

Kai Learns about the Border Crossing by Jasmine Benedict

Once upon a time, there was a young Kanienkeha (Mohawk) boy named Kai who lived in Akwesasne, a land that straddled the border between the United States and Canada. Kai loved his home, but he didn't like waiting in line at the border crossing.

Every time Kai and his family wanted to cross into the United States or Canada, they had to wait in a long line of cars. Kai always wondered why they had to wait in line when they were from Akwesasne, a land that predated the borders. He thought it was unfair.

One day, as Kai and his family waited in line, he decided to pass the time by thinking about all the other indigenous people waiting in lines around the world. He imagined indigenous children waiting in line for school, and indigenous families waiting in line for food and clean water.

As he looked around, he saw all the different people waiting in line with him. There were families with young children, elderly couples, and truck drivers with their big rigs and lots of other unfamiliar faces. Kai wondered where they were all going and what they were waiting for whilst he and his family were simply trying to get home.

Suddenly, an elder in the car next to them leaned out his window and said, "Shé:kon! Skennenkó:wa ken? I see you are also waiting in this long line. Do you know why we have to wait in line?"

Kai shook his head, eager to learn more.

The elder smiled and said, "This line may seem long and frustrating, but it is important to remember that our people have always been crossing these lands. We have always been travelers and traders, and we have always respected these lands and we will continue as we've always done. Waiting in line is just one small part of our greater journey; it is a reminder of who we are and where we come from."

Kai nodded his head, understanding the elder's words. He felt proud to be indigenous and to come from a community that had a long history of traveling and trading.

From that day on, every time Kai and his family waited in line at the border crossing, he thought about the indigenous people around the world who were also waiting in lines, and he felt a sense of unity and solidarity with them. He knew that even though waiting in line could be frustrating, it was a reminder of the strength and resilience of indigenous people and their shared history.