life at the Carlisle Industrial School for Indians. The strong, efficient prose keeps the tone of the work serious but not unsmiling, and native issues add interest to this action-heavy YA novel. Celeste has a talent for fashioning the sports sequences that lie at the story's center. Lacrosse doesn't feel merely symbolic; it's imbued with a vitality that makes the scenes dance. Celeste shows a community simultaneously decadent and triumphant, bastardized and dynamic. These traits coexist in Jake himself, who proves a multilayered (if familiar) hero for this formative tale. Though many forces, present and past, weigh upon Jake's sense of responsibility, he reads as a full enough character to make the reader believe that Jake will, in time, figure things out for himself. A spirited debut that should satisfy fans of both sports and historical YA fiction.

Clarion Review Four Stars (out of Five) Prophecy of the Eagle is an ambigious blend of history and fiction, and it succeeds at both. In Prophecy of the Eagle I, Mike Celeste weaves a captivating coming-of-age story made richer by a strong connection to the protagonist's ancestral past. The book's balanced blend of history and fiction makes it both educational and highly entertaining. The story begins with the retelling of a famous game of lacrosse, called Bagadewe by the local First Nations people, who view it as a rite of passage for young warriors. In this game played in 1763, Chief Pontiac leads the Ottawa nation against their allies, the Ojibway, outside an English fort while the Europeans drink and bet on the score. The more they drink, the less they are aware of their imminent doom as the players prepare to massacre the English and French. This is the beginning of Pontiac's Uprising, which killed hundreds on both sides before a treaty was established. Pontiac is guided in his victory by a prophetic dream, which shows him a path to removing the white men from his people's land. In the fourth chapter, a descendant of Pontiac named Fallen Tree continues the story, describing what has happened to First Nations

people in the intervening centuries. The jump between time periods is explained clearly, though Fallen Tree's character must use heavy exposition in the chapter's opening pages to bring the reader up to speed. Using his grandson Jake as a muse, he explains the creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the rise of the reservation system. After sharing his ancestor's prophetic dream, Jake prepares for his own ascension to manhood. But growing into those shoes is more difficult than it seems, and he faces a hard road before he can truly be considered a warrior. Though jarring at first, the first-person storytelling provides a personal and intimate perspective, and also allows for some omniscient narration as Pontiac, and later Fallen Tree, show both their own experience and that of their people. This allows Pontiac to express the importance of lacrosse, including details such as the symbolism of the ball's colors. The downside is that as the story moves away from the documented events of Pontiac's Uprising, it is difficult at times to parse out which details are from the historical record and which are added for narrative purposes. In some places, the narrator speaks directly to the reader, which can be awkward because it is done so rarely, and thus feels forced. However, the writing style brings more good than bad, and helps give the story an added dimension and personal touch. In fact, at times the narration evokes the comfortable feeling of being read to by one's grandfather. Prophecy of the Eagle I is an ambitious blend of history and fiction, and it succeeds at both. It is an excellent read, recommended for anyone interested in learning more about the history of colonization and First Nations in North America.

The author tells a captivating story about a Native American boy who is guided by the wisdom and love of his grandfather. The story is not only about his love of the Lacrosse game but the meaning of what it meant to him and his people and the courage and honor it represented. A great read for young adults as well because it is both educational and inspiring. A definite page turner!

Very entertaining book. Captured the Indian spirit and culture!

Great history of lacrosse and moving story

This is marvelous storytelling! Read it slowly to savor the beautiful vistas the author paints, the relationships that bring tears to your eyes, the mysteries that reveal breathtaking truths! It's a story about the history of lacrosse, a story about love, a story about native America, tragedies, triumphs, and what is most important. I couldn't put it down. I hope the author is writing a sequel...

The story of a young native American and his personal development though the sport of Lacrosse. If you like native American stories based on fact this will be a good one for you. Lacrosse was called little War by the first to play it. The protagonist, Jake uses the sport to his advantage as it becomes a learning experience to his success in life. Dave Mallegol author of The Bronze Horsemen trilogy.

Well paced story of an Iroquois Indian youth coming of age in which the author provides valuable insights into the history and culture of the Haudenosaunee people.

As you read you become part of a family full of love and traditions. The pain and joys of a young lacrosse player will inspire any athlete to fulfill their hopes and dreams. Looking forward to the sequel!

Excellent combination of fact and fiction. Sufficient historical truths to give the characters heft and believability. Can't wait for the next installment!

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