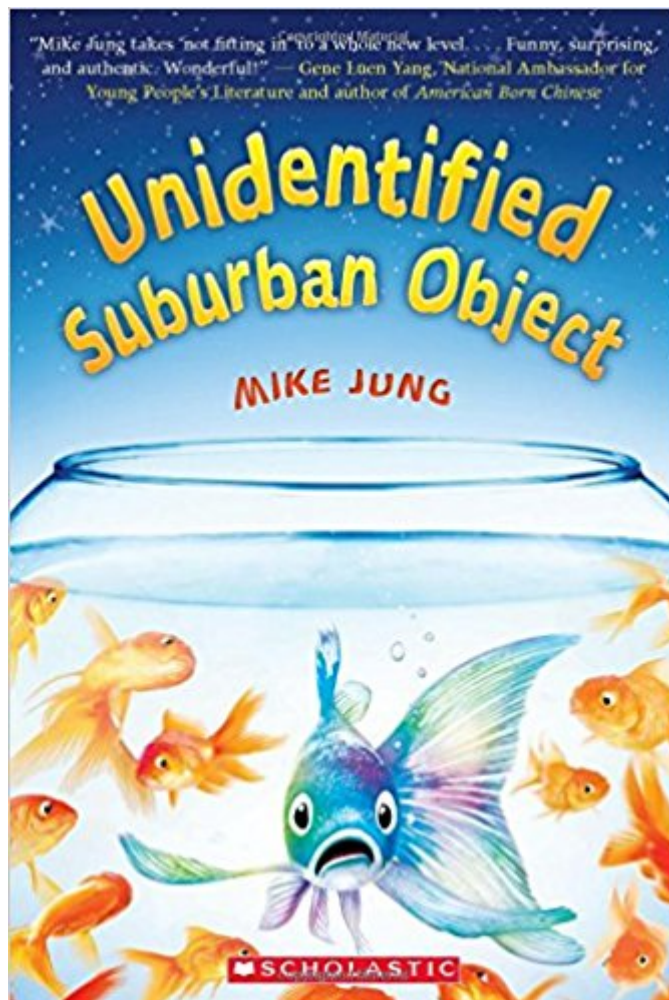




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Unidentified Suburban Object



Synopsis

The next person who compares Chloe Cho with famous violinist Abigail Yang is going to HEAR it. Chloe has just about had it with people not knowing the difference between someone who's Chinese, Japanese, or Korean. She's had it with people thinking that everything she does well -- getting good grades, winning first chair in the orchestra, et CETERA -- are because she's ASIAN. Of course, her own parents don't want to have anything to DO with their Korean background. Any time Chloe asks them a question they change the subject. They seem perfectly happy to be the only Asian family in town. It's only when Chloe's with her best friend, Shelly, that she doesn't feel like a total alien. Then a new teacher comes to town: Ms. Lee. She's Korean American, and for the first time Chloe has a person to talk to who seems to understand completely. For Ms. Lee's class, Chloe finally gets to explore her family history. But what she unearths is light-years away from what she expected.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 4-6-Chloe Cho is curious about her cultural heritage. Her parents were born in Korea but never speak of their time or families there, no matter how often Chloe asks. The only Asian American in her school, Chloe is excited when her new history teacher is also Korean, but alarmed to learn of an assignment where she needs to interview her parents to share a family story. She is finally able to

convince her father to tell her one but receives an F on the assignment and is accused of plagiarism. When Chloe confronts her father, showing him a website that retells the account he claimed happened to his uncle, he must finally tell her the truth. A game-changing family secret is revealed that alters Chloe's perception of herself and the genre of the novel. Jung spends a lot of time hammering home how unwilling Chloe's parents are to speak of their past, making their secret a very welcome and original surprise and giving the novel some needed energy. Chloe's response to her parents' news ripples into every corner of her life. Furious she's been lied to, she rebels against not only her parents but her friends and teachers as well. While Chloe herself is a gifted student, the book has enough twists and humor to broaden the audience to include reluctant readers. VERDICT Part realistic fiction and part fantasy, this novel takes a hilariously unpredictable turn that will stun and ignite readers. --Juliet Morefield, Multnomah County Library, OR

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Praise for Unidentified Suburban Object:"In Unidentified Suburban Object, Mike Jung takes 'not fitting in' to a whole new level. Chloe, her friends, and her family are funny, surprising, and authentic. Wonderful!" -- Gene Luen Yang, National Ambassador for Young People's Literature and author of American Born Chinese"How much do I love this book? Unidentified Suburban Object is a wonderfully heartwarming and seriously funny tale about a Korean girl who has always felt alien... only to discover [REDACTED].* Mike Jung has a talent for writing books that I wish I had written instead. Curse you, Mike Jung!!!!" -- Ellen Oh, founder of #WeNeedDiverseBooks and author of The Prophecy series"Wow! Important and thought-provoking ideas wrapped in a funny and surprising story -- with a crackerjack ending!" -- Linda Sue Park, New York Times

–â œbestselling author of A Long Walk to Water"For any kid who ever felt like they were all alone in the universe. Hilariously original!" -- Jennifer L. Holm, New York Times

–â œbestselling author of The Fourteenth Goldfish"With clever snark and easy humor, Mike Jung... manages to infuse thought-provoking statements about identity, race and living life as the only and 'other' -- or, as Chloe proudly insists, 'waving my freak flag solo.' Go, Chloe, go!" -- Terry Hong, Shelf Awareness"Jung excels at showing how racial insensitivity can isolate even a student who is doing everything she can to fit in... It's easy to imagine Chloe's story starting conversations about how seemingly innocent remarks can make a minority student feel like an alien in the only home she's ever known." -- Publishers Weekly"Chloe

–â œs lively, agreeable voice makes her a spokesperson for every kid who has ever felt like an outsider... A slam-dunk choice." -- Booklist"A

powerful message... A good choice to add diversity to the shelves." -- Kirkus Reviews "A very welcome and original surprise... This novel takes a hilariously unpredictable turn that will stun and ignite readers." -- School Library Journal "Are you kidding? We're not giving this away! You have to read the book!"

Mike Jung captures beautifully the emotional and social experience of Chloe. How most adults are evasive, how much they miss the point, and also the beauty of really being seen by an adult who gets it. I recommend it for adults as well as kids - adults need a reminder to pick the right team. The love between father and daughter was a favorite part of this book, too. Very sweet.

I loved this wonderful, ambitious book full of heart (and with a huge twist that somehow doesn't sidetrack the story.) A great middle grade novel about identity, family secrets, fitting in, standing out, friendship, feeling alien, and so much more. Along the way, we touch on amazing topics like whitewashing in science fiction and several others, but that never gets in the way of the wonderful story. 5 stars and 5 flying saucers for being out-of-this-world great.

Jung's book is a page-turner for any kid on the 'who am I' journey of self-discovery, or for kids who are working through relationships with friends. There are passages about racism that children of color will, either silently or with great enthusiasm, respond to as rare depictions of the racism they experience and how it feels. Those passages work beautifully, too, for children who don't have those experiences but may have seen them (or said them) but didn't realize how racist or insensitive the remarks are. As many are noting in their reviews, there's an unexpected twist in the story that complicates the identity questions in the first part of the book. It is a tough one to pull off, but it worked for me because Jung has the chops to deliver it in a believable way. I've read it once and definitely plan to re-read it and encourage others to buy/read it, too.

This is, yes, a story of a fish out of water, so to speak. The non-spoiler version is that Chloe is feeling as though she is all alone in an otherwise all white town, in some non-description fly-over state. What she doesn't realize is how important friendship is. There is more to the story than that, of course, but the feeling of being alien is a common theme in middle-school and YA books, and this book took a different spin on it. In the end, I was ok with that spin, but I think it could have gone a different way. However, since I am not the author, it doesn't really matter how I would have handled it.

A wonderful novel for middle grade readers. The main character and narrator is a middle school girl, the only Asian in a small town. She is both prickly and loveable as she makes her way through friend problems, parent puzzles, and surprising events. I really enjoyed reading Unidentified Suburban Object and have recommended it to my students.

I really loved this take on identity and belonging. It was well written and funny, and the twist in the middle, though not I guess to everyone's taste, elevated this to four stars for me. If I taught middle school, I'd absolutely include it in the curriculum. Good stuff!

This book is very witty and one that is difficult to put down. It is a strong force against any kind of discrimination. The protagonist Chloe is a dream!

So good. For anyone

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