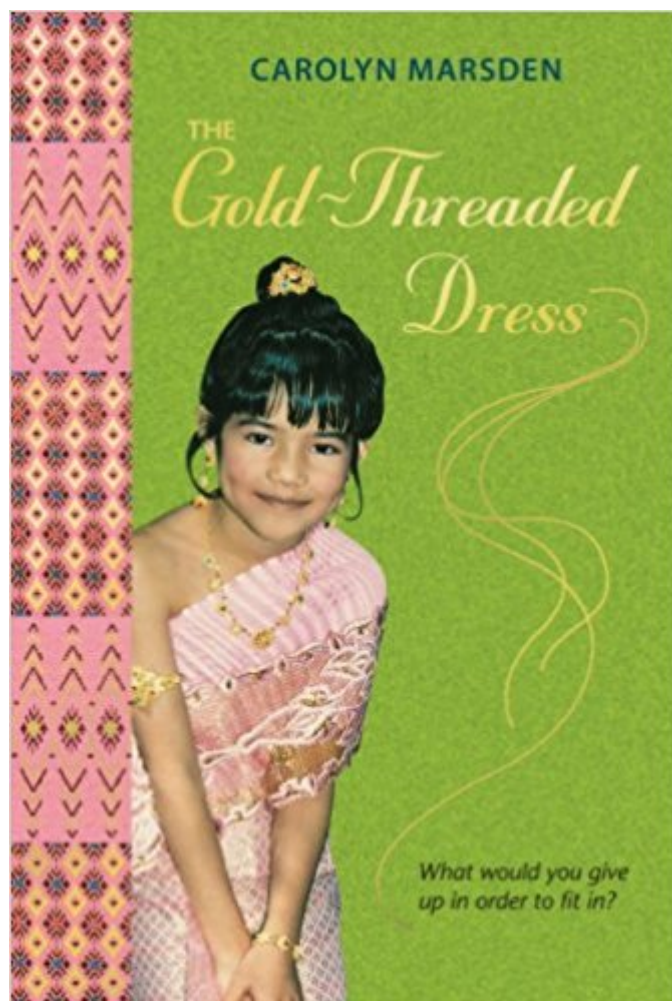


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# The Gold-Threaded Dress



## Synopsis

"A fine novel for early independent readers that conveys lots of information - about Thailand and making friends." - NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW  
In Thailand she was named Oy, but here in America the teachers call her Olivia. Other things are not so easy to change, however. When Oy draws a portrait of herself with brown hair and eyes as round as coins, her classmate Frankie makes fun of her and calls her Chinese. And the popular girl Liliandra barely speaks to her, until she learns that Oy has something very special: a Thai dancing dress from her grandmother, shimmering with pink silk and golden threads, that makes her look like a princess. Will Oy risk shaming her family to win Liliandra's approval - and be part of the club she has envied from afar? With compassion and rare insight, Carolyn Marsden tells a simple tale about a young girl who searches for acceptance in a complex culture, while learning to treasure all that she is.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 710L (What's this?)

Paperback: 80 pages

Publisher: Candlewick; Reprint edition (February 14, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0763629936

ISBN-13: 978-0763629939

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.3 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 22 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #363,118 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #159 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Asian & Asian American #185 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Moving #347 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Difficult Discussions > Prejudice & Racism

Age Range: 7 - 9 years

Grade Level: 2 - 4

## Customer Reviews

Zeroing in on a very specific situation, first-time author Marsden hits the issues of this age group squarely and truthfully. Fourth grader Oy, a Thai-American student new to a predominantly Mexican-American school, struggles to fit in with the popular clique of girls led by Liliandra. When Liliandra knocks into Oy and a picture of the heroine in a ceremonial Thai dress flutters from her

backpack, the trouble begins ("`Ooooooh, pretty,' said the girls following Liliandra. `Like a princess'"). The ringleader applies peer pressure until Oy agrees to smuggle the prized dress to school, in order to earn membership in Liliandra's club. Disaster results. Despite the brevity of the novel, Marsden plants details showing the importance of respect for position and education in Oy's home. So when the club initiation rite backfires, the consequences reach much further in Oy's mind than a reprimand at school. A touching friendship also develops with a boy who begins as a bully but softens when he sees Oy's predicament (it turns out he has some Asian heritage as well). The heroine's ultimate decision to take the high road results in a deeper understanding of her parents, including their shared experience as outsiders ("Remember, little daughter," her mother says, "The children are interested in this dress not because it makes them look the same, but because it makes them look different"). Ages 7-9. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grades 3-5--Fourth-grader Oy is the new girl in school. She wants to make friends, hold the pet hamster, and be invited into the in-crowd's clubhouse. She would really like Frankie to stop calling her Chinese, because she's Thai. When a photograph that shows her in ceremonial Thai dress falls on the ground, her classmates become obsessively enchanted with this vision of her. The leader of the clique, Liliandra, demands the dress as Oy's initiation fee to gain admittance into the clubhouse. An almost unbearable conflict ensues within her. The treasured garment from her grandmother symbolizes familiar tradition and fond memories, but her need for friends wins out. The girls carelessly grab at it and try pulling it on over their too-large bodies, and the delicate fabric is stretched and torn. When the teacher is drawn over by all the commotion, Oy is humiliated at being called the instigator of these antics. Crushed by the near destruction of her beautiful dress, she must now take home a note telling her mother of the awful event. This is a simple story about the painstaking effort of trying to fit in. It's a perfect choice to read with youngsters battling for friends, and caught within their own tangle of popularity. The Gold-Threaded Dress will have its place as a favorite for its natural voice and development of uncomfortable, yet familiar, predicaments. Alison Follos, North Country School, Lake Placid, NY Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The Gold-Threaded Dress is an important book as it describes the experience of many Thai descendants in the United States. Written from child's perspective, it shows positive and challenging, at times racist, interactions that happen when growing up in the USA. The reality

comes through sweetly and authentically in Marsden's writing, which is accessible and no-nonsense for readers. This book is one-of-a-kind and worth reading again and again.

Great!

Great story! Excellent resource! As a primary ESL teacher, I would highly recommend this audio books to others. The story itself engages both young and old listeners alike into this child's experiences at her new school. There are several "teachable moments" that you as an educator can use as a springboard for both primary and upper elementary student discussions. Please consider adding this book to your classroom library!

I bought this book for my 9 yr old daughter. She recently started reading some of Carolyn Marsden books. She likes her characters and storytelling. She also noted that she likes there is also some kind of life lesson.

Well written and subtly introduces a child to other cultures as well as to the acceptance of them. It's also an introduction to what appears on the surface is not necessarily what lies beneath.

My daughter loves this book, we got the audio book and she's listened to it over and over. I love the narrator, she has a beautiful way of telling the story!

I liked how Carolyn Marsden expressed Oy in the story! I would recommend this book to my friend Hannah! Love the story great job! :)

In an age of constant talk about bullying, the real lives of many of our children are being missed. There's a fine line between bullying and the general peer pressure that kids feel everyday. The Gold-Threaded Dress illustrates a very real-life situation in the lives of a group of fourth graders. Oy is new to both her school and this country. Her fourth-grade teacher finds her name difficult and foreign to pronounce and nicknames her "Olivia." Oy also endures some teasing from another immigrant boy in her classroom, Frankie. As if that wasn't enough, Oy is having trouble making friends with the other girls in her class. Rather suddenly, one of the girls offers to let admit her to their club. They have found that Oy possesses something they'd like to have access to: the ceremonial dress of the title. Now Oy must make a decision. She knows that the dress has no place

at school but she wants so desperately to fit in. How Oy resolves this dilemma makes for an entertaining and illustrative read. This is real-life grade school drama played out on each page. Girls will gravitate to this book more than boys, given the concept of a dress having the "cool factor" and the female protagonist, but it is a worthwhile read for all children. This book also makes a wonderful classroom read-aloud as it offers much fodder for discussion between children and adults. This is a recommended read at our library for ages 9 and up but I also encourage parents to read it (it's short) so that they can discuss with their young reader the issues with which Oy, Frankie and their classmates struggle.

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