

★ **Sheine Lende: A Prequel to Elatsoe****Darcie Little Badger****Rovina Cai, Illustrator**

Levine Querido (Apr 16, 2024)

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In Darcie Little Badger's compassionate novel *Sheine Lende*, memories live on through love.

Aided by their ghost dog, Nellie, and their ancestral ability to awaken deceased animals from Below, Shane works with her mother, Lorenza, to rescue missing people. Together, they've saved countless lives, often at no expense to the families of the missing. However, on what appears to be a standard rescue mission, Lorenza goes missing. Shane traverses uncharted territory in order to save her mother, other missing people, and herself.

Weaving together the complex stories of Shane and her loved ones, the mysteries of a world with known magic and monsters, the contemporary erasure of Lipan Apache people through displacement and marginalization, and the importance of preserving one's own history, the novel packs plenty of emotional gut-punches. It also achieves balance via levity, best seen in the relationships that Shane holds close. Its mystery is unpacked one piece at a time, with new questions arising each time another is answered.

The characters themselves are distinct, each with their own complex backstories. Shane is a resilient heroine, though she's also been hardened by grief. She has shortcomings to overcome; she loses her temper, and she feels just rage over injustices visited upon her family and community. She is not alone in worrying about what elements of her heritage she could lose because of colonialism; she fights against such forces. All the while, she loves her friends and family with undying fierceness and is unabashed in her bravery.

With elements of Lipan Apache oral history, fantasy, and mysteries, the captivating novel *Sheine Lende* follows found and inherited family members as they persevere, benefiting from the love of a good ghost dog and other fascinating creatures.

NATALIE WOLLENZIEN (March / April 2024)

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