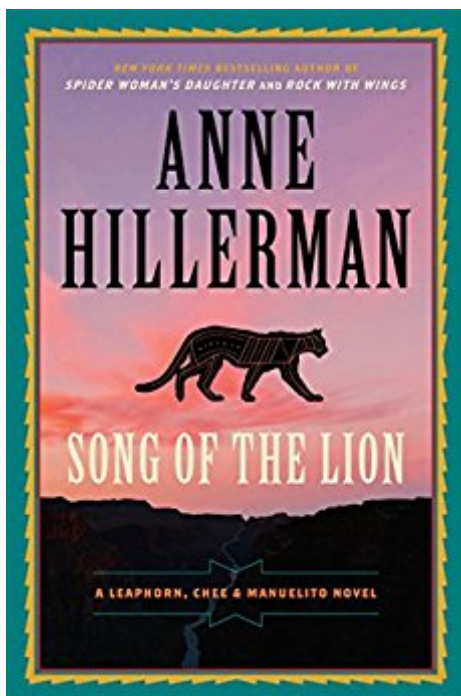


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# Song Of The Lion (A Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito Novel)



## Synopsis

New York Times Bestseller A deadly bombing takes Navajo Tribal cops Bernadette Manuelito, Jim Chee, and their mentor, the legendary Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn, back into the past to find a vengeful killer in this riveting Southwestern mystery from the bestselling author of *Spider Woman's Daughter* and *Rock with Wings*. When a car bomb kills a young man in the Shiprock High School parking lot, Officer Bernadette Manuelito discovers that the intended victim was a mediator for a multi-million-dollar development planned at the Grand Canyon. But what seems like an act of ecoterrorism turns out to be something far more nefarious and complex. Piecing together the clues, Bernadette and her husband, Sergeant Jim Chee, uncover a scheme to disrupt the negotiations and inflame tensions between the Hopi and Dine tribes. Retired Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn has seen just about everything in his long career. As the tribal police's investigation unfolds, he begins to suspect that the bombing may be linked to a cold case he handled years ago. As he, Bernadette, and Chee carefully pull away the layers behind the crime, they make a disturbing discovery: a meticulous and very patient killer with a long-simmering plan of revenge. Writing with a clarity and grace that is all her own, Anne Hillerman depicts the beauty and mystery of Navajo Country and the rituals, myths, and customs of its people in a mystery that builds on and complements the beloved, bestselling mysteries of her acclaimed father, Tony Hillerman.

## Book Information

File Size: 1427 KB

Print Length: 304 pages

Publisher: Harper (April 11, 2017)

Publication Date: April 11, 2017

Sold by: HarperCollins Publishers

Language: English

ASIN: B01IMYCWSS

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #10,070 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #15 in Kindle

Store > Kindle eBooks > Literature & Fiction > United States > Native American #25 in Books > Literature & Fiction > United States > Native American #53 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Cultural Heritage

## Customer Reviews

These married police officers apparently don't talk to each other about the same case they are working on, Really? Leaphorn needs to get healthy faster to help these young officers out. I like the idea of technology helping out the disabled Leaphorn get back some of his drive and independence. If Joe figured out that he can use technology to communicate better, maybe he could teach his skills to Mr. and Mrs Chee.

Sorry! Anne Hillerman really misses almost every mark in this effort. While the writing is clear, the major components of a good Leaphorn-Chee continuation series (even with a new focus on Bernie Manuelito as the protagonist) are sadly diluted and missing. First, the plot line. A dramatic bombing at a high-school basketball tournament is dragged (not developed) through a likely assault on a Tribal mediator working on another of the endlessly disputed projects regarding land use and protecting the sacred soil of Navajo-land. Except, it isn't really about any of this in the end. All the drama that ensues is, for the most part, a misdirection and the final resolution of the plot is woefully unresponsive of the build-up to the conclusion. At best, it's a C-minus story. The characters are not themselves, but caricatures of whom they used to be in the earlier works. Joe Leaphorn (the Legendary Lieutenant) is given a very minor presence, and since he suffered a traumatic brain injury in the first book of this series, Ms. Hillerman has still not come to grips with how to use him to advance the plot development. We see Joe struggling to communicate, preferring to use the written word, e.g. emails rather than speaking, to give advice and counsel. Because the character is now so limited and so peripheral, I wonder why Ms. Hillerman even includes him in the narrative. Nostalgia may be one motivation, I suppose. Jim Chee really has never recovered from the change in authorship. Where once he was a reflective, perhaps sometimes brooding character, torn between adapting his desire to be a medicine man (Singer) with the realities of being a Navajo policeman, he's now given only a few limited dimensions: 1) he's got an assignment that he doesn't care for much because it involves politicians; 2) he doesn't like being away from Bernie. That's it for Jim. Bernie's portrait is almost as dimensionless as Chee's, although as the protagonist she does have more facets that drive the plot forward. Like Chee in the earlier stories (including *The Spider Woman's Daughter*, Anne Hillerman's 1st novel in the series) Bernie was shown to be a reflective

woman, struggling with how to be a Navajo policewoman, dealing with family, and torn between a "crush" and a "romance" with Jim Chee. In this novel, Bernie is pretty much "all-business" and the demands of the job push almost all the human intrigue of a normal life into the background. I know this next comment is going to send the die-hard Hillerman aficionados over the top, but I have to say this particular book was redolent with the same themes as the Ella Clah series by Aimee and David Thorlo. As I read "Song of the Lion" I really did have trouble keeping a distinction between the characters of Bernie Manuelito and Ella Clah. That Shiprock is home to both heroines makes the comparison hard to miss, plus in this episode Bernie also receives a mountain lion fetish which parallels the badger fetish so prominent in the Thorlo's stories. The pacing of the stories also seem similar, to me. Finally, maybe it's bad editing or typesetting (I've noticed more and more of this in several popular mystery thrillers) but I have to say that the clues that were dropped (including dropping the villain's name and his connection with the plot-- about half-way through the story) continues to show the struggles with plot development and story that plagues the two latest books by Anne Hillerman.

I have always approached books where someone else has picked up the characters and storyline following a death with more than a little apprehension. As a devoted Tony Hillerman fan, I had this same apprehension when Tony's daughter, Anne, picked up the mantel. I should not have worried. Reading this, and the other submissions from Anne, I found it hard to believe that Tony had not done the writing. While Anne does not delve as deeply into the Navajo belief system as Tony did and spends more time with Bernadette this is a satisfying read. Highly recommended especially for Tony Hillerman fans.

There is something special about a "Hillerman" novel. This one is no exception. Anne Hillerman's love for the people and land of the Navajo permeates her writing. Through her eyes I see the beauty of the land and reverence of the people of the people that live there. Of course there wouldn't be much of a mystery if everyone lived the Navajo Way. The mystery is interesting and characters compelling. A very enjoyable read, and if I close my eyes, I can still see the beautiful vistas she describes.

Been a fan and having read all her fathers book I was surprised to find out about a month ago that Ann was continuing the stories. Got book 2 from the library while ordering book 1 from .com. When I noticed a discount on the Song of the Lion ebook I decided to purchase instead of waiting for the 9

people ahead of me at the library. Finished both books within two week and looking forward to reading book 1. Anne has a slightly different style but I enjoyed these books as much as her father's. Thanks Anne for continuing the Leaphorn, Chee & Manuelito novels and hope to see more in the future

I want to thank Ms Hillerman for continuing her father's stories about Joe Leaphorn, Detective Cher and his wonderful wife and fellow officer Ms Manuelito. Ms hillerman tells an excellent story herself. I hope she continues to bring alive the stories and culture of the native tribes of the southwest.

The first book in the series was not very good and I lost interest for quite some time, but last week I decided to take a chance on the second and galloped my way through it. "Song of the Lion" is the best of the three. I even went online looking for maps of the area. I must say that Bernie really gets banged up; it would be nice if she came out without all the scrapes, bruises, and concussions she's piled on while fighting off the bad guys. I hope the series continues because I look forward to another one.

Well Anne Hillerman has kept the family tradition of writing great books. If you are a fan of Chee and Leaphorn and Chees wife then this book is for you. There was me depressing thing about the book....its was distressing to read about Leaphorn having health issues. But at least he is alive after his injury. But Chee and his wife had a good adventure. As always it is fun to read about the Navajo legends and customs and how Anne blended them not a novel about crime and police actions.

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