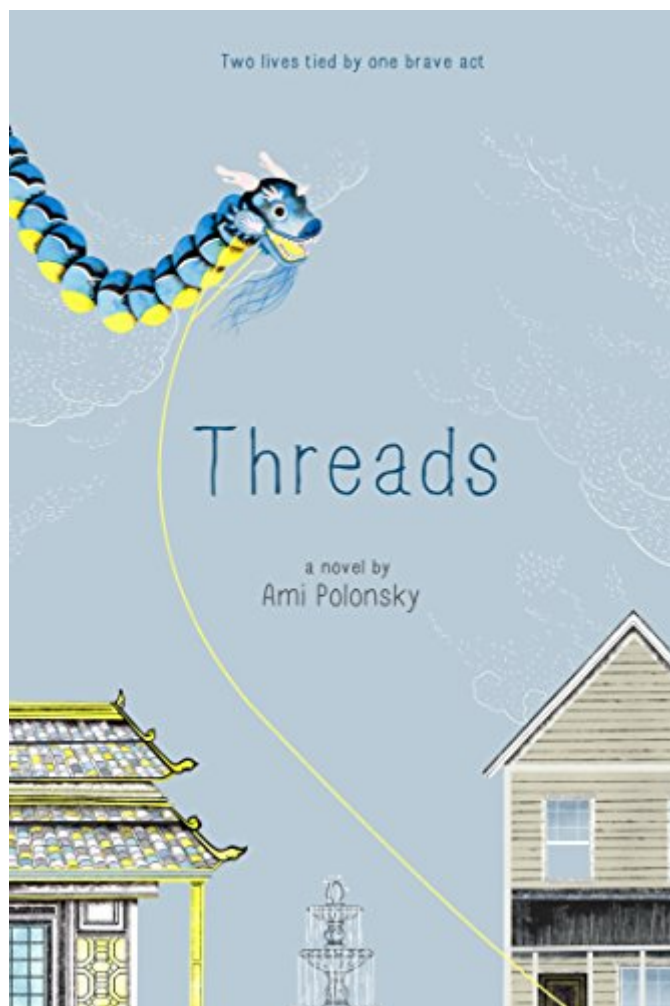


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# Threads



## Synopsis

To Whom It May Concern: Please, we need help! The day twelve-year-old Clara finds a desperate note in a purse in Bellman's department store, she is still reeling from the death of her adopted sister, Lola. By that day, thirteen-year-old Yuming has lost hope that the note she stashed in the purse will ever be found. She may be stuck sewing in the pale pink factory outside of Beijing forever. Clara grows more and more convinced that she was meant to find Yuming's note. Lola would have wanted her to do something about it. But how can Clara talk her parents, who are also in mourning, into going on a trip to China? Finally the time comes when Yuming weighs the options, measures the risk, and attempts a daring escape. The lives of two girls--one American, and one Chinese--intersect like two soaring kites in this story about loss, hope, and recovery.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is an emotionally resonant adventure story, a page-turning delight, with a social importance. The premise compelled me from the get-go. It is a superbly paced story with interesting tensions

within and between characters, and there is an emotional and physical urgency that compels the action throughout. Polonsky's visceral language allowed me to feel the characters' experiences deeply and guided me fluidly through landscapes both external and interior. As a former teacher, I see this book as an excellent choice for a classroom unit in a variety of disciplines, with many points of access for further investigation--child labor, grief, social action, courage, relationships, and the power of story. I was eager to share my enthusiasm for Polonsky's first book, *Gracefully Grayson*, and I feel that way yet again with *Threads*.

All my girls enjoy reading this book : )

*Threads* is brilliant!!!! Very captivating! A must read!

This book started out a little slow and at times it felt fragmented, but that might have been because *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* came out while I was reading it so I put it down for the two days it took me to finish that book. That being said I loved the way the author intertwined the two stories of the two girls. In this book, Clara is still in shock over her sister Lola. Lola has recently died, and so Clara has been withdrawing from everyone around her. That is until she finds a note asking for help from a girl in China who is stuck working in a factory. For once Clara feels connected to someone again, even if that person is all the way on a different continent. Clara feels that it is her destiny to help this girl and as she does everything that she can Yuming is also actively working to on her part to free herself too. This is a great book for coping with death and I really loved all the symbolism that came up in this book. It is a small book but it was slow reading. One thing that made me like the book and dislike it at the same time was the way that all the loose ends were not tied up. This I appreciate because it seems too clean when books tie up every single loose end, while at the same time because every other book does clean up the loose ends, it made me feel like I was missing something even though the book had ended. I would recommend this as a good book about coping with death.

We often get so caught up in our own problems that we forget to be grateful for what we do have. *Threads*, by Amy Polonsky, helps put things into perspective. Clara and Yuming's stories unfold in alternating chapters, highlighting the stark contrast and similarities the two girls share. While I enjoyed the juxtaposition, I did find the beginning of *Threads* to be a little slow. As I moved forward, the pace picked up

It's hard to tell whether it was by pacing or by a greater familiarity with the author's prose. Author Ami Polonsky (*Gracefully Grayson*) presents death and coping with grief in a way that makes sense and is easily accessible. A few elements seemed a bit too convenient, and the conclusion is perhaps a bit too tidy, but that wouldn't keep me from recommending *Threads*.

Literary empathy. That's how I see Ami Polonsky's work after reading *GRACEFULLY GRAYSON* and now, *THREADS*. Her books are warm, intimate, and filled with authentic voices that we too often choose to ignore. Books like hers and why I have faith that kids will grow up with the knowledge and feelings to be better than us. 5 huge, hopeful stars!

Ami Polonsky, the author of *Gracefully Grayson*, has written another lovely book, this time telling the story of two very different girls developing the strength and fortitude they need, while also gently exposing readers to the horrors of human trafficking (in this case, imprisoned child labor in a Beijing purse factory.). Inspiring, with a well-earned happier ending both for Yuming and for Clara. May we all learn to command our strength like these two do.

As a writer and reader, I didn't stop to think about why my heart and spirit were deeply engaged from page 1 of Ami Polonsky's *THREADS*, but I felt that I didn't want to stop reading - so after a few pages, I put the book aside for the weekend, when I huddled away and read it straight through. With a touch of magic from the coincidences of everyday life, the story pulls us into the lives of two girls from different worlds, both suffering losses and entrapments of the spiritual, emotional, physical (and more) kind, but journeying to freedom and growth with the resilient, determined, focused energy that defines each differently, yet binds them together. Polonsky's story moves quickly, with a gorgeous balance between internal and external conflicts, and lyrical language that keeps us safely reading as our hearts pound with increasing mystery and danger. When I finished *THREADS*, I realized it put me in mind of something I learned from Linda Sue Park's discussions of writing long ago, reflecting her own and others' perception of the characteristics of a wonderful story: "Right words, right order." That's how I feel about *THREADS*. Polonsky took a significant social justice issue and an issue of early loss of a sister, and entwined the two in perfect measure. The alternating points of view are handled beautifully, and we journey with both young girls through internal and external pain as they head (true to an important middle grade sensibility) toward a hopeful and

optimistic resolution. Well done!

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