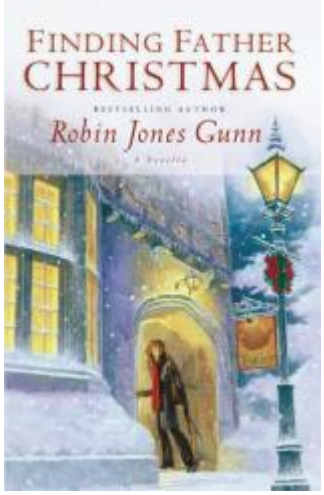
Finding Father Christmas

by Robin Jones Gunn



About the Book

Miranda Carson's desperate search for her father takes a turn she never expected when she finds herself in London a few days before Christmas with only a few feeble clues to who her father might be. Unexpectedly welcomed into a family that doesn't recognize her, and whom she's quickly coming to love, Miranda faces a terrible decision. Should she reveal her true identity and destroy their idyllic image of her father?

Or should she carry the truth home with her to San Francisco and remain alone in this world? Whatever choice she makes during this London Christmas will forever change the future for both herself and the family she can't bear to leave. Robin Jones Gunn brilliantly combines lyrical writing and unforgettable characters to craft a story of longing and belonging that will stay with readers long after they close the pages of this book.

Discussion Guide

1. Do you know any women like Miranda who grew up without a father? How have these women filled the empty space in their lives?

2. What do you think of Miranda's decision to go searching for her birth father?

3. How did Doralee's spiritual experience affect Miranda in the long run?

4. Why do you think Miranda preferred to think of herself as an accident of nature rather than someone created by God?

5. Miranda liked accounting because the numbers could be "counted on" to always act in certain ways. What or who do you rely on to be stable when the rest of life seems to be on shifting sand?

6. How would you feel if you found yourself depending on the kindness of strangers at Christmastime?

7. What roles did the image of Father Christmas play in the book? In what ways was this "character" like God? In what ways was Father Christmas different from God?

8. Read Genesis 21:8-21. Ishmael was the son of a slave and of the slave's owner, Abraham. Early in life Ishmael was separated from his father and raised by his mother. How do you think Ishmael felt about his father as Ishmael grew up? What do you think Hagar told her son about his father? Do you think she portrayed Abraham sympathetically or unkindly? What does this story tell us about fathers and mothers? What does it tell us about God as our heavenly father?

9. Was there ever a time you felt your parents withheld important information from you, including possibly leading you to believe in Santa? How did you feel about your parents when you found out the truth?

10. Miranda was concerned that God might be like a one-eyed dragon on the other end of the swimming pool. Can you recount a time you thought of God as potentially dangerous? Did you, like Miranda, run away, or did you respond differently?

11. How did God win Miranda's heart? What does this tell us about him?

12. Can you recall a time someone beckoned you, like Christmas Present called to Miranda, "Come in, and know me better"? How did that make you feel?

13. What do you think of the way Miranda told the Whitcombes about her possible relationship to them? Do you think she handled the situation fairly for all involved?

14. What does the last paragraph of the book tells us has occurred in Miranda spiritually and emotionally?

15. Identify a time when you felt you were experiencing Christmas after a long winter in your life. How did that make you feel about God?

Author Bio

Robin Jones Gunn is the bestselling and award-winning author of more than 70 books, with over four million copies of her titles sold worldwide. Best known among them are the *Christy Miller*, *Sierra Jensen* and *Christy and Todd: College Years* teen series. A Christy Award winner and a two-time finalist for excellence in fiction, Robin has also been a Gold Medallion finalist. She and her husband have a grown son and daughter and live in Hawaii.

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