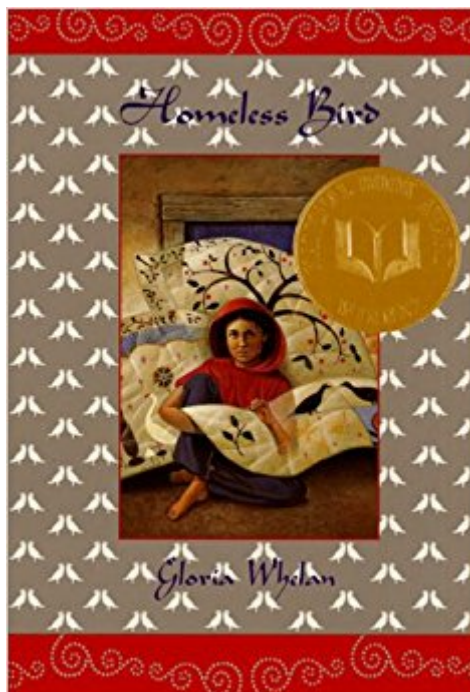


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Homeless Bird



Synopsis

The National Book Award-winning novel about one remarkable young woman who dares to defy fate, perfect for readers who enjoyed *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park or *Inside Out and Back Again* by Thanhha Lai. Like many girls her age in India, thirteen-year-old Koly faces her arranged marriage with hope and courage. But Koly's story takes a terrible turn when in the wake of the ceremony, she discovers she's been horribly misled—her life has been sold for a dowry. Can she forge her own future, even in the face of time-worn tradition? Perfect for schools and classrooms, this universally acclaimed, bestselling, and award-winning novel by master of historical fiction Gloria Whelan is a gripping tale of hope that will transport readers of all ages.

Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

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Best Sellers Rank: #16,468 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia #11 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Homelessness & Poverty #129 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Girls & Women

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 5 and up

Customer Reviews

"What if I don't like him?" "Of course you will like him." "But what if I don't?" Maa impatiently slapped at a fly. "Then you must learn to like him." But Koly never gets a chance to find out if she does care for her intended groom. Married and promptly widowed at 13, Koly finds herself in the grim position of being cast out by a society that has no place for girls like her. With a seemingly hopeless future in India, this courageous and spirited young woman sets out to forge her own destiny. Through perseverance, resourcefulness, and sheer luck, she manages not only to find a niche for herself, but

even to find happiness again. Gloria Whelan's tale of a remarkable girl in an extraordinary situation will linger with the reader long after the last page is read. The shaping of Koly's life, as anyone's, is in her own hands, as well as the hands of the society in which she lives. Her ability to express herself--and ultimately support herself--with her exceptional skill in embroidery is a symbol of the creative ingenuity that will serve her well throughout her tribulations. (Ages 8 and older) --Emilie Coulter --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

Whelan (*Miranda's Last Stand*) blends modern Hindu culture with age-old Indian traditions as she profiles a poor girl's struggle to survive in a male-dominated society. Only 13 when her parents find her a husband, Koly can't help feeling apprehensive about leaving home to live in a distant village with her in-laws and husband, none of whom she has met. The truth is worse than she could have feared: the groom, Hari, is a sickly child, and his parents have wanted only a dowry, not a wife for him, in order to pay for a trip to Benares so Hari might bathe in the holy waters of the Ganges. Koly is widowed almost immediately; later, she is abandoned in the holy city of Vrindavan by her cruel mother-in-law. Koly, likened to a "homeless bird" in a famous poem by Rabindranath Tagore, embodies the tragic plight of Hindu women without status, family or financial security. She is saved from a dismal fate by her love of beauty, her talent for embroidery and the philanthropy of others--and by Whelan's tidy plotting, which introduces a virtuous young man, a savvy benefactress and a just employer in the nick of time. The feminist theme that dominates the happily-ever-after ending seems more American than Indian, but kids will likely enjoy this dramatic view of an endangered adolescence and cheer Koly's hard-won victories. Ages 8-12. (Mar.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio Cassette edition.

I read a lot of children's and YA lit, searching for books to send to my grands. Because such books generally don't contain smut, I have gotten to the point where I prefer them to those written for adults these days. Words can't express how much I enjoyed this story. No, it's not a show stopper but a work full of emotion and well-rounded characters. Too bad it isn't longer, but then it wouldn't be a children's book.

great story. I loved this book when I was in high school. A great tale of a young girl who overcomes life's cruel trials and makes a life for herself. Truly empowering

Really simple read if you're an adult. A bunch of my students were reading it for school (I'm a tutor)

so I picked it up. It's a great book for 5th-6th graders to read.

4 1/2 Stars. Don't know about the 'facts' behind the story, but I have to say I really liked it. It's a sweet, scary, touching story about a young girl forced to marry at the age of 13, and then left on her own in a strange city. It would have been too depressing if not for the kindness of random strangers she met, though she had her share of close calls, too. Might be a little intense for younger readers in places, but I do recommend it.

Hard to believe people still live this way in this day and age, makes me appreciate our freedom. Very fast read but so well worth it. My 15 year old daughter is reading it now with pure absolute awe at how different and lucky she is. Great book.

This story is very touching. I went back to it after a few months and re-read the whole thing. In the light of current events concerning the education of girls in some antifeminist societies, I think Whelan presents a compelling picture of why it is so important to give girls equal access to quality education, and to economic opportunity.

We received this book as a gift. I have to say, I read a lot of books that are culturally related and this was eloquently read. The author does such an exquisite job painting a picture in your head of the setting and the characters personalities. This is a quick and easy read!

I was assigned this book by my English professor due to the fact that it is nowhere near as popular as the literary classics, and thus the chances that us students have read it before were slim. I'm not going to analyze it for you. I will just say that the book was addicting from beginning to end. I'm a 20yr old English major who is very easily put off by a boring book. This book touched me, a tough macho man, on an emotional level. Just buy it; it's only a couple of dollars anyways.

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