



Missing May

By Cynthia Rylant

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This critically acclaimed winner of the Newbery Medal and the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award joins Scholastic's paperback line.

When May dies suddenly while gardening, Summer assumes she'll never see her beloved aunt again. But then Summer's Uncle Ob claims that May is on her way back--she has sent a sign from the spirit world.

Summer isn't sure she believes in the spirit world, but her quirky classmate Cletus Underwood--who befriends Ob during his time of mourning--does. So at Cletus' suggestion, Ob and Summer (with Cletus in tow) set off in search of Miriam B. Young, Small Medium at Large, whom they hope will explain May's departure and confirm her possible return.

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Missing May By Cynthia Rylant Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

This wonderful book revolves around a few delightfully named characters: Summer, Uncle Ob, Aunt May and Cletus Underwood. After being passed among relatives, Summer joins her aunt and uncle and marvels at the couple's deep love for one another. But after Aunt May dies, Summer and Uncle Ob are brought together in their struggles to come to terms with the death. Cletus, a neighbor boy, comes along to help provide an answer. This simple and sweet story, which won the Newbery Medal in 1993, is injected with just the right touches of humor and mysticism.

From Publishers Weekly

This short novel is a study of grief--chiefly, that felt by Summer after her foster mother's sudden death, but also her sorrow at witnessing the grief of Ob, her foster father--she realizes that she herself may not be reason enough for him to go on living. And for several months it seems as if he may not in fact go on, until Summer and Ob take a short car trip that somehow transforms their lives. In a direct, matter-of-fact voice occasionally laced with irony and wry humor, Summer articulates many discerning insights about sorrow and loss. The reader remains a distant observer of her emotions, however--perhaps because the novel begins after May's death, making her a less immediate figure, perhaps because Summer's perceptions are quite sophisticated, even adult. And the novel's emotional turning point is difficult to grasp, either verbally or intuitively: all Summer, and we, know is that "something happened to Ob" to make him embrace life fully again. Ages 11-up.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 5-8-- They've been a family for half of Summer's 12 years, and when her Aunt May dies, a little bit of Summer and her uncle Ob dies too--and his whirligigs go ``still as night." Ob's 'gigs are his ``mysteries," works of art that capture the essence of Storms, Heaven, Fire, Love, Dreams . . . and May. For a time, he seems to be failing, and Summer fears she'll lose him, as well. Then he claims to have been visited by May's spirit. And, stranger still to Summer, he takes a liking to that ``flat out lunatic," Cletus Underwood. Lunatic or no, Cletus steps unhesitatingly into the space May has left, and all three take off on a journey in search of May. It's an ill - fated journey that, nevertheless, lets Ob and Summer turn a corner in their grieving--and sets Ob free. With homely detail, Rylant plunges readers into the middle of Summer's world, creating characters certain to live long in their memories. Her tightly woven plot wastes no words; May's death and the course of her husband and niece's grieving are both reflected in and illuminated by the state of Ob's mysteries and the course of that interrupted journey of discovery. There is much to ponder here, from the meaning of life and death to the power of love. That it all succeeds is a tribute to a fine writer who brings to the task a natural grace of language, an earthly sense of humor, and a well-grounded sense of the spiritual. --Marcia Hupp, Mamaroneck Pub. Lib., NY

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Kathleen Bonds:

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also turn into a life style. This

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Ronnie Chaney:

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