



## The Wolf at Twilight: An Indian Elders Journey Through a Land of Ghosts and Shadows

**Kent Nerburn**

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Kent Nerburn's latest book, *The Wolf at Twilight*, is a combination of memoir, historical narrative, and spiritual reflection that showcases his innate flair for storytelling. In response to a summons from Dan, a tribal elder, Nerburn returns to the Lakota reservation that provided the landscape for his previous book, *Neither Wolf nor Dog*. Dan wants Nerburn's help in finding his sister, Yellow Bird, who was lost nearly seventy-five years earlier to the U.S. Indian re-education programs. Dan and Nerburn embark on an unsettling journey into a part of the past that has long been relegated to the shadows of the American conscience.

Nerburn's access to this history is one of the chief strengths of this book. From the 1870s through the 1940s (and beyond) Native American children were separated from their families and sent to federally funded boarding schools whose mission it was to strip Indian language, spirituality, and culture from the children. Former students are increasingly telling of their experiences of malnourishment, overwork, and brutality at the hands of the government and church, and the study of these schools has become one of the most active areas of American Indian historical study. In *Wolf at Twilight*, the memories and experiences of Dan and his family give the reader a glimpse of this history and its impact on individuals.

It would be tempting for Nerburn to report this information from the detached and authoritative role of the observer. He successfully shrugs off the role of journalist, however. Nerburn is just as comfortable writing about his own connection to the fraught relations between White America and Native America as he is Dan's. It is precisely his connection with the people and places in his book that gives his writing resonance. *Wolf at Twilight* is a wonderful read for any reader who wants to learn more of our national history, who longs to connect to spirituality, or who simply wants to read a story told from the heart. (November) *Lizzy Shramko*  
(November / December 2009)

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