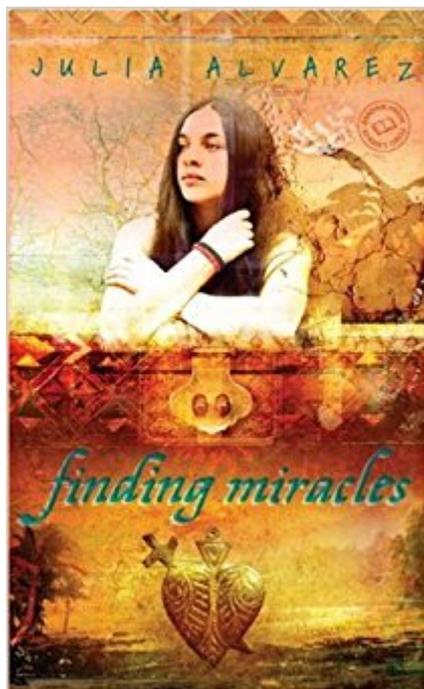


The book was found

Finding Miracles



Synopsis

MILLY KAUFMAN IS an ordinary American teenager living in Vermont until she meets Pablo, a new student at her high school. His exotic accent, strange fashion sense, and intense interest in Milly force her to confront her identity as an adopted child from Pablo's native country. As their relationship grows, Milly decides to undertake a courageous journey to her homeland and along the way discovers the story of her birth is intertwined with the story of a country recovering from a brutal history. Beautifully written by renowned author Julia Alvarez, *Finding Miracles* examines the emotional complexity of familial relationships and the miracles of everyday life.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 0770 (What's this?)

Mass Market Paperback: 288 pages

Publisher: Laurel Leaf (May 9, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0553494066

ISBN-13: 978-0553494068

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.8 x 6.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #618,103 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #44 in [Books > Teens >](#)

[Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Adoption](#) #198 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Central & South America](#)

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Grade 6-9 In spite of her family's openness, Milly Kaufman has never wanted to talk about her adoption. However, during ninth grade, Pablo Bolivar, a refugee from an unnamed Central American country, joins her class and immediately identifies her as someone who might have come from his family's hometown. Then, her grandmother attempts to make a will that differentiates between her and her siblings. While her mother and father's angry reaction makes the woman back down, their increasingly close relationship with Pablo's family makes it impossible for Milly to stop thinking about the parents who gave her up and the war-torn nation she came from. When that

country's dictator is deposed in a democratic election, the Bolívar's go home to visit and invite Milly along. There she discovers a world quite different from her Vermont home, an extended family, a boyfriend in Pablo, and several possible sets of birth parents. She realizes, too, how much she loves her own family, and they join her for a grand reunion. The strength of this book lies in its description of adoption issues—Milly's feelings of abandonment and difference and her sister's fear that Milly's increased identification as Latina will destroy their close relationship. However, the plot is contrived to help Milly find her identity, and the characters never really come alive. The home country has been stripped of any identifying characteristics that might make the setting interesting. Still, readers interested in this subject will be pleased with the satisfying resolution. Kathleen Isaacs, Edmund Burke School, Washington, DC Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

Gr. 8-11. Alvarez returns to a familiar theme--the effect of a dictatorship on the citizens of a Latin American country--but half of this story is set in Vermont, where 16-year-old Milly Kaufman tries to come to terms with her adoption as a child from a never-named country. When new student Pablo arrives from their native land, Milly tries to ignore him, but she needs to know her history, so she returns for a visit with Pablo and his family. In some ways this is a blend of fairy tale and horror story. Pablo realizes Milly is from his country because of her unique eyes. Once in her homeland (the lack of the country's name is awkward and annoying), Milly returns to the region where people with her eyes live and finds the elderly woman who remembers all stories: Milly's parents were more than likely revolutionaries. The romantic personal voyage is mixed with the country's history of murders, rapes, and sadness. Alvarez was probably trying to make the personal universal here, but in many places this unwieldy and too long. Effective? Yes, sometimes--but not as much as it could have been. Ilene Cooper Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to the Audible Audio Edition edition.

This is a wonderful book! A sometimes haunting, sometimes lovely, but overall heartwarming story about family, adoption, history, love, loss, and finding out who you really are is written in a way that continuously drew me in and kept me interested about what would happen next. All the characters are wonderfully developed along the way and I felt like even though the story took place in a small town in Vermont and an unnamed Latin American country-I knew someone just like them in my own neighborhood.

I tend to really like books written by Julia Alvarez However, this one was a little flat for my liking. I was not impressed with the way she switched scenes without warning in a few places. It made for a bit of confusion and I had to go back and make sure i wasn't skipping over any sentences. I would recommend to my pre teen nieces but not great for an adult. If that makes sense.

Julia Alvarez is a fantastic writer! this novel is a great read for teens and parents, there are so many feelings explained a way you can be in the different characters shoes. Friendship, parenting concerns, adoption and adventure.

I loved the novel. The only issue I had was that it was too short and it left me wanting more!

Great very nice very very good im satisfied but dont want to write anithing else sorry god less you all

This book was for my entering-high school son, who found its not well written or interesting. Since he's a regular reader who loves stuff from Harry Potter to mysteries, it's worth noting.

Julie Alvarez's ("How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent") newest novel "Finding Miracles" is the story of Milly Milagros Kaufman, a typical all-American, half-Jewish high schooler with a not-so-typical secret: Milly was adopted as an infant from a war-torn Latin American country, where her adopted parents were serving in the Peace Corps. Milly has managed to successfully keep this info from her best friend Em, friends Jake and Dylan, and the community at large, because thinking about her sickly beginnings at an orphanage dredged up too many painful questions about why she was abandoned at the doorstep, who her birth parents may have been and if they "disappeared" during the dictatorship. Milly is forced to confront her past when Pablo Bolívar joins her grade at high school. Pablo and his parents are refugees from Milly's home country (which is never named). One of his uncles was murdered, one of his brothers is a prisoner, and the other a revolutionary. Pablo asks Milly to help him with English in exchange for practicing Spanish, and one day makes a comment that changes Milly's life: he tells her that her eyes look like those of the mountain village Los Luceros. Also, Milly overhears an angry family discussion in which her unhappy grandmother Happy effectively writes her out of her will as she is not a "blood" relation. Milly begins to slowly examine her feelings by confronting "The Box," a mahogany box containing her adoption papers, naturalization papers, two locks of hair (one light, one dark), a coin, and several photos, and in a

brave speech running for a class office, tells the story of her adoption to the school at large. The second half of the novel chronicles Milly's journey to her homeland. When Milly's home country is freed from tyranny and democracy is slowly put into place, she takes up Mrs. Bolívar's invitation to visit, searching for traces of her shadowy past. Milly and Paco become more than just friends, bonded by the shared sadness of having lost loved ones in the war. The novel does not have a "fairy tale" ending where everything works out perfectly, but the ending provided a satisfying conclusion to Milly's journey. Realistically written and beautifully described, Alvarez captures a girl torn between cultures, languages, and her past, and how Milly, now Milagros, makes all the pieces fit.

Finding Miracles by Julia Alvarez is about a teenage girl named Milly, who lives in Vermont in the United States of America. Throughout the book I learned about Milly's past and current struggles. The book starts off with Julia Alvarez allowing you to become familiar with the characters' personalities. Milly seems like an average teenage girl until you find out she was adopted as a baby when her parents saw her at an orphanage when they were in the Peace Corps. She keeps this information a secret from everyone at school. Then one day a boy named Pablo comes to her school. After a while Pablo and Milly's families become friends. You learn that Pablo and his family escaped the country they are from because they were being persecuted by the government. After getting to know Pablo's family, Milly and her family discover Milly was adopted from the same country Pablo is from. This helps Milly accept and tell her peers about her adoption. Finally, Milly joins Pablo and his family on a trip back to their country to help her understand where she is from, and learn more about her adoption. I really liked this book, because there is lots of foreshadowing, to keep the reader guessing what will happen next. One example is when Pablo says to Milly, "These people from Los Luceros, they all have eyes like yours." This is foreshadowing that Milly may be from Los Luceros, which is located in the country she is from. There is also a romance aspect to the novel. Milly describes Pablo as "He was good-looking." The romance that develops between Pablo and Milly is fun to read and picture mentally. This book can appeal to all different types of readers because it has many different parts to it, like adventure, romance, and is about finding and coming to terms with who you are. Since there are different parts of the book I would recommend it to girls in grades 7, 8, and 9 because they can most relate to Milly, and what she is going through in terms of identity, which is a gigantic part of this novel. This book illustrates how children can struggle with adoption and that they can feel out of place. It also brings attention to identity. A lot of children go through a phase trying to find out who they are, like Milly does. Lots of teenagers will be able to

relate to Milly's character because of her struggles.

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