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Full Cicada Moon



Synopsis

Inside Out and Back Again meets One Crazy Summer and Brown Girl Dreaming in this novel-in-verse about fitting in and standing up for what's right. It's 1969, and the Apollo 11 mission is getting ready to go to the moon. But for half-black, half-Japanese Mimi, moving to a predominantly white Vermont town is enough to make her feel alien. Suddenly, Mimi's appearance is all anyone notices. She struggles to fit in with her classmates, even as she fights for her right to stand out by entering science competitions and joining Shop Class instead of Home Ec. And even though teachers and neighbors balk at her mixed-race family and her refusals to conform, Mimi's dreams of becoming an astronaut never fade no matter how many times she's told no. This historical middle-grade novel is told in poems from Mimi's perspective over the course of one year in her new town, and shows readers that positive change can start with just one person speaking up.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars See all reviews (14 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #63,409 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #38 in Books > Children's Books >

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in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1900s

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Cicada Full Moon by Marilyn Hilton is about a mixed-race girl named Mimi Oliver who is half Japanese and half African American. She is just starting high school in Vermont; her family has recently moved from Berkeley, California so her father can take a teaching position at the local college. The story takes place in 1969 and chronicles Mimi's difficulty being bi-racial in solidly white,

middle-class Vermont where she is seen as an oddity rather than a real person with feelings. It also chronicles her love of astronomy and her interest in the NASA space program; (the novel is conveniently set during the summer of the Apollo 11 moon landing). Along the way, Mimi helps push gender norms in this small town by petitioning that girls should be able to take shop class and boys -- home economics; she befriends a nice boy named Tommy (who lives next door with his Great Uncle, Mr. Dell, a WWII veteran) and a girl named Stacey whose family is from the South. Written in verse, this big fat book goes by quickly. Hilton uses verse seamlessly to tell Mimi's story; verse lends itself well to a precocious 13-year-old's voice. Hilton's description of the seasons and the intricacies of a Vermont winter are winning; she gives us the mind of Mimi and the spirit of Vermont in her text. I was a little worried about an Anglo writer taking on a mixed-racial character's story. Overall, I think Hilton handles it well, although some of Mimi's concern seem a little stereotyped (kids touch her hair, repeatedly ask her about her nationality, shun her because of her race); I wondered whether Vermont in 1969 was really like that socially; it currently enjoys a reputation as a most liberal state. This is a charming book that is enjoyable to spend time with. Pleasant to read, an extremely likable character, artfully rendered. The ending wraps up a little too quickly and neatly, but by the end of the novel we would wish as much for Mimi.

I bought this book for my grand-daughter but as with all such purchases, I read it before I give it. The title appealed to me and the cover illustration drew me in totally. It was such a sweet but not maudlin story about prejudices and acceptance. I loved it so much that I bought it for another grand-daughter.

Lovely book. Just enough action to keep things moving but a lot of space to let readers think and consider big issues of race and including others. My 4th grade students love it. It is nominated for the Maine Student Book Award for 2016-17. Good luck!

Full Cicada Moon is such an extraordinary story. It's lyrical. It's moving. It's complex and yet written with such perfect simplicity. This is the story of 7th-grader, Mimi Yoshiko Oliver, set in 1969. She's half-black, half-Japanese, living in a mostly white community. She is also a girl who dreams of becoming an astronaut. She is judged because of her skin color and boxed in by her gender, but she is strong and determined. I loved this novel so much. It's beautifully written and it has an important story to tell, about what it's like to be different and about finding your wings and learning to soar. I think middle graders will appreciate Mimi's struggle to be accepted and her determination to

fight for her dreams. This is an easy introduction to telling a story through verse since the writing is flawless and approachable and the characters are so well developed. I'm quite sure that other readers will fall in love with Mimi and her family and friends. This is definitely one of my favorite book of 2015.

Our local library recommended this book as part of a suggested summer reading list. My eight-year-old (going into third grade) daughter doesn't care much for books that aren't mysteries/graphic novels/series, but I was astounded to see how absorbed she was. When she finished it she lamented it wasn't longer "and at 400 pages, this was easily the longest book she'd ever read" because she didn't want it to end! So, of course, I had to read it and see what wondrous book this was. And I, too, was sad to see it end "but at the same time, it was exactly as long as it needed to be. In brief: Twelve-year-old Mimi moves with her African-American college professor father and Hiroshima-survivor mother from Berkeley to a small town in Vermont. It is 1969, the year of Apollo 11, and the family's arrival causes quiet ripples. This may sound maudlin or like a recipe for trouble, but it subtly incorporates the climate of the time into the lives of real kids: women's rights (budding scientist Mimi dares to dream of becoming an astronaut), social protest (students stage a sit-in to effect integration of girls-only home ec and boys-only shop classes), racial integration (not only does Mimi and her family initially have trouble being accepted, not to mention embraced, by this community unaccustomed to the sight of people of color, but there is also the whiff of interracial dating) and Vietnam (the brother of one of Mimi's friends goes missing in action). The book may be written 'in verse,' but it is not a typical poetry book. The lines are brief and fleeting in their appearance, popping by like thoughts do, and as the story unfolds it feels more like prose. Whatever you call it, FULL CICADA MOON is so beautifully written it is doubly a pleasure for readers of virtually all ages. Read it "you will not regret it.

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