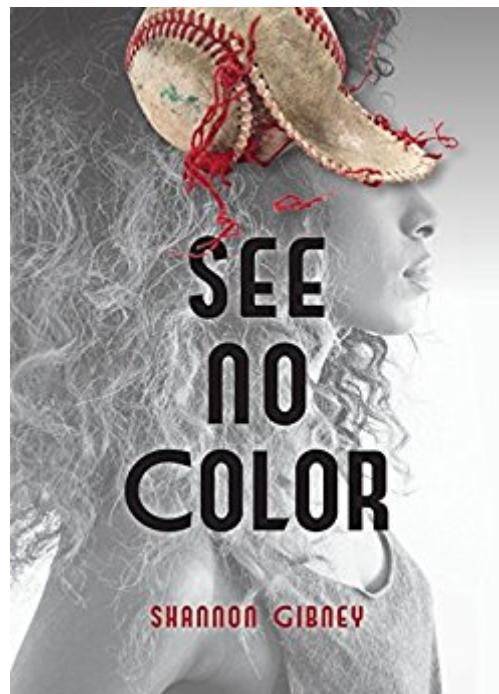


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See No Color (Fiction - Young Adult)



Synopsis

For as long as she can remember, sixteen-year-old Alex Kirtridge has known two things: 1. She has always been Little Kirtridge, a stellar baseball player, just like her father. 2. She's adopted. These facts have always been part of Alex's life. Despite some teasing, being a biracial girl in a white family didn't make much of a difference as long as she was a star on the diamond where her father—her baseball coach and a former pro player—counted on her. But now, things are changing: she meets Reggie, the first black guy who's wanted to get to know her; she discovers the letters from her biological father that her adoptive parents have kept from her; and her body starts to grow into a woman's, affecting her game. Alex begins to question who she really is. She's always dreamed of playing pro baseball just like her father, but can she really do it? Does she truly fit in with her white family? Who were her biological parents? What does it mean to be black? If she's going to find answers, Alex has to come to terms with her adoption, her race, and the dreams she thought would always guide her.

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Customer Reviews

This book is perfect. I almost don't think I need to go beyond giving it 5 stars. Adequate words fail me in the face of such talent and skill in storytelling. The pacing is excellent, the structure classic without feeling forced - the steady build up of tension to a crescendo (emotional meltdown) followed by resolution and empowerment. The author depicts a very realistic, age-appropriate developmental crisis, aka "coming of age" story, of a transracial adoptee. It's a modern journey of discovery rarely told by transracial adoptees in contemporary fiction and there is not a wasted word or scene, completely natural dialogue and relationships and reactions between characters. It's just flawless. I don't feel like there is a lot more I can say without doing what the parents did in this book, which was to explain Alex to herself way too often. I hope I have read it as an anti-manual for adoptive parenting but I may never succeed in rising above the temptation of control, false as the illusion may be. And every kid, no matter what deck they've been handed, eventually has to find their own way in spite of their parents' best intentions. Inspirational quote, universal for anyone who feels freakish in a world that dictates a narrow set of norms, (not a spoiler but it is well into the journey):(Alex has discovered the world of online adoptee blogs and forums)" . . I reflected on the fact that I might not be as much of a freak as I always thought I was. Maybe I just belonged to an outlaw tribe. One you wouldn't even know was there unless you knew how to go looking for it. And maybe those of us in the tribe weren't responsible at all for what had happened to us, all the things that had made us who we were. Maybe we actually had nothing to apologize for. To anyone."

This is a deeply emotional book about a teen girl facing the type of identity crisis many teens face, only exacerbated by the fact that she's a transracial adoptee. I was intrigued by this intimate look into the psychology of identity but less taken with the whole baseball subplot, which felt disconnected. There were a lot of threads in this beautifully written and generally satisfying book. The author is a transracial adoptee herself so that adds to the authenticity of the story and enhances the reading experience.

Interested read

Everything about this book, "See No Color," is done well, and that's saying a lot. I give it Five Stars even though I felt the main problem did not seem truly believable: that bi-racial "Alex's" white

adoptive parents never discussed the black-race part of her identity and, as a result, she felt too "white" inside. When she was attracted to a black young man ("Reggie"), she felt overwhelmed and almost psychologically paralyzed by her "whiteness." "Whiteness"? It's made to sound shameful. Several black teens in the town cruelly taunt her about being bi-racial; that, also, was hard to believe, as this book takes place today. I grew up (white) in a housing project situated between the Bronx and Bridgeport. All kids played together and never thought of skin color: that was in the 50's-60's. In the 70's, I lived near an Army-base-town in Colorado and mixed-race couples were the norm. Then I lived ten years in Baltimore City, and race - again - was not an issue. The only other town I have experience with is New Orleans, and it's the same there: people don't consider race first; they consider each person as another human being first. Yes, we SEE race, but in the same way as we SEE age, gender, etc. During this last decade, however, there's been some effort used to divide "blackness" and "whiteness" in America, and it's appalling. That said, I admire author Shannon Gibney for exposing the problems involved with trying to be "either-or," and for illuminating wonderfully the complexity of the teenage-to-adulthood journey. Her characterization of the two families is slightly stereotypical, but subtleties might have been missed, so I've no quarrel with that. Especially well done is Alex's "sister," white "Kit," whose insight of- and helpfulness to- 16-yr-old Alex is brilliant. "She had been confining herself to just two colors lately because...minimizing color composition was challenging her to express her eleven-year-old self through shape, media, use of perspective, and a host of other elements..." (p.19) I think that says it all: Define, Confine, Separate, and in the end, Blend.

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