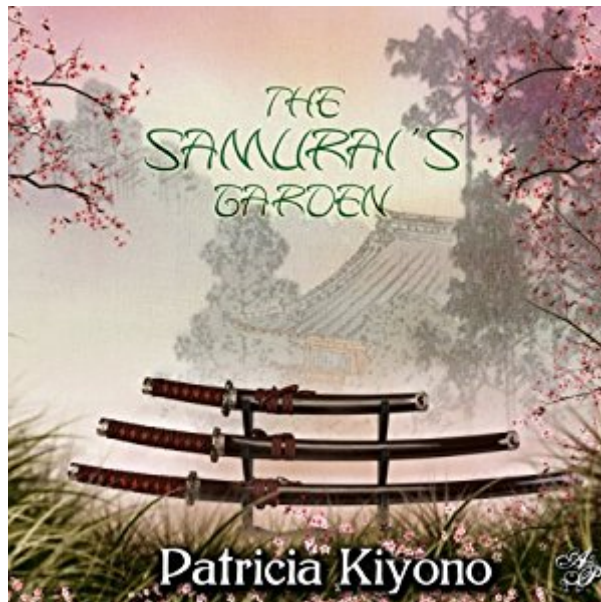


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The Samurai's Garden



Synopsis

Hiro Tanaka prepared for a life as a samurai warrior. But his world changed when Japan's feudal system was abolished by the Emperor. Now, he must find a new vocation. Disillusioned with fighting and violence, he travels alone, going north to the island of Hokkaido. Many other samurai wander through the country and are known as Ronin. Some have forsaken their honorable way to prey on the less fortunate. Hanako Shimizu experienced first-hand the devastation caused by these disreputable wanderers. The previous winter, they raided her farm and killed her husband. Now, she needs to rebuild but has no money and no prospects - except for the dubious intentions of the town merchant. When Hiro, tired of his wandering, encounters Hanako in the market, arguing with the merchant, he poses as her late husband's cousin then offers to help her on the farm in exchange for a place to stay. Working on the land, Hiro finally finds the peace he has been seeking. But the reappearance of the rogue Ronin, led by an unscrupulous leader from Hiro's past, forces him to take up his swords again. But now, the stakes are higher. This time, he's fighting from the heart.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Life changed drastically in Japan when the emperor abolished the country's feudal system. In the Samurai's Garden, Patricia Kiyono, tells a riveting tale set in this tumultuous time. It was a time when the elite Samurai class had to worry about how they'd live in this new civilization. For many former samurai, who wanted to honor the precepts of bushido, the choice was to accept commissions in the Imperial army, return to their wealthy families, or find careers of their own. Others, with less honorable intentions, roamed the country and preyed on the less fortunate and become known as

the ronin -- a name that struck fear in the hearts of peaceful villagers. In Ms. Kiyono's tale, Hanako Shimizu has already experienced the devastation caused by the ronin. Her humble farm had been raided by these bandits the previous winter. They'd killed her drunken husband, but worse, they'd taken her animals and crops. She's managed to struggle through the winter, but now she longs to rebuild her farm, doesn't have the money needed to buy seed and animals. Hiro Tanaka is an honorable man. He spent his life learning the way of bushido, eventually becoming a prominent samurai warrior. But fighting and violence offend Hiro's gentle nature. When his world changes, it gives him the opportunity to find a different, more peaceful life for himself. He wanders north and finally arrives at the market in Hanako's village...just in time to hear the town's merchant suggest slyly how she could acquire the supplies she needs. Offended by the man's behavior and tired of the wandering, Hiro pretends to be her late husband's cousin and pays for her supplies. However, when he offers to help her on her humble homestead in exchange for lessons in farming, it causes a bigger change in their lives than any edict of the emperor's could have. Japan is a very unusual setting for a historical romance. I really enjoyed seeing this romance develop.

This is a beautifully written gentle story covering a turbulent period in Japan's history. With a very nasty villain and a wonderful hero and heroine, I was glued to this story and couldn't put it down. If you like well written historical romance with an unusual setting I highly recommend this book.

This book is so well written, with adequate research of old Japan, and the story is unusual for these times. The writer's attention to detail concerning the hard times the heroine endured, yet her contentment with any little progress makes you wonder why we feel the need for so many gimmicks these days. As a late night read before bed I found I slept easier and it put me in a restful uncluttered frame of mind, helping me realise that simplicity is a reward in itself. To be able to appreciate life on a natural level, glad of what little one has and a gratitude for what nature gives us is a lesson we all could benefit from. The heroine endured many years of severe hardship, labouring dawn to night, hunger, loneliness, without complaint, and from a lowly start never lost the love of simple pleasures. As and when circumstances improved bit by bit, she did not become a spoiled person but took each blessing with delight and lasting pleasure. This concerns our sense of values. And perhaps how to still an over-active mind.

I have just finished reading "The Samurai's Garden" and loved the book. It isn't a time period I usually read, but after reading excerpts on the author's page, I had to buy this one. The action takes

place in the late 19th Century when big changes came to Japan as the samurai class struggled with a drastic change in their way of life. The author did a beautiful job of capturing the emotions of the characters as well as the mood of the time and the descriptions of the landscape - I could picture myself in that little hut along with the characters, and held my breath along with the heroine when her husband went off to Tokyo without her.

This love story is set in rural Japan when its feudal system ended and rogue samurai (ronin) terrorized villagers, destroying farms and taking lives. The unusual setting, time period (1870s), and strong, appealing characters held my interest from the first page. Beautiful writing and good reading.

it is not a tragedy book. It is heart warming but I was so engulfed in the story... that I cried for that which I know only exists in this book, and not in real life. I'll have to re incorporate to this world gently.... for the characters and their development are as real and palpable that they'll be missed.... I wonder.... if there are people like this out there.... I hope so.... reality has to be better than fiction, else we are quite screwed HAHAAHAHAHAH but once in a while, comes a story from another secret world, that moves the ground underneath and makes you soar high into the stars and dream.

"The Samurai's Garden" revolves around two people, a former samurai named Hiromasa (Hiro) Tanaka and a young farm girl named Hanako (whose name means "Flower Child") Shimizu, and takes place during a period in Japan's history known as the Meiji Restoration. It was during this time when the emperor Meiji abolished the samurai or warrior class. As a result, Hiro is left jobless and chooses to wander north to find work. When he arrives at Furano on Hokkaido, the northernmost of Japan's four main islands, he meets Hanako, and his real journey begins... Patricia's story is very memorable. It was very fun to read. The characters and the scenes were easy to picture in my mind, and the story flowed very smoothly from beginning to end. I really liked Hanako because she worked very hard to make ends meet despite the situation in which she found herself after ronin (samurai with no lord or master) devastated her farm and murdered her husband. She never gave up, even after meeting Hiro. I recommend buying this book if you enjoy reading romance novels. As I mentioned earlier, the story takes place during the Meiji Restoration, so if you're interested in Japanese history and culture like myself, don't pass up the opportunity to buy this novel.

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