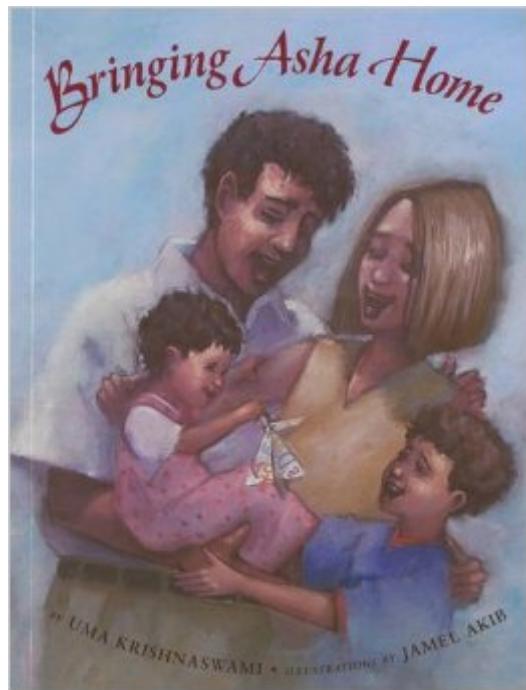


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Bringing Asha Home



Synopsis

It's Rakhi, the Hindu holiday special to brothers and sisters, and Arun wishes he had a sister with whom to celebrate. Soon it looks as if his wish will come true. His parents are going to adopt a baby girl named Asha. She is coming all the way from India, where Arun's dad was born. The family prepares for Asha's arrival, not knowing it will be almost a year until they receive governmental approval to bring Asha home. Arun is impatient and struggles to accept the long delay, but as time passes he finds his own special ways to build a bond with his sister, who is still halfway around the world. With warmth and honesty, this tender story taps into the feelings of longing, love and joy that adoption brings to many families. Readers will find reassurance knowing there is more than one way to become part of a loving family.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars See all reviews (9 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #339,381 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #156 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Adoption #168 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #1423 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Siblings

Age Range: 4 - 9 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 4

Customer Reviews

The Plot: Arun's family adopts a baby girl from India. The Good: The story is framed by the Hindu holiday Rakhi, a holiday that is about brothers and sisters. Arun wishes he had a sister so that he could celebrate Rakhi. A few months later, he finds out the family is going to adopt a little girl from India, the country where Arun's father was born. The story ends with the baby, Asha, (now about one years old) arriving just in time for Rakhi. It's a holiday I was unfamiliar with; but it's a perfect holiday to celebrate children becoming siblings, and it's also one that will be easily understood by

children hearing the story. I love that this story was framed by this holiday; and I love that the pictures and text show a family that celebrates a diverse heritage. Rakhi is celebrated; during October, there is a jack-o'-lantern on a table. The pictures, as well as the text, show a biracial family. (Truth be told, I didn't pick that up until my second reading, when I noticed that Dad's country of origin was mentioned but not Mom. The Lee & Low website confirmed this. I like that it's not a "hit you over the head with it" part of the story.) This is a great story about adoption, particularly international adoption, and the long wait many families face in waiting for their adoptive child. "When you adopt a baby from one country and bring her to another, there are many governmental forms to fill out and laws to follow," Dad says. "It takes time." (I am so good. I am not making any snarky comments about international adoptions and certain celebrities.) While the actual process takes a long time, *Bringing Asha Home* shows a family taking the steps to welcome the baby into their hearts long before the child is brought into their home: a room is prepared, Arun makes her presents of paper airplanes, and a birthday party is held.

Arun really wants a little sister. His best friend, Michael, has one and even though Michael isn't that impressed by the experience, Arun thinks having a baby sister would be great. He tells Michael, "In India, where my dad was born, sisters tie shiny bracelets on the wrists of their brothers. The bracelets are called *rakhi* too, just like the holiday. Brothers and sisters promise to be good to each other, and everyone eats special sweets." Arun soon finds out that he will have a baby sister. Mom and Dad are adopting a baby girl, Asha, from India. But the wait and the papers and the regulations are excruciating. Arun, in the meantime, turns eight and celebrates his birthday without Asha. The family even celebrates Asha's first birthday without her. Arun makes do by fashioning the best paper airplane he's ever created for his sister and placing it on a shelf in her room. Finally, Arun tells us, "a few weeks later, on a sticky-warm Saturday, I find an envelope from India in the mailbox." It's the letter. "We help Dad get ready for his long trip. I write colorful letters--forward, backward, upside down--on the folded wings of the paper plane I've been saving for Asha. I tuck it into Dad's suitcase." "*Bringing Asha Home*" is a beautiful adoption story from a brother's point of view. Jamel Akib's illustrations are warm, friendly, and accessible. I hope that "*Bringing Asha Home*" will be read outside the adoption community, however, because it's a universal story about the hopes of a boy and his family. "*Bringing Asha Home*" is great read-aloud choice for children ages 4-9.

We read this book to our 2-year-old. He got very interested, especially that part of the story is making paper airplanes. :) Well, whatever helps. What was important to us was that the book

provided a nice perspective on adoption.

This book describes adoption without describing adoption. It is intended for children 5 to 9 but may help children of any age to understand a new addition coming into the family by way of adoption. Personally, I love sociology and the differences of all cultures. I love to learn about different holidays, religions, beliefs and practices. This book taught me about Rakhi. On the last page there is an author's note that further tells about Rakhi in addition to a blurb about adoption. The story is well written and told from a little boy's perspective as he waits for his sister to arrive. The anxiety and impatience that he feels as the seasons change are evident. He wants to meet his sister but the paperwork and other red tape take long. Soon his sister comes home. The images are a great pair to the story. They are lifelike and because of this the reader feels a real connection with the cast of characters. The emotions that they feel waiting and waiting for Asha to come home to them is intense and as an adult I felt sympathy for the parents as they waited for everything to be in order. Children are a blessing no matter how they come to us and this book shows us the waiting that goes along with the overseas adoption process but also the satisfaction when the baby finally arrives. ahgooreview.com

Very touching story. The pictures are great, and the story is wonderful. This is a great story for children and families where adoptions have taken place, in or outside of the United States.

Wonderfully written by Uma Krishnaswami and deftly illustrated by Jamel Akib, *Bringing Asha Home* is a story for young readers ages 5 to 9 and set at the time of Rakhi, a Hindu holiday which is quite special for brothers and sisters. An only child, Arun greatly desires to have a sister to share Rakhi with and his parents are hoping to adopt a little girl. But first they must all struggle with getting governmental approval to have a little girl named Asha join their family from halfway around the world. *Bringing Asha Home* is a warm and joyous story that would grace any school or community library picturebook collection.

good book

Good

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