Clarion Review

Juvenile Fiction

Kiri Chooses A Life
Rosmarie Bogner
iUniverse
978-0-595-36870-9
Four Stars (out of Five)

After another year at boarding school 11 year old Kiri is delighted to spend the summer at her grandmother Deda's Wyoming ranch while her mother explores a film career in Australia. Enjoying her grandmother's stories home cooking and the farm animals Kiri finally finds a place where she belongs a place to call home.

Soon after her arrival however things take a surprising turn when ranch hand Joel takes Kiri riding on her favorite horse Tupaho. Thrilled to be reunited with him Kiri rides ahead to reach the swimming hole before Joel. Tragically when Kiri dives in she hits her head on a hidden rock tragically ending her young life. Leaving Earth Kiri is magically transported into another world she initially thinks is a movie set. Upon meeting her look-alike spirit guide however Kiri learns that she died and has been brought to this magical new world to choose another life for herself.

Transported into a fantasy world where anything is possible Kiri meets a number of fascinating characters including Irma Yutta Phorimon and Son with whom she'll share her adventure. Reflecting on characteristics within herself Kiri easily identifies traits among the others that she both admires and detests. As she encounters each world and person Kiri looks back at her "old" life as she tries to decide how she wants to return to Earth and who she wants to be next.

Kiri Chooses a Life intended for ages 10 and up is a beautifully written book full of colorful characters and dreamy descriptions of the afterlife. Author Rosmarie Bogner does an excellent job of explaining Kiri's viewpoint her concerns for the future and her sadness over the loss of her family. Bogner succeeds in creating a rich fantasy world to draw in her readers.

While well written the book explores a number of concepts including Kiri's acceptance of her own death that are well beyond the understanding of the intended age group. Many of

these concepts touch on the mystical realm which could be not only confusing for a younger person but frightening as well. In addition because there is so much action in such a short space it is sometimes difficult to follow all of the characters as they learn the rules for choosing their new lives.

Overall however *Kiri Chooses a Life* is a beautifully written book full of life and love. The author's magnificent command of the English language makes it easy to get caught up in the story and to cheer Kiri on as she encounters each new adventure.

Dana E. Blozis