

Kira-Kira

By Cynthia Kadohata

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kira-kira (kee ra kee ra): glittering; shining Glittering. That's how Katie Takeshima's sister, Lynn, makes everything seem. The sky is *kira-kira* because its color is deep but see-through at the same time. The sea is *kira-kira* for the same reason. And so are people's eyes. When Katie and her family move from a Japanese community in Iowa to the Deep South of Georgia, it's Lynn who explains to her why people stop on the street to stare. And it's Lynn who, with her special way of viewing the world, teaches Katie to look beyond tomorrow. But when Lynn becomes desperately ill, and the whole family begins to fall apart, it is up to Katie to find a way to remind them all that there is always something glittering -- *kira-kira* -- in the future.

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Kira-Kira By Cynthia Kadohata Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
In Cynthia Kadohata's lively, lovely, funny and sad novel -- winner of the 2005 Newbery Medal -- the Japanese-American Takeshima family moves from Iowa to Georgia in the 1950s when Katie, the narrator, is just in kindergarten. Though her parents endure grueling conditions and impossible hours in the non-unionized poultry plant and hatchery where they work, they somehow manage to create a loving, stable home for their three children: Lynn, Katie, and Sammy. Katie's trust in, and admiration for, her older sister Lynn never falters, even when her sisterly advice doesn't seem to make sense. Lynn teaches her about everything from how the sky, the ocean, and people's eyes are special to the injustice of racial prejudice. The two girls dream of buying a house for the family someday and even save $100 in candy money: "Our other favorite book was *Silas Marner*. We were quite capitalistic and liked the idea of Silas keeping all that gold underneath the floorboards." When Lynn develops lymphoma, it's heartbreaking, but through the course of her worsening illness, Katie does her best to remember Lynn's "*kira-kira*" (glittery, shining) outlook on life. Small moments shine the brightest in this poignant story; told beautifully and lyrically in Katie's fresh, honest voice. (Ages 11 to 14) --*Karin Snelson*

From School Library Journal
Grade 6-8--Katie's first word is "*kira-kira*," the Japanese word for "glittering," and she uses it to describe everything she likes. It was taught to her by her older sister, Lynn, whom Katie worships. Both girls have trouble adjusting when their parents move the family from Iowa to a small town in rural Georgia, where they are among only 31 Japanese-Americans. They seldom see their parents, who have grueling jobs in chicken-processing plants. Then Lynn becomes deathly ill, and Katie is often left to care for her, a difficult and emotionally devastating job. When her sister dies of lymphoma, Katie searches for ways to live up to her legacy and to fulfill the dreams she never had a chance to attain. Told from Katie's point of view and set in the 1950s, this beautifully written story tells of a girl struggling to find her own way in a family torn by illness and horrendous work conditions. Katie's parents can barely afford to pay their daughter's medical bills, yet they refuse to join the growing movement to unionize until after Lynn's death. All of the characters are believable and well developed, especially Katie, who acts as a careful observer of everything that happens in her family, even though there is a lot she doesn't understand. Especially heartbreaking are the weeks leading up to Lynn's death, when Katie is exhausted and frustrated by the demands of her sister's illness, yet willing to do anything to make her happy. Girls will relate to and empathize with the appealing protagonist.--*Ashley Larsen, Woodside Library, CA*
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From Booklist
Starred Review Gr. 6-12. Katie Takeshima worships her older sister, Lynn, who knows everything and takes care of Katie while their parents are working long hours in their small Georgia town in the late 1950s. It's Lynn who shows Katie the glittering beauty *(kira-kira)* of the stars and who prepares Katie for the prejudice she will encounter as one of the few Japanese American kids in their school. But when Katie is 10, Lynn, 14, falls ill, and everything changes. Slowly the roles are reversed; Katie becomes caregiver and does what Lynn has taught her. There's no surprise. It's clear that Lynn will die, and Katie goes through all the stages of grief. The real story is in the small details, never self-consciously "poetic" but tense with family drama. In her first novel for young people, Kadohata stays true to the child's viewpoint in plain, beautiful prose that can barely contain the passionate feelings. Just as heart wrenching as the sisters' story is what Katie knows of her father's struggle, whether it's his backbreaking work in the factory or his love for his family. The quiet words will speak to readers who have lost someone they love--or fear that they could.

Hazel Rochman
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mohammed Thomas:

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Francine Nott:

Hey guys, do you would like to finds a new book to read? May be the book with the headline Kira-Kira suitable to you? The particular book was written by popular writer in this era. The particular book untitled Kira-Kirais the one of several books in which everyone read now. That book was inspired many people in the world. When you read this book you will enter the new age that you ever know ahead of. The author explained their plan in the simple way, consequently all of people can easily to recognise the core of this e-book. This book will give you a great deal of information about this world now. In order to see the represented of the world on this book.

Joy Hutchinson:

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William White:

A number of people said that they feel weary when they reading a book. They are directly felt it when they get a half portions of the book. You can choose the actual book Kira-Kira to make your personal reading is interesting. Your current skill of reading skill is developing when you like reading. Try to choose basic book to make you enjoy to learn it and mingle the idea about book and looking at especially. It is to be initially opinion for you to like to available a book and read it. Beside that the guide Kira-Kira can to be your friend when you're experience alone and confuse with what must you're doing of the time.

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