

# **The Panther Indian Pact**

## **One Boy's Courage to Be a Friend during the Civil War**

Ann Kronwald

### **One Sheet**

#### **Description—Reader Benefits—Author Bio**

Eleven-year-old Marty is downright tired of being afraid. With a panther attack haunting his memory, Confederate soldiers hiding just south of his farm in New York, and the biggest bully this side of the Appalachians eager to destroy the crops and pummel his hide, there's plenty to fear. He needs a real weapon—an Indian bow. And it wouldn't hurt to have a friend either—one who would share his dream of being brave, one crazy enough to fight alongside him, one who'd stick with him whether or not they shared the same skin color. But when tragedies plop the responsibility for the family farm square on Marty's shoulders and give the bully a chance to destroy everything, will a bow, a friend, and *The Panther Indian Pact* give him the courage to face his sworn enemy?

**Desire:** This fun, coming-of-age story offers what most boys long for—**adventure**. Active boys, like those who previewed *The Panther Indian Pact*, would rather ride their scooters into a cactus than sit still for dry readings on the Civil War. Yet, give the character they love an epic weapon, stack the odds against him, sprinkle in humor and suspense, and they'll ask for more.

**Felt Need:** It feeds their longing to be brave and allows them to safely experience courage in their imaginations. Will they ever move past that same old childhood fear? Do they have what it takes to tackle man-sized responsibilities? Can they stand up to the likes of Angry Abe Turner?

**Virtue:** *The Panther Indian Pact* playfully and seriously exposes our common struggle to focus beyond ourselves and take on the interests of another. It highlights themes of **friendship, loyalty, heroism, and self-sacrifice** and explores prejudice through diverse characters. Within snapshots of the Civil War era, the story safely feeds the mind's interest in history, the heart's appetite for friendship, and the soul's natural gravitation to redemptive themes.

**Relevance:** Eight to twelve-year-old boys often witness or experience **bullying and racial tension** for the first time. The National Center for Educational Statistics reveals that one out of five students are bullied. More than half of these bullying situations stop when a peer intervenes (Hawkins, Pepler, and Craig). *The Panther Indian Pact* focuses on what happens over time when friends and family continue to stand up for each other against a common enemy. It captures the same wonderful take-away as R. J. Palacio's *Wonder*—that all humans have value.

**Demand:** Three of the five *Most Exciting Middle Grade Books of 2019*, by Tom Burns on Brightly, have similar messages or themes. Interest in these themes remains high. Yet books for boys in these arenas remain relatively low. According to trends on Read Brightly, books for girls in each of the categories of friendship, bullying, and Civil War fiction still outnumber those for boys.

**Author:** Ann Kronwald is a freelance writer whose articles appear in magazines and anthologies in the US and abroad. Among her awards are first place in the *Writers-Editors Network* International Writing Competition and second place in *Today's Christian Living* Writing Contest. Ann is native to Arizona but traces her ancestry to the very farm in New York which serves as the setting for this story. She discovered letters from a relative describing snippets of 1800s farm life in the northeastern US. These sparked her imagination for *The Panther Indian Pact*.

**Discussion Guide:** Questions for classroom, homeschool, and book club use can be found at [AnnKronwald.com](http://AnnKronwald.com).