



## Ten Little Indians

By Sherman Alexie



### Ten Little Indians By Sherman Alexie

Sherman Alexie is one of our most acclaimed and popular writers today. With *Ten Little Indians*, he offers nine poignant and emotionally resonant new stories about Native Americans who, like all Americans, find themselves at personal and cultural crossroads, faced with heartrending, tragic, sometimes wondrous moments of being that test their loyalties, their capacities, and their notions of who they are and who they love.

In Alexie's first story, "The Search Engine," Corliss is a rugged and resourceful student who finds in books the magic she was denied while growing up poor. In "The Life and Times of Estelle Walks Above," an intellectual feminist Spokane Indian woman saves the lives of dozens of white women all around her to the bewilderment of her only child. "What You Pawn I Will Redeem" starts off with a homeless man recognizing in a pawn shop window the fancy-dance regalia that was stolen fifty years earlier from his late grandmother.

Even as they often make us laugh, Alexie's stories are driven by a haunting lyricism and naked candor that cut to the heart of the human experience, shedding brilliant light on what happens when we grow into and out of each other.

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## Ten Little Indians By Sherman Alexie Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #68610 in Books
- Brand: Alexie, Sherman
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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Sherman Alexie, a gifted poet and storyteller, plows familiar yet fertile ground in his third collection of short stories, *Ten Little Indians*. The book contains nine stories populated by at least one American Indian (usually of Alexie's Spokane heritage, and mostly living in Seattle), but "little" is a bit of a misnomer; the book addresses human (not necessarily Indian), rituals, ceremony, love, loss, insecurity over life choices, and personal sacrifices. A lot of intense basketball is played, too.

When Alexie is at his best, his stories function at a profoundly sad level, where broken down characters are broken down even more, but are fierce-willed enough to attempt Phoenix-like transitions. Unfortunately, the weakest stories appear first, where characters and situations seem far too contrived or forced, the dialogue wooden, and questions or exclamatory sentences appear annoyingly in bunches. In the last half of the book, a married couple, once intensely in love but now lost in life's routines, deal with infidelity ("Do You Know Where I Am?"); a bright basketball prospect attempts a comeback--twenty years after giving up the game ("Whatever Happened to Frank Snake Church?"); and a transient Indian finds his grandmother's regalia in a pawn shop and seeks to quickly raise the lofty purchase price ("What You Pawn I Will Redeem"). Brilliant turns of phrase abound, such as ceremonies being "pitiful cries to a disinterested God," or when a gym rat plays against "Basketball-Democrats who came to the court alone and ran with anybody and Basketball-Republicans who traveled in groups of five and only ran with each other." *Ten Little Indians* is an uneven collection, but contains some significant, memorable stories. --*Michael Ferch*

#### From Publishers Weekly

Fluent, exuberant and supremely confident, this outstanding collection shows Alexie (*The Toughest Indian in the World*, etc.) at the height of his powers. Humor plays a leading role in the volume's nine stories, but it's love, both romantic and familial, that is the lens through which Alexie examines his compelling characters. His range stretches from the strange to the poignantly antic. In "Can I Get a Witness" an Indian woman is caught inside a restaurant when a suicide bomber blows himself up; in "Do Not Go Gentle" a father buys a vibrator dubbed "Chocolate Thunder" and uses it as a spiritual talisman to successfully bring his seriously injured baby out of a coma. In one of the book's finest stories, "The Search Engine," Corliss Joseph, an intrepid 19-year-old Spokane Indian college student, finds an obscure 1973 volume of Indian poetry and tracks down the author, an aging forklift operator with painful memories of his foray into the literary world. Basketball looms large in a number of these stories, from the thoughtful "Lawyer's League" to the superb final entry, "What Ever Happened to Frank Snake Church?" Loose, jaunty and salted with long, hilarious, inspired riffs--"What kind of life had she created for herself? She was a laboratory mouse lost in the capitalistic maze. She was an underpaid cow paying one-tenth mortgage on a three-bedroom, two-bath abattoir"--these are still cohesive, powerful narratives, expanding on Alexie's continuing theme of what it means to be an Indian culturally, politically and personally. This is a slam dunk collection sure to score with readers everywhere.

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#### From School Library Journal

Adult/High School-Nine extraordinary short stories set in and around the Seattle area, featuring Spokane Indians from all walks of urban life. In "The Search Engine," a student of English poetry stumbles upon a book of poems by another member of her tribe and goes on a vision quest to find him. But no brief description does justice to the rich complexity of this story or the others; adjectives such as incisive, ironic, emotional, political, tragic, triumphant, angry, loving, exuberant, and wise come to mind, and Alexie puts

everything together in a deceptively casual, often dazzling way. In bursts of exposition, using colloquial language and uncensored thoughts, he creates characters so richly layered and situations so colorfully detailed that readers finish each tale with a feeling of having encountered a real person or event. They include a woman caught in a terrorist attack; a homeless, alcoholic man on a quest to recapture his grandmother's lost regalia; a lawyer who pays too high a cost for being too focused on his ambition; and a feminist mother, as remembered by her adult son. Woven throughout are themes that satirize Native American images, such as the great storyteller and the spiritual master; yet even as the characters are self-deprecating about these stereotypes, Alexie slyly, in unexpected ways, ultimately demonstrates their truth. Those familiar with this author's earlier work will find his charm, originality, and sheer humanity in full measure here.

*Christine C. Menefee, Fairfax County Public Library, VA*  
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## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Brian Dunlap:**

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with good friends is thing that usually you may have done when you have spare time, then why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. 1 activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition info. Even you love Ten Little Indians, you can enjoy both. It is good combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

#### **Eva Ammons:**

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