



Julie of the Wolves

Jean Craighead George , John Schoenherr (Illustrations)

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Miyax, like many adolescents, is torn. But unlike most, her choices may determine whether she lives or dies. At 13, an orphan, and unhappily married, Miyax runs away from her husband's parents' home, hoping to reach San Francisco and her pen pal. But she becomes lost in the vast Alaskan tundra, with no food, no shelter, and no idea which is the way to safety. Now, more than ever, she must look hard at who she really is. Is she Miyax, Eskimo girl of the old ways? Or is she Julie (her "gussak"-white people-name), the modernized teenager who must mock the traditional customs? And when a pack of wolves begins to accept her into their community, Miyax must learn to think like a wolf as well. If she trusts her Eskimo instincts, will she stand a chance of surviving?

Julie of the Wolves Details

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Author : Jean Craighead George , John Schoenherr (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Julie of the Wolves for online ebook

Leona Carstairs says

Real Rating: 4.5 stars

I'm editing my shite review and trying to do this work of art justice!

I love this book. It's amazing, at first I was unsure of whether I would like it or not, but, turns out that I love it. This is a short novel (approximately 176 pgs) but it's so worth reading. I have long been looking for a book which features a female MC surviving in the wilderness, and I found it. Not my usually type of book, but I loved it nonetheless.

This book struck a chord in my soul, made me feel alive and just made me feel and it was just beautiful. Oh god, I need to reread this book, I want to feel that beauty again. I really really really loved this and HIGHLY recommend. <3

Julie says

Every writer should read this little Newberry winner.

Why?

I'm glad you asked, and I am so happy to answer.

Every writer should read this little Newberry winner to learn. . . that a book with a fast-paced narrative that is "readable" may not only sell well, it may also win a prestigious book award! A book with horrible dialogue may still be read over and over again in classrooms everywhere, so, it turns out, you don't need to waste any further time on making dialogue authentic! Whew! What a relief! And, last but not least, write about an Eskimo, even a completely unlikable/unrelatable Eskimo, because multiculturalism sells, y'all!

Three stars for naming her Julie.

Emily says

The genre was action/fiction. When Amaroq died, it was very sad. One of the things that made me sad was when Amaroq died was when Julie screamed "For a bounty, for money, the magnificent Amaroq is dead!" I think this might be how some one feels when someone important dies. (pg. 140). At first, Amaroq did not let Julie in the pack. Why do you think he eventually did? Why was Jello a wolf in shame? why did the men kill Amaroq and then not take him with them? I think that this was a very good book because I liked how the quiet moments and the action tied together to make one.

Jen says

According to this book, to survive in the tundra you might need to drink from a wolf's teat, collect upchucked food from furred friends, and stuff your pockets full of excrement for fuel. It also doesn't hurt to be very, very optimistic about life and your chances of survival in general. According to Kapugen, Julie's father, when you're feeling fear you need to change your position. So, when Julie begins to fear life among a new family, she changes position by walking out into barren landscapes and winging it, hoping by the end that she reaches San Francisco (see how well her optimism serves her?). Anyway, when one lives like Julie does for so long there is a good chance that re-adjusting to life among those less optimistic and normal is a struggle...but in the end I'm rooting for her to manage it, although I don't think she'd ever stop singing out her love for a certain lead wolf after gently biting him on the nose and all.

Lesle says

The author spent a summer watching and studying the behaviors of a wolf pack in Denali. She had seen a young woman walking the tundra alone. The story is inspired.

Julie of the Wolves is a story about Miyak's journey from leaving a frightening situation behind at a very young age, to find her way, to her pen pal in San Francisco. She is lost in Alaska with no food and no way to shelter herself from the tundra. During her journey she is torn between a Gussak (Julie) way of life or is the Eskimo (Miyak) life a better way? At times it is intense, will she survive? She finally finds hope in a pack of wolves and begins to study how they communicate to one another which allows her to interact with them, in-turn saves her life.

The story is well written, it is believable in the fact that it could possibly happen in the world of Eskimo life. Miyax's ingenuity to survive with the pack and sustain herself with some of the lessons she learned from her father is the heart of the story. She also is able to save another, with the Plover Bird. A couple that is out hunting find her and give her hope to reunite with her father and show him what she has learned.

The descriptions are very detailed, the real life hits her hard when she realizes her father is modernized which has led to the death of one she admired so much. She gives the Plover to her father as a gift, shortly after the bird passes. Is this a sign? Sad.

The sketchings are also pretty detailed and give you a true image of her different circumstances. Wolves are fascinating creatures the way they build structure in the pack and how they show respect towards the leader.

Alissa Patrick says

3.5 Stars

Jacqueline says

at first I thought Julie's observations of wolf behavior to be overly simplistic. It's not just a matter of adopting their vocal cues to one another that will allow you to approach a wild wolf and gain its trust and friendship.

however, after a while I attempted some of the wolf behaviors on my 2 dogs, and was surprised that they seemed to work and be understood. Imagine pippen's surprise when I bit the top of her nose the first time! heh

the grunt whine means come here.

the licking of the chin and cheeks means hail to the chief.

it actually DOES translate.

I'm weirded out by this.

Wanda says

Wanda's Summer Carnival of Children's Literature

Although I know that I read *Julie of the Wolves* when I was about 11 years old, I could not recall a single detail of it, just a general impression that it had been an enjoyable book. I think I got much more out of it reading it as an adult!

What I can truly appreciate now is the wonderful depiction of the natural world, the Arctic environment. The author spent some time in Alaska, doing biological research, and her knowledge of the area just shines through. Not just wolves, but lemmings, skuas, foxes, and a variety of other birds and animals populate these pages, strongly appealing to the naturalist in me.

As a child, I certainly did not understand the sadness about the changing way of life of the people of the Arctic. George was obviously sorry to see the Native people losing their traditional way of life and becoming initiated into regular North American culture. The ending is particularly heart wrenching, as Julie faces the fact that she must also join in settled life. I experienced similar feelings when visiting Bhutan—the young people were all excited about the internet and joining in world culture, but as a visitor, I saw that their culture risked losing so much of its uniqueness as a result. Yet who in their right mind would deny them the right to modernize? It's a balancing act, to take the best of other cultures while retaining what is best of your own.

I think there are echoes in this book of the idea that Native peoples and their cultures would inevitably die out, something which so many are still struggling against. So many indigenous languages are quickly going extinct, being replaced by European languages. Hopefully, these communities will be able to hold the line against further erosion of their cultures and languages.

Catie says

3.5 stars

I'm glad that this is getting re-released, because I think that it deserves to find a new generation of fans. This book is very short (less than one hundred pages) and simply written, but I found it very affecting nonetheless.

The story opens with the Eskimo girl Miyax lost, alone, and starving in the Alaskan wilderness. Her only hope of survival is the nearby wolf pack, and the long ago memory of a tale that her lost father told: of one hard winter when he appealed to a wolf leader for help and was given aid. Desperate, Miyax begins to emulate wolf behaviors and communication. The wolves slowly begin to accept her presence, but she can't rely on them for all. Miyax must unearth a hidden strength and the nearly lost wisdom of her ancestors to survive.

As the story unfolds, we learn that Miyax has another name and another life. In childhood, she left the warmth and tradition of the seal camp and her father, to join her aunt in a more developed town. There, she attended school, gained a pen pal in San Francisco, and became Julie. But at age thirteen, according to the Eskimo tradition, she agrees to marry the son of her father's close friend. All seems well, until her husband becomes aggressive. Julie decides to flee toward the hope of San Francisco and a new life.

This is a powerful story of conflict between two identities and two sets of traditions. Julie loves the safety of home and people; she wants to have a place in society. But when Julie runs into the wilderness, her proprieties and her limits are stripped away. She loses her fear and uncertainty and she finds Miyax underneath it all. And she finds even more than that: a new family and a new home.

But can Miyax's new home remain untouched? With the industrialized world expanding ever further into the north, her new life is not a stable one. The ending is bittersweet, but it feels like truth.

What's most interesting to me is that I felt my own reactions to Miyax's environment change right along with hers. In the beginning, I felt frightened for Miyax and a bit disgusted by the lengths that she was forced to go to in order to survive. But by the end, I was happily eating raw liver and packing my sled with caribou "chips" (aka, poop) for fuel right along with her. I rejoiced at the thought of Miyax turning her back on "civilized" life and surviving on her own.

Perfect Musical Pairing

Genesis – White Mountain

From the 1970 album, an epic song about harsh reality and adventure through the eyes of a wolf on the white mountain. Couldn't be more perfect!

Dan says

Synopsis:

To escape from an arranged marriage gone bad, Miyax (Julie) runs away into the Alaskan wilderness. Becoming lost, she quickly realizes that she must befriend a pack of wolves, or starve to death. While she left to escape from the traditions of her forefathers, she comes to realize that it is their wisdom that will guide her through her greatest challenges. If, that is, she can survive to tell the tale.

Personal thoughts:

Of the Newbery's I've read so far, this is probably the one I liked the least. It isn't that it's poorly written -- it isn't. Rather, it was a bit hard for me to grasp what the author's purpose was in writing the book.

At times, it seems like a narrative version of National Geographic, explaining in excellent detail the mannerisms of wolves and how they maintain their pack hierarchies. It also does an excellent job detailing the Eskimo traditions that help Miyax to keep up with the Alaskan tundra. Yet, that doesn't seem to be the author's intention.

Really, it seems that the point of the story was meant to be a coming of age tale, with Miyax originally intending to leave Alaska for San Francisco. Yet, through the course of the book, she realizes that there is much less "Julie" in her than there is Miyax, the Alaskan born Eskimo with traditions worth keeping.

[*** Spoiler warning ***]

I suppose that the thing that left me the most unsatisfied was the way the book ends. She finds that her father, who taught her what she needed to survive, is alive. She also discovers, though, that he has given up the ways of the Eskimo, which have kept her alive. In the end, she chooses to leave him behind also, returning to the true traditions of her fathers.

But, isn't that what she was escaping from in the beginning? What of her marriage? Does she believe _that_ tradition is worth keeping? What of the benefits brought by the Americans to fight alcoholism and other problems among the Eskimos? Surely choosing between Julie and Miyax isn't so completely black and white. And yet, for her, it is. She gives up everything.

For me, it seems that what she really wants isn't life as an Eskimo, but life with the wolves, where she didn't have to deal with the multi-faceted aspects of people's lives and traditions. In short, I don't know that she 'came of age' as much as she just reverted to a childish desire to have nothing change.

Amanda NEVER MANDY says

I decided it best to reacquaint myself with this story since it had been such a long time between my original read and this review and let me just say what a difference time has had with this one. My memories were of this little girl who happened to make friends with a pack of wolves while traveling from point A to point B, which consisted of some mildly dangerous wilderness.

WRONGO

Adult me looks at this story now and sees sad. Buckets of it. From beginning to end there is just a whole hell

of a lot of wrong happening to this poor little girl and her ability to endure it astounds me. Maybe that is why I loved this book so much as a child. It wasn't the animal aspect but more the strong central character that drew me in. I seem to have a knack for falling for the independent and stubborn leads that take not just one, but many life ass-kicking's and still manage to see that sparkle that makes it all worth it shine on through.

I may display an empty cup mentality but I sure don't read like it.

Tyler says

My younger brother is a rather picky eater. When he eats something he doesn't like, he clamps his nose with two fingers and swallows the food as quickly as possible while suppressing the gag reflex. For him, some foods just don't go down as easy as others.

For me, Jean Craghead George's Julie of the Wolves could hardly go down at all.

It's a quick and easy read, for ages 10 and up, coming in at about 150 pages, and to be honest, that's all I could bear.

This 1972 Newberry award winning novel shows the effects of the world's urbanization on the native Inuit tribes. But instead of making this book heartwarming at all...it just comes off as being depressing.

The storyline follows a young Eskimo girl with a near-unpronounceable name, Miyax. She studies wolves, and attempts to "learn their language," a skill that sounds weird on paper, and is even weirder in practice.

She was set up to be married to a man who is quite a dweeb and a rapist, so she runs away into the arctic and sets off a string of highly depressing prose.

Although if there's something that George gets right in the course of the book it's her writing style. She describes the landscape of the arctic with such majesty and sophistication that I can't help but gape at the mental picture she paints. The unfortunate catch is that there is no substance to back up this beautiful diction, the characters were clichéd, the storyline uninvolved, and the ending abrupt and awkward.

And speaking of awkwardness, this book was the 32nd most-banned book from 1990-1999, according to the ALA.

Why?

At the end of Part II there is a scene depicting an attempted rape between two characters, Miyax (now Americanized and re-named Julie) and Daniel, (the guy she marries). According to Banned in the U.S.A. an incident occurred in March 1996, when the book was removed from the sixth grade reading list in Pulaski Township, Pennsylvania at the behest of parents who "complained of a graphic marital rape scene in the book." This really surprised me, why on earth would they include a scene about a rapist in a children's book? I didn't even know what rape meant until I was in 9th grade... Yet, there it is. I'm totally against censorship, but I don't really think that this book is suitable for 5th grade readers (its target audience).

While there are two more installments to this trilogy, I will definitely not be reading them. This book can go just below other similar pieces of repulsive literature, such as Stephanie Myer's Twilight Saga and Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter. To Quote Jean Craghead George herself, "the hour of the wolf and Eskimo is over." Frankly, the hour doesn't even start.

Katharine says

Julie of the wolves Book Report

By: Katharine B.

If you plan to read this book then DO NOT read this book report, due to SPOILERS!

Introduction

The author of the Newberry award winner of Julie of the Wolves is "Jean Craighead George" and the pictures were made by "John Schoenherr". Jean Craighead has also written books called "My side of the mountain" "the talking earth" and a few others. John Schoenherr was the illustrator of the books called "Gentle Ben" "Owl moon" and some others. The genre of this book is fiction because one girl can't easily become best friend with a pack of wild wolves and the subgenre is young adult fiction because of its sexual content. I think the book was adventurous because Julie (Miyax) traveled to places like San Francisco and Alaska and she had to be able to get shelter and food. The narrator of this book is Julie herself so that means the point of view is third person limited. This affected the story because you can only know what Julie is thinking and not the rest of the characters.

Setting

This story takes place in Alaska tundra which Miyax describes as looking as an 'ocean of grass'. The book does not tell you exactly when the story takes place but I guess it would be sometime between 1960's - 1970's because that was the time the book was made and they were using the term Eskimo. Miyax lives in a home she built of sod. She describes the home as "cozy" but not well built. The area is described as "gold-green plain" with frozen soil that only moss, grass and a few flowers can grow from the top layer. There are no trees. Only animals that can survive the cold temperature of the tundra can live there like cranes, caribou and wolves. If this story took place in a hot jungle with different animals and scenery I don't think it would be the same. The relationship between Miyax and the wolves is really interesting and I don't think it would be the same if the story took place somewhere in a jungle. There would be other things to worry about in the jungle. The cold and hard environment is harder to survive than a jungle.

Characters

The main character is Julie and her Eskimo name is Miyax. She is a thirteen year girl who lives the wolves in the arctic tundra. She is described as "a classic Eskimo beauty, small of bone and delicately wired with strong muscles." She has a pearl round face, flat nose and black sparkling slanted eyes. Because of the cold environment Eskimos live in, her body is small and compact because it helps them conserve heat. Miyax is brave, because she decided to go to the wolves instead of running away. Miyax is also tough and patient because she knows how to use the land to survive when she is all alone. She also cares for the animals and for her land. Example would be her taking her time to study the wolves in order to make friends with them and share food. I think what makes Miyax so different is how caring she is, because she stays with the wolves and does her best to protect them

Her father's name is Kapugen. He is described as rugged with gentle eyes. She admires her dad very much and thinks he is a great hunter. Her dad was the one she was closest to since her mom died when Miyax was four years old. She describes memories she had with her dad walking in the tundra, stories he shared about the wolves and what she needed to do if anything happened to him. She used the information her dad gave her to help survive in nature.

Amaroq is the leader of the wolf pack and the companion to Miyax. Amaroq is described as a regal black wolf. He was the largest of the wolves and Miyax thought he walked like her father with his head high and his chest out. Miyax believed he was the wise wolf because the pack starred at him like he was their leader. Amaroq is a great leader because he helps his pack to survive. He is also caring because he feeds and protects Miyax and kills one of the wolves that were taking Miyax's food.

The supporting characters are introduced at different times in the book and I mention them in the Plot Summary.

Plot Summary

The book is divided into three parts. Each part is titled after the important characters in the book. The first part tells us the beginning part of the present story. The story begins with a description of the Arctic sun as a yellow disk in a lime-green sky. The colors describe the time of day it is in the tundra. Miyax (Protagonist) is a young Eskimo girl who is alone and trying to survive life in the tundra. There are no other human characters in the first except for memories of her dad Kakugan. She is the hero of the story. She is a very tough person for being so young. She uses the memories she had with her dad on how to survive nature and living with the animals. Miyax loves nature and animals. She makes friends with a wolf pack and its leader Amaroq. The two other adult males are named Jello and Nails. The female is named Silver. There are five pups. Nails takes orders from Amaroq and stays close to Silver when Amaroq is not around. Jello is described as a loner and is the babysitter for the pups when the other adults were out. Jello can also be an antagonist because he destroys Miyax's home and takes her stuff. The leader of the five pups is Kapu. Even Jello takes orders from Kapu when Kapu nudges Jello's mouth so he can let go of meat he was holding so Miyax can eat. Miyax spends most of the time watching and trying to communicate with the wolves. She knows soon the wolves will leave and she will be on her own trying to find food. At the end of this part the wolves let Miyax feast on the remainder of the caribou that Amaroq had killed.

The second part of the book goes back in time when Miyax was younger. We learn about her mom dying and about new characters like Martha, (Miyax's aunt, Naka (Friend of Kapugen and future father-in-law to Miyax), Nissan (Miyax's future mother in law), and Pearl, (Miyax's friend). After Miyax's mother's death, Kapugen leaves everything behind and takes Miyax to a seal camp where they make good memories of walking the tundra and fishing. Miyax does not like the summer time in seal camp because the English speaking Eskimos would visit and call everyone there by their American name. When Miyax turned nine she was sent to live with her Aunt Martha until she was 13 and then could leave to marry Daniel if she did not like living with Martha. Miyax became Julie when she started to live with Martha. Later one her aunt told her that her dad had died. I think she was not telling the truth and wanted to keep Miyax with her because when Miyax later leaves to get married the Aunt complains about how she will not be able to do all the work by herself. Julie stops thinking of Kapugen and gets used to her new life in Mekoryuk. She learns English and Math and gets a job. She also cuts her hair into a bob and makes a pen pal with a girl named Amy who lives in San Francisco. She starts to learn about new things in Amy's letters like TV and blue jeans. When she turns 13 years old she is taken away to marry Daniel. She thought there was something wrong with Daniel because of his dull eyes and grin. The next day she is married to Daniel. She spent most of her time helping Nusan sew and saw Daniel very little. Then one day Daniel attacks her and after that Julie packed her stuff and left the home. She went to Pearl's to say goodbye and get some things she needed to survive for a week. She left and headed for the tundra. She wanted to go to San Francisco.

In Part 3 the story goes back to the present and Julie is now Miyax again living in the tundra. She gets back to her home and sees her house crushed, sleeping skins were torn and food laid out on grass was gone. She sees Jello and knew it was him that did all this. She knew it was time to leave. When she was camped one day Jello found her and took her pack and ran. She fell asleep wondering how she was going to survive without the stuff in her pack. When she wakes up she smells urine and she sees Jello's torn up body. The wolves had killed him because Jello had done something bad by taking food from a pup. Later on Amaroq gets killed by bounty hunters. The rest of the wolves stay until Miyax leaves. Before she leaves Miyax meets an Eskimo hunter named Roland with his wife Alice and their baby. She learns from Alice about some great hunter who had adopted Roland and his name was Kapugen. When Miyax realized it was her father she left and said goodbye to the wolves and went to see her dad. When she found her dad she saw he had married a pale faced woman with red/gold hair. Miyax also noticed things in the home like china dishes, coffee pot and a stove. Miyax could not believe that things had changed. When her father stepped away Miyax left. She

found her tent and pack and threw it on her back. She began to think about building snow houses in the winter and sod houses in the summer and how she would find a boy like her and they would have children. He pet bird then died and she buried it then took her shoes and pointed it toward Kapugen. I think this means she is going back to him.

Theme

I think the moral of this story is follow your heart and take chances, because when Miyax saw those wolves she was scared but she just followed her heart, took a chance and tried to communicate with them. Also when her husband was treating her bad she knew in her heart she had to run away no matter how cold it was out there.

Personal Response

My favorite part of the book is when Miyax sleeps with the wolves, because it shows how much she loves and trusts them. The most compelling literary element for me was characters, because you get to learn what their names are and how different each character acted. I would say this book would be for 6th grade and up, because as I said it had some sexual content and, the bounty hunters coming to kill the wolves.

And this was my book report on "Julie of the wolves" I hoped you enjoyed!

Marie Lu says

Amaroq! Kapu! My heart!!

Cathy says

This book won the Newbery award in 1973. It is really excellent and quite an amazing story! I thoroughly enjoyed it. Because my husband LOVES Alaska so much, he also read it. Well, I love Alaska too!! We would go back there in 2 split seconds if our children weren't here instead of there.

ALSO this book has been challenged often and can you guess why? Well, these are the ones I could find:

"socialist, communist, evolutionary, and anti-family themes; references to family alcoholism, abuse, and divorce; includes a rape scene"

And guess what? No matter how repellent and unthinkable alcoholism, abuse, and divorce are, THEY HAPPEN.
