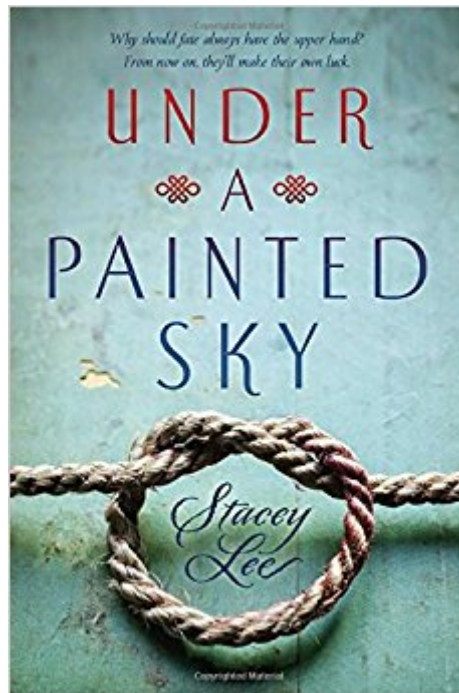




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# Under A Painted Sky



## Synopsis

From the author of *Outrun the Moon*, Stacey Lee's debut novel is a powerful story about love, friendship, and sacrifice. Perfect for fans of *Code Name Verity*. "This moving novel will captivate you." —Buzzfeed.com

All Samantha wanted was to move back to New York and pursue her music, which was difficult enough being a Chinese girl in Missouri, 1849. Then her fate takes a turn for the worse after a tragic accident leaves her with nothing and she breaks the law in self-defense. With help from Annamae, a runaway slave she met at the scene of her crime, the two flee town for the unknown frontier. But life on the Oregon Trail is unsafe for two girls. Disguised as Sammy and Andy, two boys heading for the California gold rush, each search for a link to their past and struggle to avoid any unwanted attention. Until they merge paths with a band of cowboys turned allies, and Samantha can't stop herself from falling for one. But the law is closing in on them and new setbacks come each day, and the girls will quickly learn there are not many places one can hide on the open trail.

Winner of the SCBWI Crystal Kite Award  
An ALA Best Fiction for Young Adults Pick  
An Amelia Bloomer Book

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 730 (What's this?)

Paperback: 384 pages

Publisher: Speak; Reprint edition (March 1, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0147511844

ISBN-13: 978-0147511843

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1 x 8.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 127 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #53,068 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #18 in Books > Teens > Historical Fiction > United States > 19th Century #31 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #79 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 7 Up "Although Samantha and her father have a successful dry goods store in Saint Joseph,

Missouri, they long to escape: Samantha yearns to return to New York in hopes of a music career, while her father dreams of moving west to California. After her father dies in a fire, the teen is left grief-stricken and vulnerable. Their landlord, Ty Yorkshire, offers her accommodation at the town hotel, where she befriends Annamae, a slave housekeeper. After Samantha kills Ty during a rape attempt, she and Annamae create disguises and join a caravan traveling to California in search of gold. While Annamae's dialogue is written in a colloquial dialect, it doesn't distract from the story. Samantha's voice will sound contemporary to modern ears, yet not inaccurate to the mid-19th-century time period. The ever-present fear of being caught, whether by police or fellow travelers becoming wise to their disguises, is effectively created, as is the primitive life on the trail. As the girls learn cowboy techniques such as using dried buffalo scat to make a campfire and roping horses, readers are introduced to authentic cowboy life. Complications arise for Samantha when she develops a crush on a fellow cowboy; while Annamae falls for a vaquero (Mexican cowboy). This offers a much needed multicultural look at the Oregon Trail, with resourceful, smart, and brave Chinese American and African American girls as main characters. High drama, tension, romantic longings, and touches of humor will entice historical fiction fans, and will be a perfect tie-in to social studies curriculum.âJennifer Schultz, Fauquier County Public Library, Warrenton, VA

--This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Winner ofÂ the SCBWI Crystal Kite AwardÂ An ALA Best Fiction for Young Adults Pick An Amelia Bloomer BookÂ

âDebut author Stacey Lee successfully rides onto the range with this sweeping, warmhearted tale.â

âThe Chicago Tribune Â

âA much needed multicultural look at the Oregon Trail, with resourceful, smart, and brave Chinese American and African American girls as main characters. High drama, tension, romantic longings, and touches of humor will entice historical fiction fans.â

âSchool Library Journal Â

âThis moving novel will captivate you.â

âBuzzfeed.comÂ

âEmotionally resonant and not without humor, this impressive debut about survival and connection, resourcefulness and perseverance will keep readers on the very edges of their seats.â

âKirkus Reviews, starred review Â

âA great fit for fans of historical adventure with a touch of romance.â

âBooklist Â

âA story that distinguishes itself by integrating strands of Chinese lore and wisdom, Christianity, and music with themes of friendship, diversity, and survival.â

âPublisher's Weekly, starred review Â

âGet ready to fall in love with this one.â

âBustle.com Â

âA solid, entertaining read.â

âTor.com Â

âA beautifully narrated story about first loves, unbreakable friendships and family found in unlikely strangers.â

âBookPageÂ

I really had a hard time getting into this book (I blame my bookish slump, not the book itself). Once I made it passed the 7th chapter, I was hooked. I loved the diversity in the novel, along with the female friendship and close bond formed between Sammy and Andy, a run-away slave. More importantly, I definitely fell in love with the Western-Oregon-Trail-and cowboyish-feel that allowed the plot to trot at a smooth pace. Several times I found myself laughing out loud at Cay's shenanigans or the witty banter that the characters throw back at each other. This book definitely had me reminiscing on life's struggles and how through courage, family, heritage, fate, and with the help of strangers and friends, life is always worth the risks and troubles it may throw at you. This book will take you on an adventure through the Wild West, reminiscing about the good ole days playing Oregon Trail: hunting animals for your family, crossing dangerous terrain, being on the lookout for robbers, and curing the ailments of cholera. For a young adult, Sammy has to deal with a lot of struggles and troubles. Her knack to pick up the swagger of a cowboy and answer life's questions with her Chinese heritage, medicinal knowledge, and beliefs are both empowering and delightful.

I just finished this and I absolutely LOVED it!!! I could only put it down when I had to for sleep and work. It's action packed and full of twists and turns. I can't wait to reread it some day. It's about family and friendship and so much more. Highly recommend!! Rating: PG-13

I don't usually like Westerns, but this historical novel reads like a racially diverse Little House on the Prairie. There's a touch of romance, but the most important relationship is the friendship between these two resourceful girls. The writing is superb with well developed characters, a fast pace and a fine sense of place and period (1849). Despite dealing with tough issues like murder, slavery and racism, it still manages to be a feel good story, appropriate for tweens as well as teens. The girl protagonists are 15 and 16 and the boys are a bit older. This debut tops my list of best YA from 2015 that I've read to date: <http://blog.sarahlaurence.com/2015/12/best-ya-books-of-2015.html>

I absolutely loved everything about this story. At first I was unsure of the time period, I've never been a huge western fan, but I'm so glad I picked this up. Not only were the historical details interesting, but the characters were timeless. Sammy was such a beautiful, courageous, complex main character, I couldn't help but root for her. The memories of her father and her connection to him through music was heartbreaking, and her heritage touched every facet of her life on the run.

The family she formed with the cowboys and Andy was so genuine and real, and made me laugh in unexpected places. The action was fast paced and something was always happening, so it was hard to put down. Highly recommend this story for anyone who's a fan of adventure, strong female relationships, and romance. A++

Oh dear. How much do I love this book? Let me count the ways. First things first, I am not someone who enjoys westerns at all but I was gripped from the very first sentence. The thing is, while it is a western [and if you love shows like Deadwood, or any western, you will truly adore this for it's carefully researched authenticity] it is compelling because of it's universal story of love, loss, friendship and the struggle to overcome our difficult circumstances. I enjoyed it cover-to-cover and only wish there was more. A must-read and a book I will be gifting friends in 2015

Well well written and paints a beautiful setting, The characters are likable and the pacing is very nice. One of my favorite stories now.

Good, solid, read for ages 12+. Somewhat unrealistic and yet believable story of two strong young female characters traveling west disguised as boys. Couldn't stop reading it until I was finished with the book, and now my granddaughter is doing the same. This book has many relevant themes about race, gender, class, religion, and other stereotypes and is an excellent choice for a classroom or family read aloud. Get it.

Was eager to get back to this book soon as I could get another chance. Story kept me interested.

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