

Caroline Finding Miss Lilly

Sherry Wetherington

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Caroline Finding Miss Lilly is an artfully crafted, family-friendly read that showcases the goodness in all people.

Sherry Wetherington's adorable picture book *Caroline Finding Miss Lilly* is filled with colorful illustrations and a heartwarming theme.

Young Caroline's best friend is a cow named Miss Lilly. When a rough storm strikes their farm, Miss Lilly wanders off, and Caroline and her mother go on a hunt to find her.

The story is short and accessible. It features many Christian themes and symbols, including prayer, the cross hanging on the wall of Caroline's room, and a rainbow. These motifs don't overpower the story, if they do disrupt its secular elements.

Characters are sweet and relatable. Caroline's eager desire to find her lost friend is sympathetic, and her neighbors—though they are not individually fleshed out—are helpful, contributing to a friendly tone. The story offers a hopeful message about the beauty that comes when people show kindness, and presents people's true nature as inherently good.

A few elements are inconsistent or disjointed. Miss Lilly becomes all the colors of the rainbow after the storm, but there's no explanation for this change. After one of the characters finds Miss Lilly, his hair turns gray—an odd, contradictory development, especially after Miss Lilly is shown as a "rainbow-colored" creature that brings color to those who offer her kindness. A reference to Miss Lilly finding her pot of gold at the end of the rainbow also feels random compared to the rest of the story.

Illustrations are vibrant, colorful, and detailed. Characters are uniquely drawn and appealing. The text can be harsh on the eyes, particularly on pages with multiple, heavy paragraph blocks. The typeface is cute, though placing it against a blue background seems an odd choice. The front cover conveys a different tone than the rest of the book.

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TIA SMITH (June 26, 2018)

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