



Where Women Are Kings

By Christie Watson

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From the award-winning author of *Tiny Sunbirds*, *Far Away*, the story of a young boy who believes two things: that his Nigerian birth mother loves him like the world has never known love, and that he is a wizard

Elijah, seven years old, is covered in scars and has a history of disruptive behavior. Taken away from his birth mother, a Nigerian immigrant in England, Elijah is moved from one foster parent to the next before finding a home with Nikki and her husband, Obi.

Nikki believes that she and Obi are strong enough to accept Elijah's difficulties—and that being white will not affect her ability to raise a black son. They care deeply for Elijah and, in spite of his demons, he begins to settle into this loving family. But as Nikki and Obi learn more about their child's tragic past, they face challenges that threaten to rock the fragile peace they've established, challenges that could prove disastrous.

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Where Women Are Kings By Christie Watson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

"Watson paints a portrait of a world torn by issues of class, race, and belief...[T]he book becomes progressively more convincing, darker and unexpectedly comic as a lively cast of characters inject humor and a believable awkwardness into an often painful drama...[A] moving and complex picture. Watson is especially good at describing Elijah's pleasure in the odd beauties of nature, as well as the wants and needs of domestic life. Elijah is never more heartbreaking than when he's imagining all the people he loves brought together in one place." —*New York Times Book Review*

"[Christie] Watson gracefully creates the delicate workings of a small household with an adopted Nigerian son at the center...Watson's writing, with its gorgeous detail, is well suited to portraying the complexities involved in creating familial bonds, particularly the painstaking adoption process, and the daily life of a newly formed household. She has constructed a wonderful set of characters and a remarkable story of family love amid cultural and emotional tension." —*Booklist*

"A multilayered, sophisticated book that gets to the heart of what family is and what we will do to love them." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"[Christie] Watson...approaches the topic with expert knowledge of what a child like Elijah would have gone through, as well as tremendous empathy for her cast of characters. *Where Women Are Kings* is undeniably powerful." —*Publishers Weekly*

"[A]n intense cross-cultural story of love...Watson's portrayal of these characters is forceful and potent...the love that pervades the story is liberating." —*Shelf Awareness*

"At times hauntingly heartbreaking, Christie Watson's second novel explores race, family and the complexities of the Western foster system...Watson shows us the politics of adoption, the complexities of calling a stranger your son, and the capacity of love." —*The Riveter*

"*Where Women are Kings* does not coddle its readers, nor does it cling to the hysteria of melodrama. Watson's controlled prose transforms Elijah into a boy as real and memory-soaked as a scar." —*The Toast*

"Equally heartwarming and heartbreaking." —*The Jersey Journal*

"Watson's writing is magical and beguiling. Elijah, the protagonist of this novel, joins a distinguished list of fictional wunderkinder that stretches from Peter Pan to Oskar Matzerath of *The Tin Drum* to Azaro of *The Famished Road*. Watson is a fluent story teller." —E. C. Osondu, winner of the Caine Prize

"In this very moving story, Watson confronts us with pain and loss. And yet, despite all of that, love ultimately wins." —Chika Unigwe, author of *On Black Sisters Street*

"Christie Watson reeled me into this wise and moving portrayal of one family's struggle to love fiercely to the haunting end. Young Elijah stayed with me long after the last page." —Shilpi Somaya Gowda, best-selling author of *Secret Daughter*

"Christie Watson writes with compassion, insight, and a delicate beauty about a difficult and often

overlooked subject—the intersections of race, family, fostering and the unexpected power of love.” —Chris Abani, author of *GraceLand* and *The Secret History of Las Vegas*

“Christie Watson writes with incredible commitment and understanding of her subject. *Where Women Are Kings* is a great follow up to her first novel, *Tiny Sunbirds, Far Away*, and I hope it finds the readers it deserves.” —Helon Habila, author of *Oil on Water*

“A beautifully sad novel... Watson’s words are beautifully lyrical... Watson leaves us with an unforgettable story that will make your chest tighten, your eyes leak and your heart lurch.” —*In Style*

“A sensitive portrayal of the complex realities of adoption and mental illness.” —*Daily Telegraph*

“Staggeringly authentic, staggeringly moving and profound...and at times hysterically funny. It’s a gem.” —Lesley Lokko, author of *A Private Affair*

“Watson’s second offering is deeply moving and disturbing, with a rich narrative that keeps the reader keen — yet fearful — of what happens next.” —*Independent Press Association*

“One of those stories that goes straight to the heart.” —*Litteratursiden*

“Expertly handles delicate, culturally sensitive issues . . . Elijah’s voice shines through the pages, making him a character who is memorable long after the story ends.” —*We Love This Book*

“A stunningly haunting novel... impossible to put down.” —*Image*

“Kept us gripped throughout . . . stayed with us long after we’d finished the final page.” —*Stylist*

“Uplifting, heartwarming...” —*Pride Magazine*

About the Author

Christie Watson is a British novelist and pediatric nurse. She holds an MA in Creative Writing from the University of East Anglia, where she won the Malcolm Bradbury Memorial Bursary, and has since published short fiction and other writings in numerous publications including *Wasafiri*, *Msllexia*, *Index on Censorship*, *The Guardian*, and *The Telegraph*. Watson teaches creative writing at various institutions including Birkbeck University, the Groucho Club, and Cambridge University. She has won the Costa First Novel Award and Waverton Good Read Award for her first novel, *Tiny Sunbirds, Far Away*, and was named one of *Red*’s Hot Women of the Year in 2012. She lives in London.

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Elijah, my lovely son, my beloved,

I want to tell you your life. Everyone has a story inside them, which begins before they are born, and yours is a bigger story than most will ever know. They say I shouldn't tell you some things, and that words can hurt little ears, but, son of mine, there are no secrets between a mother and son. A child has seen the insides of its mother's body, and who can know a secret bigger than that? And they say a lot of things, those English. What they call 'child abuse', us Nigerians call 'training'. So don't mind them.

Your story begins in Nigeria, which is a place like Heaven. There is continuous sunshine and everyone smiles and takes care of each other. Nigerian children work hard at school, have perfect manners, look after their parents and respect the elderly. Nigeria is brightness and stars, and earth like the skin on your cheeks: brown-red, soft and warm.

I am full up with proud memories from Nigeria. Most of all I remember my family. Mummy – your grandmother – was famous for shining cooking pots and shining stories. 'Long ago,' she would tell me and my sisters, 'a woman, so full of empty, sold her body as if it was nothing but meat for sale at the market. She travelled all over Nigeria, that woman, looking for something to fill up her insides, and learnt many languages, searching for words to explain the emptiness.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Antonio Duncan:

This book untitled Where Women Are Kings to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, that's because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit in it. You will easily to buy this kind of book in the book store or you can order it via online. The publisher in this book sells the e-book too. It makes you quicker to read this book, as you can read this book in your Smartphone. So there is no reason for you to past this reserve from your list.

James Gabriel:

Do you really one of the book lovers? If yes, do you ever feeling doubt if you are in the book store? Make an effort to pick one book that you find out the inside because don't ascertain book by its cover may doesn't work the following is difficult job because you are frightened that the inside maybe not seeing that fantastic as in the outside look likes. Maybe you answer might be Where Women Are Kings why because the excellent cover that make you consider regarding the content will not disappoint a person. The inside or content is definitely fantastic as the outside or cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly make suggestions to pick up this book.

Gayle Anderson:

This Where Women Are Kings is great publication for you because the content that is certainly full of information for you who always deal with world and also have to make decision every minute. This particular book reveal it details accurately using great manage word or we can state no rambling sentences inside it. So if you are read that hurriedly you can have whole information in it. Doesn't mean it only will give you straight forward sentences but tough core information with beautiful delivering sentences. Having Where Women Are Kings in your hand like having the world in your arm, information in it is not ridiculous

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Raymond Langford:

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