



Spider Woman's Daughter (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel)

By Anne Hillerman



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Spider Woman's Daughter (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) By Anne Hillerman

Anne Hillerman, the talented daughter of bestselling author Tony Hillerman, continues his popular Leaphorn and Chee series with *Spider Woman's Daughter*, a Navajo Country mystery, filled with captivating lore, startling suspense, bold new characters, vivid color, and rich Southwestern atmosphere.

Navajo Nation Police Officer Bernadette Manualito witnesses the cold-blooded shooting of someone very close to her. With the victim fighting for his life, the entire squad and the local FBI office are hell-bent on catching the gunman. Bernie, too, wants in on the investigation, despite regulations forbidding eyewitness involvement. But that doesn't mean she's going to sit idly by, especially when her husband, Sergeant Jim Chee, is in charge of finding the shooter.

Bernie and Chee discover that a cold case involving his former boss and partner, retired Inspector Joe Leaphorn, may hold the key. Digging into the old investigation, husband and wife find themselves inching closer to the truth...and closer to a killer determined to prevent justice from taking its course.



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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Anne Hillerman: Why I Decided to Continue Tony Hillerman's Chee/Leaphorn Series



When Dad died in 2008, he left big shoes to fill. I loved to sit in his home office, surrounded by the books and maps he used as part of his research, and listen as he read just-finished passages he was especially proud of. (Despite living in New Mexico for more than fifty years, Dad never lost his Oklahoma twang.) Jim Chee and Joe Leaphorn seemed like my uncles, part of our family. With millions of others of Dad's fans, I would wait restlessly for the latest installment of their adventures. When Dad received a box of first editions of the newest book from HarperCollins, he never forgot to autograph one for me. I have these in my living room, my most treasured possessions.

Dad and I and my husband Don Strel worked together for several years on a non-fiction book, *Tony Hillerman's Landscape: On the Road with Chee and Leaphorn*. As part of my research, I had the pleasure of re-reading each Leaphorn Chee book and of talking to Dad about how he developed the plot, themes and settings. The research gave me precious insights into my dad as an author and admirer of the Navajo people and their sacred landscape.

As part of our conversations, Dad and I discussed Bernadette Manuelito, the Navajo police officer whom he used in several books. In his final novel, *The Shape Shifter*, she has progressed from Chee's girlfriend to his wife and is doing research for Leaphorn. I suggested that Dad might have fun creating a story in which Bernie actually got to solve the crime instead of working as sidekick. "That's an interesting idea," I remember him saying. "If I were energetic enough to write a few more of these, I might do it."

Dad died in October 27, 2008. The book we worked on together came out the following year. As Don and I toured the country talking about *Tony Hillerman's Landscape*, the question people asked me most often was "Did Tony have another novel to continue the series?" The answer was "no." Nothing squirreled away in a file cabinet or saved on his computer. His fans didn't like that response. Neither did I, but it was the undeniable truth.

When I emerged from the worst of my grief after Dad's death, I realized that I was also mourning the end of his mystery series. I missed those detectives, and I especially regretted that Bernadette Manuelito would never get a book that put her in the spotlight. And then I thought: I could try writing Bernie's book myself. If I didn't like it, I could hit the delete key. In addition to *Hillerman's Landscape*, I had written several other books, so I knew part of the challenge that faced me. I jotted down some ideas as a rough outline and got to work.

Because Dad's books were fresh in my mind, I decided to use some of his favorite settings for what became *Spider Woman's Daughter*. These included Gallup, N.M., Window Rock, Az., the imaginary Navajo Inn, and the very real and mysterious Chaco Canyon. Because I live in Santa Fe, I thought it would be fun to devise a reason to bring Dad's famous detectives to my home town. I developed the plot by trial and error, frequently asking myself how Dad would handle things. I missed him fiercely as I wrote but sometimes felt as if he was looking over my shoulder.

After I'd written enough to hope that my ideas might be of interest to someone other than me, I spoke to my mother, my father's first and best editor for every book he wrote. She brainstormed with me, sharing her vast knowledge of Dad's work and her sterling memory of characters and settings. With her blessing, I contacted Dad's editor, Carolyn Marino at HarperCollins, to make sure there weren't any copyright issues or other hurdles. Marino not only reassured me, she offered to take a look at whatever I came up with when I felt ready.

I worked on *Spider Woman's Daughter* for three years with encouragement from my writer friends and help from law enforcement experts, Navajos, archaeologists and more. I think my Dad, who firmly believed in Heaven, sent along some inspiration.

One of Dad's skills was the ability to start his books with a scene that whetted the reader's appetite for more. I knew that getting off on the right foot would be crucial for my book. Here's a brief excerpt from my opening scene. Bernadette Manuelito has just left a meeting at the Navajo Inn to take a phone call from her husband, fellow officer Jim Chee. Joe Leaphorn heads out too, planning to drive home.

Through the lobby window, Bernie saw someone climb out of the blue sedan backed in next to Leaphorn's white truck. She watched Leaphorn walk toward the truck, extract the keys from his pants pocket.

"You still grumpy?" Chee asked. "I got off to a bad start this morning."

The person extended an arm toward the lieutenant. Bernie saw a gun. Heard the unmistakable crack of the shot. Saw Leaphorn stagger back, falling against his pickup. Crumple to the asphalt.

She dropped her phone as if it were on fire, Chee still talking, and ran. Pushing the restaurant's heavy glass doors open, she raced toward Leaphorn, reaching for her gun. She watched the shooter scramble into the car and heard the sedan's tires on the asphalt as it sped away, keeping the car in her peripheral vision as she reached the lieutenant. Squatting down, Bernie pressed her fingers beneath his jaw, feeling for the thread of a pulse against her fingertips.

I think Dad would have liked *Spider Woman's Daughter*. I'm pleased with it and I hope that his readers will be too.

From [Booklist](#)

Hillerman, who has written some nonfiction, now tries her hand at fiction, incorporating some of her late father Tony's characters into the story. Although billed as a "Leaphorn & Chee Novel," neither character is

really in the spotlight here. That position is reserved for Navajo Tribal Police Officer Bernadette “Bernie” Manuelito, Chee’s wife. When the retired Leaphorn is shot right in front of Bernie, and the assailant escapes, Bernie swears she’ll find the person responsible. As a witness, however, Bernie is removed from the case and relegated to finding Leaphorn’s family. Jim Chee is put in charge, but he knows very well that stubborn, determined Bernie won’t stand down, especially when someone she considers an “uncle” is the victim. Hillerman builds upon characters and themes from her father’s *Thief of Time* (1988), applying her own knowledge of contemporary Navajo culture. The spiritual elements prominent in previous Leaphorn-Chee books are downplayed, and the measured plot (with perhaps too much attention to the desert landscape) has few surprises. What intrigues is Bernie herself, a devoted young Native American balancing her heritage and family obligations with the demands of a difficult job. --Stephanie Zvirin

Review

Spider Woman’s Daughter is an intricately plotted, suspenseful, colorful, and unforgettable journey. Readers will fall in love with Bernie Manuelito and look forward to Anne Hillerman’s next effort in what should be a long, enjoyable, successful series. Her depiction of the Navajo Nation is spot on. I loved this book. (Jo-Ann Mapson, author of award-winning *Solomon’s Oak* and *Finding Casey*)

“Chip off the literary block—there are a lot of things Tony taught is daughter, Anne, and one of them was how to tell a good story. *Spider Woman’s Daughter* is a proud addition to the legacy, capturing the beauty and breath of the Southwest as only a Hillerman can.” (Craig Johnson, author of the Walt Longmire Mysteries, the basis for A&E’s hit television series *Longmire*)

A daughter takes on her famous father’s legacy in resuming a series focused on Navajo culture...maintaining the integrity...throughout. (Kirkus Reviews)

“[H]eart-stopping, action-packed...VERDICT Fans of Southwestern mysteries will cheer this return of Leaphorn and Chee.” (Library Journal (starred review) on *SPIDER WOMAN’S DAUGHTER*)

“Difficult to put down...If you love mysteries, this book is for you.” (Examiner.com on *SPIDER WOMAN’S DAUGHTER*)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Landers:

This *Spider Woman's Daughter* (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) book is not really ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you will get by reading this book will be information inside this guide incredible fresh, you will get info which is getting deeper you read a lot of information you will get. This specific *Spider Woman's Daughter* (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) without we realize teach the one who studying it become critical in imagining and analyzing. Don't end up being worry *Spider Woman's Daughter* (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) can bring if you are and not make your tote space or bookshelves' grow to be full because you can have it within your lovely laptop even phone. This *Spider Woman's Daughter* (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) having good arrangement in word and also layout, so you will not feel uninterested in reading.

David Stokes:

Do you certainly one of people who can't read gratifying if the sentence chained within the straightway, hold on guys this aren't like that. This Spider Woman's Daughter (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) book is readable by simply you who hate the straight word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving even decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer regarding Spider Woman's Daughter (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) content conveys thinking easily to understand by a lot of people. The printed and e-book are not different in the articles but it just different as it. So , do you still thinking Spider Woman's Daughter (A Leaphorn and Chee Novel) is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Arlene Farmer:

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