



In Search of Mockingbird

By Loretta Ellsworth

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A runaway seeks Harper Lee for answers

Sometimes the things that need to be discovered aren't so easily found at home. Erin is certain that this is true in her case. A book is all that connects Erin to her mother, who died when she was a baby. But how much can Erin really learn about her mother from a tattered copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird*? On the eve of her sixteenth birthday, Erin decides it's finally time to find out. And so begins her bus journey from Minnesota to Alabama in search of Harper Lee, the reclusive author of Mockingbird.

In a novel full of quirky characters, strange coincidences, and on-the-road adventures, Loretta Ellsworth deftly traces a unique voyage of self-discovery.

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In Search of Mockingbird By Loretta Ellsworth Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 7–10—It's 1986 in St. Paul, MN, and Erin is about to turn 16 when her father announces that he's marrying his girlfriend. Her brothers are thrilled, but what the teen really wants is for her dad to talk about her mother, who died when she was a baby, and whose dog-eared copy of *To Kill a Mockingbird* has inspired the girl to become a writer. When her dad surprises her with her mother's diary, Erin learns that she, too, had wanted to be a writer. Angry that her father kept the diary from her until now and feeling out of place in her evolving family, she makes the sudden decision to take a one-way bus trip to Monroeville, AL, to talk to Harper Lee. This is a slender book, interesting in its journal-styled layout but short on character, background, and plot development. While there are some moments of identifiable teen emotion, Erin and her father are as one-dimensional as the helpful characters the teen meets on her trip. Readers who haven't read *Mockingbird* will wonder what the fuss is about, and those who have may feel that Ellsworth's book doesn't quite do it justice. Occasional '80s details add some nostalgic flair, but the choice of this period seems wholly unnecessary. Ultimately, this book fails to draw readers into real emotional connection to Erin or her rather superficial journey. The happy ending, in which she has a chance run-in with the author in a diner and makes up with her father, is pleasant enough, but predictable. A thin read that falls short of a promising premise.—*Riva Pollard, The Winsor School Library, Boston*

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From Booklist

Reeling from her dad's announcement that he is engaged, Erin decides to run away from St. Paul, Minnesota. Her plan? To search for Harper Lee, who was her late mother's favorite author. Erin won't be 16 until the next day, so her escape vehicle is a Greyhound bus headed south to Monroeville, Alabama, Harper Lee's hometown. In this light, contemporary quest story, set in 1986, Ellsworth paints a portrait of an unhappy yet talented teenager caught in a male-dominated family. Erin meets a variety of interesting characters along her journey, including large, redhead, twenty-something Epp Gobarth, who listens and, out of concern, joins her on her mission. Ellsworth's story shows just how easily poor communication with adults can sidetrack and endanger teens, and how clear talk and caring can rescue them. Suggest this as a follow-up to Lee's classic novel. *Frances Bradburn*

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Review

Praise for Loretta Ellsworth's *The Shrouding Woman*:

ALA Amelia Bloomer Feminist Book for Youth
2005 Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award Master List
CCBC Choices 2003

“[This book] gently breaks new ground for children in removing some of the mystery from what some view as our last remaining obscenity, death. An important offering from a very talented newcomer.” —*School Library Journal*

“[An] intriguing topic, responsible period research, and skillful thematic development make this an accessible and unthreatening introduction to a neglected area of women's history.” —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Pam Wright:

Book is written, printed, or created for everything. You can know everything you want by a reserve. Book has a different type. We all know that that book is important issue to bring us around the world. Close to that you can your reading talent was fluently. A publication In Search of Mockingbird will make you to end up being smarter. You can feel more confidence if you can know about every thing. But some of you think that will open or reading a book make you bored. It isn't make you fun. Why they are often thought like that? Have you seeking best book or acceptable book with you?

Neil Myers:

The book In Search of Mockingbird has a lot details on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of help. The book was authored by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research just before write this book. That book very easy to read you can get the point easily after reading this book.

Edward Avelar:

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Timothy Reed:

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