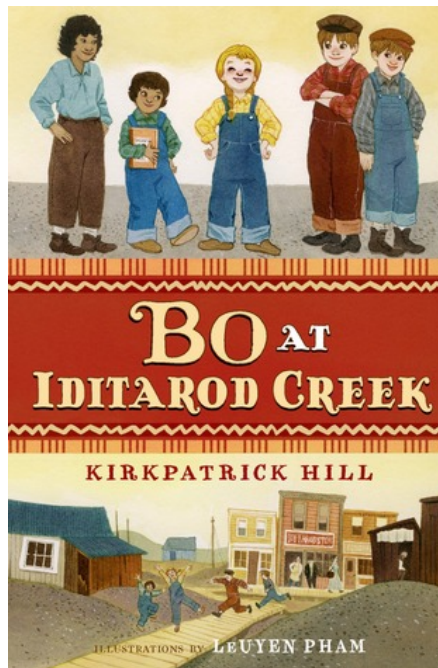




Bo at Iditarod Creek

Kirkpatrick Hill , LeUyen Pham (Illustrations)

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Ever since five-year-old Bo can remember, she and her papas have lived in the little Alaskan mining town of Ballard Creek. Now the family must move upriver to Iditarod Creek for work at a new mine, and Bo is losing the only home she's ever known. Initially homesick, she soon realizes that there is warmth and friendship to be found everywhere . . . and what's more, her new town may hold an unexpected addition to her already unconventional family.

Bo at Iditarod Creek Details

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Author : Kirkpatrick Hill , LeUyen Pham (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Bo at Iditarod Creek for online ebook

Kirsten Murphy says

Connections: Alaska, gold rush, mining, families

Sequel to Bo at Ballard Creek

Autumn says

If you had asked me 10 years ago if there would ever be a kids' book about two gold-mining bears who adopt a bunch of kids that is also extremely cool about native Alaskans, people who can't read and why you shouldn't say the n-word (but you might hear it around), I would have been like I DOUBT IT. But, here it is!

Dana says

Just as sweet and enjoyable as the first. I love how these books are full of interesting information about living in Alaska at this time but also full of heart and fun. These books deal with a lot of serious issues in a very easy-to-handle package and with so much love and community support. I think this is some truly great historical fiction!

Laura says

I enjoy the closeness and understanding this blended family shows to their entire community. Repeated uses of racial slurs, while true to the time period, may require some discussion.

Rebecca says

It's 1930. Bo, her part-Indian new brother Graf, and her two papas, Swedish Arvid and African-American Jack, need to leave Bo's beloved Alaskan town of Ballard Creek because the gold mine is closed. They make a long, long journey by river to the papas' new jobs at Iditarod Creek. The town is nothing like Ballard Creek; all the houses sit on the gravel tailings from the everlastingly loud dredges, and there is no green and no animals anywhere. What they do find is a town full of diverse and mostly kind people whom Bo soon befriends just as she befriends everyone. She, Graf, and their new friends Will and Buddy roam the town and learn all they can, and Bo even starts school by mail. They enjoy a raucous fourth of July, and a few sad times, especially when they hear about a boy named Renzo who seems to have a very difficult life. Is there any way they can help him?

I so adored the first book, and really liked this one as well. The descriptions are fantastic, and you can really see the town and its people (okay, the illustrations help!). It's such a different world from that which most kids encounter in books and in daily life, and paints a great picture of the diversity of gold mining towns at the time. Although this is a children's book, the author doesn't shy away from difficult topics, such as the casual use of the "n" word in relation to Jack (which will probably cause many libraries to ban this book),

and the abuse of Renzo. What did disappoint me a bit was that she did not maintain the ambiguity of the papas' relationship--it's pretty clear that they're just besties, nothing more. While there's nothing wrong with that, I just feel sorry for the little kids with two papas or two mamas who read this book and realize that yet again, their reality is not represented in 99.99% of childrens' books. Still, definitely worth a read for kids who like episodic historical fiction that tell them about different lives, and which are full of loving people (the few mean ones don't get much air time, though they are certainly present). I hope a third book is in the offing!

Lisa says

Very sweet books.

Margaret says

This is the second book in a series of two books so far, but I hope many more to come! This time Bo, her two papas and her new brother Graf (well, new to her!) leave Ballard because there is no more gold to mine. They get in a boat and spend a long, long time getting to the mining camp at Iditarod Creek where they have many new adventures. The end of the book seems like another new beginning to me, so hopefully that means the author has another book in the series coming out soon.

Katie Fitzgerald says

This review also appears on my blog, Read-at-Home Mom.

Bo is back! In her second adventure, she and newly adopted younger brother Graf set off with their papas (gold prospecting partners) for their new home at Iditarod Creek. Unlike Ballard Creek, this new town is heavily populated, but has few children. Houses are moved from place to place as necessary to facilitate access to gold, and there are loud dredge machines that make frightening noises. Though Bo misses her old friends, she makes the best of her new experience by getting to know all the interesting people around her, including a mysteriously sad boy who might be in trouble.

This book is fascinating. It includes information about gold prospecting, Eskimo culture, relations between people from different racial and cultural backgrounds, and the nature of adoption in this specific time and place. There is lots of discussion about language - off-color words to describe others, differences in language even among people from the same culture, even what to call a couch (or divan, or sofa). Interesting details reveal what it was like to get an education at home, and how adults could grow up without ever learning how to read and write, only to be taught later by their own children. Words seems to be the main focus of the story, and the message about their power comes through loud and strong.

Unfortunately, some of the language itself makes it hard to know who will - or should - read this book. Certainly the first story about Bo would make a fine read-aloud for even a preschooler, but this second book uses racial slurs in confusing contexts (sometimes as insults, sometimes as nicknames) and it throws around the "b word" in a playful way without ever really explaining what it means or why it might not be okay for Bo - or other kids her age -to say it. I fully believe that these details are accurate for the time period and the nearly childless male dominated environment Bo and Graf are living in, but I would still hesitate to read

these words out loud to my child. If I were looking for a way to have a specific conversation about sensitive language, this book might help me do that, but if a mom picked up this book unwittingly based on her child's love for the first one, she might find herself faced with some uncomfortable discussions she was not prepared for.

Also possibly troubling to younger audiences would be the abuse of Renzo, the boy who Bo's family befriends and helps. There aren't many details, and they are mostly filtered through Bo's optimistic and innocent point of view, but the thought of a young boy nearly freezing to death in a piano box could be troubling for very little kids.

I liked this book very much, but I feel like my book talk of it for a parent would be more of a warning label than a promotion of the book, because it is so deceptively mature in content.

Ms. Yingling says

In this sequel to *Bo at Ballard Creek*, Bo, her new brother Graf, and her papas Jack and Arvid must move from their small town of Ballard Creek to Iditarod Creek, where the men have jobs in a mining operation in about 1930. The trip is long, and involves passing a ghost town and a boat with a gramophone on it! Once they arrive, the family sets up shop in a house in a town where mining sometimes dictates that houses be moved, giving the whole place a haphazard air. Bo has to explain her story to all of the new people that she meets, such as the Japanese gentlemen who run the town laundry, and the few children who are in town. She meets another boy, Renzo, whose father works at another mine, as well as Nita and her daughter, Paulie.

Eventually, Bo has to be signed up for school, and the papas get an opportunity to leave the mine business and live on land that is not ruined by the mining industry, leaving room open for another sequel.

Strengths: Like the first book, this is a charming story about community and family, rich with details about life in the Alaskan wilderness. There are all kinds of diversity, from Jack, who is African-American, to various native Alaskans, to Renzo, who is Italian. The EARC didn't show the LeUyen Pham illustrations, which I am sure are delightful.

Weaknesses: The first book is a hard, hard sell at my school, and since Bo is about 6, this would be better suited for younger readers. However, there is a lengthy discussion of why "nigger" is a bad word, several mentions of women who are "bitches", and occasional mentions of women being "good time girls", all of which seems like not a good match for the target demographic. I found the use of the term "Dago Charlie" especially offensive; growing up in a largely Italian community, I was always told that this was an offensive term, but there was no mention that this was an ethnic slur.

Connie Jones says

I loved this historical fiction about a non-traditional family. Gold rush camps and mining towns in Alaska. This author knows Alaska - *The Year of Miss Agnes* is one of my favorite stories.

Adele says

It makes me very sad to be writing this review. This book started well with interesting, well-rounded characters doing interesting things and treating each other with love. If anything, I was enjoying this sequel even more than *Bo at Ballard Creek*. Then Bo's family arrived at Iditarod Creek with its noisy dredge and

ugly tailing piles everywhere and the entire book took a horrible turn. It started when they moved into their new house and declared that Jack would be sleeping "in the closet". Seriously? This can't be a coincidence right? This is clearly a reaction to either criticisms from a narrow-minded editor or general backlash to the first book or both, right? Either way, I was appalled to read Bo saying Jack and Arvid weren't partners before getting her, that they just "partnered up on the spot". I don't remember if the first book stated explicitly that they were partners before, but it was definitely implied. In any case, saying Jack and Arvid became partners solely for the purpose of raising a baby girl doesn't make them straight, it just makes them stupid. Then there was the whole section where a little boy uses the word "n*****" and Jack, a black man, says this is sometimes a mean word but sometimes it's just a word. The author attempts to justify this scene in an afterword in the back, but I don't buy it. Then they bring in a nasty woman just to say bad things about the good-time girls and be mean to Bo. And several chapters seem to be inserted to give the author an opportunity to pontificate on problems in education. The book goes so far astray from being in Bo's voice and from Bo's point of view that at the end she is reduced to eavesdropping behind doors on scenes she is not a part of. Which really makes no sense because there are some scenes from Graf's point of view that Bo isn't part of at all.

Very, very disappointing. :-(

Barbara says

Following up on her delightful Bo at Ballard Creek, which won the Scott O'Dell Award for Historical Fiction, the author continues to tell the story of a blended Alaskan Family. The previous book left off as Jack and Arvid, two strapping miners with hearts of gold, leave Ballard Creek after the mine plays out. They take Bo and Graf, their adopted children, with them, of course. The trip takes quite a long time, and they contend with mosquitoes and boredom as well as having the chance to take a look at what must have been the largest ghost town in Alaska. Once the family reaches Iditarod Creek, Bo finds very few children with whom to play, and the ravages of the dredge whose noise fills the air, disturbs their senses and makes all of Bo's family long for the tundra and quietness. Because gold lies beneath some of the houses, residents have grown accustomed to having to have their houses relocated. As in the first book, the author describes the quick friendships that spring up among the townsfolk as well as delicious meals and community celebrations. She also addresses some of the racism and prejudices of the times, but throughout the book, it's clear that Bo and Graf have landed with the right family. One of the most entertaining parts of the story involved the children's education, a mail order program that specified exactly what the teacher should say and do, and included the Dick and Jane readers from which many of us learned to read. Needless to say, Bo is not impressed. I enjoyed this one from start to finish, and as the family heads off to a new home in Mammoth Creek with one more addition, I wondered about the next chapter in their lives. I hope the author will provide readers with a follow-up. The characters are charming and are fully aware of what really matters in life.

Mary Evers says

One of the cutest books I've read in a long time! I wish the author would write more of Bo's story!

Sarah Sammis says

More anecdotal than plot oriented but still delightful.

<http://pussreboots.com/blog/2018/comm...>

Sarah says

Didn't like this quite as much at the first, but 6yo and I enjoyed it. She really got attached to the characters. We are definitely hoping there's a third (fourth, fifth) book. I love the settings and the characters. We've both learned a lot about the particular time and place.

I had to do a little editing, as it's not meant for 6yos. If you want more specifics, ask me.
