



Pigs in Heaven: A Novel

By Barbara Kingsolver

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Picking up where her modern classic *The Bean Trees* left off, Barbara Kingsolver's bestselling *Pigs in Heaven* continues the tale of Turtle and Taylor Greer, a Native American girl and her adoptive mother who have settled in Tucson, Arizona, as they both try to overcome their difficult pasts.

Taking place three years after *The Bean Trees*, Taylor is now dating a musician named Jax and has officially adopted Turtle. But when a lawyer for the Cherokee Nation begins to investigate the adoption—their new life together begins to crumble.

Depicting the clash between fierce family love and tribal law, poverty and means, abandonment and belonging, *Pigs in Heaven* is a morally wrenching, gently humorous work of fiction that speaks equally to the head and the heart.

This edition includes a P.S. section with additional insights from Barbara Kingsolver, background material, suggestions for further reading, and more.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Taylor Greer and her adopted Cherokee daughter Turtle, first met in *The Bean Trees*, will captivate readers anew in Kingsolver's assured and eloquent sequel, which mixes wit, wisdom and the expert skills of a born raconteur into a powerfully affecting narrative. Now six years old and still bearing psychological marks of the abuse that occurred before she was rescued by Taylor, Turtle is discovered by formidable Indian lawyer Annawake Fourkiller, who insists that the child be returned to the Cherokee Nation. Taylor reacts by fleeing her Tucson home with Turtle to begin a precarious existence on the road; skirting the edge of poverty and despair, she eventually realizes that Turtle has become emotionally unmoored. In taking a fresh look at the Solomonic dilemma of choosing between two equally valid claims on a child's life, Kingsolver achieves the admirable feat of making the reader understand and sympathize with both sides of the controversy, as she contrasts Taylor's inalterable mother's love with Annawake's determination to save Turtle from the stigmatization she can expect from white society. The chronicle acquires depth and humor when Kingsolver integrates the story of Taylor's mother Alice, a woman who believes that the Greers are "doomed to be a family with no men in it" (that she is proven wrong adds a delicious element of romance to the story). Alice's resolve to help her daughter takes her into the heart of the Cherokee Nation and results in an astonishing but credible meshing of lives. In the end, both justice and compassion are served. Kingsolver's intelligent consideration of issues of family and culture--both in her evocation of Native American society and in her depiction of the plight of a single mother--brims with insight and empathy. Every page of this beautifully controlled narrative offers prose shimmering with imagery and honed to simple lyric intensity. In short, the delights of superior fiction can be experienced here. 100,000 first printing; \$125,000 ad/promo; BOMC alternate; author tour.

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From School Library Journal

YA--When a young Cherokee tribal lawyer comes to the door to claim Taylor's illegally adopted Indian daughter, the white woman must face the fact that her stable life is about to be torn apart. The story follows her and six-year-old Turtle across the West as they flee from the threat of separation and exist on minimum-wage earnings. Meanwhile, Taylor's mother, Alice, leaves her second husband and goes to stay with her cousin in Heaven, Oklahoma. There she meets Cash, a full-blooded Cherokee, who has been living outside the reservation, but yearns to return to his roots. The richness of Indian tribal life is seen through the eyes of Cash, Alice, and Annawake Fourkiller, the lawyer. There are some wonderful scenes revealing Cherokee customs and lifestyles. The stories of the different characters are woven together with humor and sensitivity. When Taylor and Turtle come to the reservation to face their future, readers will feel the adoptive mother's helplessness as she admits that she, too, might have let the child down. The characters are ordinary, yet noble and memorable, and the ending is just and gratifying. The issue of Indian children being adopted outside the tribe is addressed with respect from all sides.

Penny Stevens, Fairfax County Public Library, VA

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From Library Journal

It takes an insightful writer like Kingsolver (*Animal Dreams*, LJ 8/1/90) to tackle the complicated, emotional issue of dysfunctional families, but she does it well (again), making this development of characters first introduced in *The Bean Trees* (LJ 2/1/88) as enjoyable to read as its predecessor--and better. Taylor Greer and her kindergarten-aged adopted daughter, Turtle, unwittingly place themselves at the center of a controversy involving Turtle's Native American heritage. Their love for each other--an unspoken,

unquestioning bond--helps them cope with family, friends, and lovers as they try to tie the loose ends of their lives into a strong, tidy knot. Maybe this novel will help readers understand the meaning of life or simply provide them with some good entertainment. But as Kingsolver brilliantly reveals from the first pages of this novel, the answers to our questions aren't delivered easily but must come from the heart. Recommended for all general collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 2/15/93.

- *Marlene McCormack-Lee, Reedsport Branch Lib., Ore.*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ruth Barnett:

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Walter Crouse:

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Hye Elliott:

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Gary Roth:

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