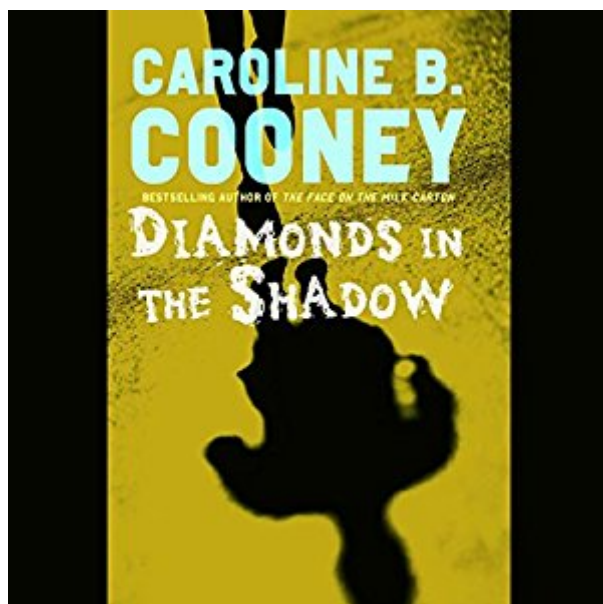


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Diamonds In The Shadow



Synopsis

THE FINCH FAMILY did not know that five refugees landed from Africa on the day they went to the airport to welcome the family sponsored by their church. The Finch family only knew about the four refugees they were meeting - Andre, Celestine, Mattu, and Alake - mother, father, teenage son and daughter. Soon Jared realizes that the good guys are not always innocent, and he must make a decision that could change the fate of both families. This story presents many points of view and a fresh perspective on doing the right thing. From the Hardcover edition. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Diamonds in the Shadow begins in a church committee meeting that Jared Finch-much to his surprise-is requested to attend. The church has sponsored a refugee African family of four, and their planned accommodation has fallen through. The Finch family has volunteered to house them for several weeks, much to Jared's disgust. As far as he is concerned, he hasn't signed up to anything, and it is his bedroom, as well as that of his sister Mopsy's, that is being volunteered. The family eventually arrives. A disgruntled Jared does his best to overcome his unwillingness. His mother and sister are filled with boundless and cringe-inducing enthusiasm. His father, already bogged down in the implications of a church financial scandal involving a close friend, is completely detached. And this is one bizarre refugee family. Independently of each other, both Jared and Mopsy begin to realize that something very strange is going on under the surface. The behaviour of the Amabo

family members towards each other does not make sense, and clearly, the entire family is absolutely terrified of something, or someone. This knowledge draws Jared and Mopsy together, and begins to make them both curious and protective towards the children, Mattu and Alake. Surprise after surprise awaits them as the dark secrets of this unusual family begin to be uncovered. This is a wonderful read, full of sparkling humor, top class teenage 'attitude,' and gripping suspense. It is a book that can be enjoyed by both teenage and adult readers alike. Armchair Interviews says: This book will make you laugh, and you won't want to put it down.

I've been a fan of Caroline B. Cooney ever since reading *The Face on the Milk Carton* years ago. That being said, I was thrilled when I saw she has a new book, *DIAMONDS IN THE SHADOW*. True to her contemporary style, Cooney brings in a current events issue - the unexplainable violence taking place in some areas of Africa today. This new book focuses on a group of African refugees coming to the United States to begin living safer and more enriching lives. Four of the refugees - a father, mother, and two teenage children - are welcomed at the airport by the Finch family. The family's church is sponsoring the refugees and will provide them with a place to live and help in adjusting to life in America. The fifth refugee is met at the airport in New York, but is headed for a new life in Texas. Not everyone is happy about the new living arrangements. The Amabo family was originally supposed to have their own apartment with the church volunteers helping out as needed. However, an apartment was not available, so they are moving in with the Finches. High school student, Jared Finch, is not at all pleased with this change in plans. His mother may be all excited about teaching this new family the ways of America, but sharing a room was not part of the arrangement. Celestine Amabo is anxious to start learning about her new surroundings. She is a quick study as Mrs. Finch takes her shopping and teaches her about cooking and cleaning. Andre Amabo's adjustment is hampered by the fact that the uncontrolled violence in Africa resulted in the loss of both of his hands. Instead of learning to work, he is spending time visiting doctors who hope to create at least one artificial hand, enabling him to help in the support of his family. Jared and Martha (Mopsy) Finch take on the task of helping the two African teenagers deal with school and their new American lives. Mattu adjusts quickly, but Alake doesn't seem to see or hear anything that goes on around her. Jared Finch is suspicious about these strangers right from the start. He doesn't believe they are really family. There doesn't seem to be an emotional or loving connection between any of them. While the Finch family is working hard to adjust to their new guests, the fifth refugee is in Texas trying to find out where the Amabos are living. It appears that someone in the refugee "family" has something valuable that belongs to him. Is he looking for something related to two

mysterious boxes supposedly containing the cremated remains of Mattu's grandparents? Can he find them and will everyone be in danger when he does? Caroline B. Cooney succeeds once again with a YA novel filled with suspense and action. Adding the current event topic of the African refugee situation, along with the struggle of Americans to understand and help those in need, creates much to think about in DIAMONDS IN THE SHADOW. Reviewed by: Sally Kruger, aka "Readingjunky"

When the apartment that the Amabo family was to stay in falls through - Jared is forced to share his bedroom with Mutto - their teenage son. He is not very happy about this - not happy at all. Mopsy, Jared's younger sister, is overjoyed at the fact that their teenage daughter Alake will be bunking with her. The Amabo family are refugees from Africa. They have received passage to the states and are being sponsored by Jared's church. They will help to give them training and find jobs - but there is trouble from the start. The biggest being that the fifth refugee on the plane doesn't like not being in control. Then Andre Amabo, the father, has had his hands chopped off during the war in Africa - one at the wrist, the other at the elbow. Alake doesn't speak - and doesn't appear to hear either. She has to be prodded to even eat. And what is up with Mattu and the two cardboard boxes that contain the ashes of his grandparents? Jarod doesn't believe in the same God that his parents do, and that the Amabo's seem to also. He feels praying is a waste of time. But while the Amabo's are staying with them, his reality begins to change. He finds that doing things for other people really isn't that much trouble. He discovers that his younger sister isn't so annoying, but has great insight and can even be trusted. And he discovers what secrets the ashes of Mattu's grandparents contain. What he does with that information will decide the fate of both families - but will he make the right choice? This would be a great book for middle schoolers and maybe early high school. It is well written, but seems a little simplistic for older than that. I would not recommend it for younger than middle school because of some of the violence that it describes. People are not who or what you expect in this book - and that helped to make it a quite a page turner. I was able to read it in just two sittings.

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