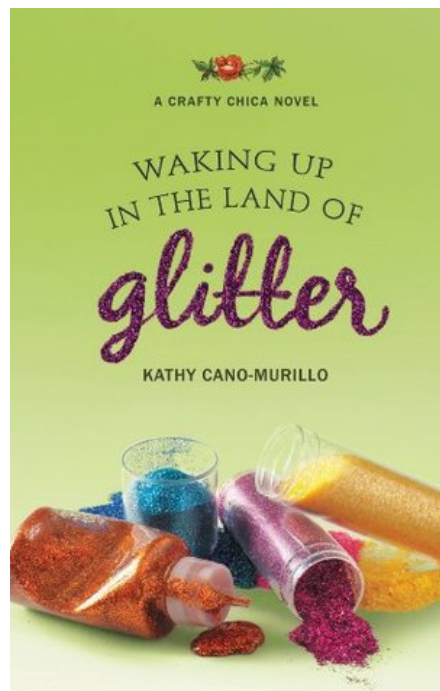




Waking Up in the Land of Glitter: A Crafty Chica Novel

Kathy Cano-Murillo

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With glue guns, glitter, twigs, or yarn, the ordinary can become extraordinary . . . especially at La Pachanga. Owned by Estrella "Star" Esteban's family, the restaurant has a rep for two things: good food and great art. La Pachanga brings people together-even when it looks like they couldn't be further apart.

One ill-fated evening, Star jeopardizes her family's business, her relationship with her boyfriend, and her future career. To redeem herself, she agrees to participate in a national craft competition, teaming up with her best friend, Ofelia-a secretly troubled mother whose love for crafting borders on obsession-and local celebrity Chloe Chavez-a determined television personality with more than one skeleton in her professional closet. If these unlikely allies can set aside their differences, they'll find strength they never knew they had, and learn that friendship, like crafting, is truly an art form.

Waking Up in the Land of Glitter: A Crafty Chica Novel Details

Date : Published February 16th 2010 by Grand Central Publishing (first published September 23rd 2009)

ISBN :

Author : Kathy Cano-Murillo

Format : Kindle Edition 336 pages

Genre : Fiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Adult Fiction

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From Reader Review Waking Up in the Land of Glitter: A Crafty Chica Novel for online ebook

Melody says

I am struggling with this. Not sure if I can make it through. But I won it on Goodreads and feel a sense of obligation to read and review. I also feel obligated to say: I am not a fan of chick lit. I don't know what possessed me to enter the contest for this book. I guess I can be crafty when need be. And I like glitter. I apologize in advance to the author.

As I suspected - it didn't get any better: Constant cliché after cliché; forced reference to music, items and people in popular culture; forced plot advancement; narrative and characters all written in same voice - so no distinctive characters; so many freaking adjectives and similes that I actually got a little queasy.

But I will say it made me visit the author's crafting site and I might go by Hobby Lobby later to buy some glitter and supplies to make a sparkly mixed media art badge. (I will say I'm disturbed to also seeing a link on the site for writing tips)

Mary Gramlich says

WAKING UP IN THE LAND OF GLITTER written by Kathy Cano-Murillo
A Crafty Chica Novel
03/10 - Grand Central Publishing – Paperback, 336 pages

Simply a wonderful story that should be read by everyone it is that good!

Female friendships are born from diversity and survive by tenacity. The relationships that make it are road tested over the years but each person in the friendship knows that while bumps in the road come and knock you off the cart they do not stop you from getting back in and finishing the ride. Ofie, Star and Chloe are three sides to a triangle that are different from one another but there is a superglue that has them sticking it out regardless of the cost. While Ofie and Star are old friends with years of memories it is the new addition of Chloe that breathes life into their circle and a little bit of anguish as everything starts to change.

Ofie is a wife, mother and crafting addict gone wrong; Star is an out of control woman who refuses to be a responsible adult and her crazy antics have cost her the love of her love and the tolerance of her parents; Crafty Chloe is a TV personality that while appearing put together and acting all about it on the air is an insecure mess after the camera shuts down and the truth of her crafting inefficiencies comes out.

With the Craft Olympics coming to Phoenix these three unlikely people are drawn together to create some of the most beautiful artwork ever seen and push each other toward greatness when hidden talents start bubbling to the surface. Each of these women has been forced to face the reality of sink or swim for this event and when they come together to create they make one another more independent and create such magic tears are shed even some family drama can't slow the crafting process. But all good relationships get tested and the real push for any true friendship is when you get to the top of the mountain and your fears of failure come out and you know your worth of self is built around the complexities of your friends and they share their strength with you not keep it for themselves.

This book covers so many areas but has the basis built in friendship and moves the story out from there.

Friends are the wonder in your life as well as create some of the difficulties but building on these difficulties we realize all is not glitter and gold in our lives and you can't always put memories in a scrapbook but you can pull together something beautiful and touching with the right word or having a sincere friend stand beside you when you need it the most. Life is not about crafts that have gone wrong or pictures hanging on the wall crocked, it is about what we show with a simple act of kindness which after all is a grand deed. However, everything seriously does look great with glitter on top and you cannot put too much on anything.

Jodi says

At first, I didn't think I liked this book. The characters were weird and not particularly likeable and I really didn't understand the craft obsession. (I know that's the whole point of the book but it didn't make a lot of sense.) There were a lot of bad decisions made by each of the main characters but their redemptions were well worth the wait. The basic story is about three women. 2 are friends. Star Esteban is an artist-wannabe whose parents own a very popular Latin restaurant. Her boyfriend is an up-and-coming artist. Star has never actually stuck with any one thing before. But the night she gets drunk and defaces her boyfriend's mural sets her life in a whole new direction. Her best friend Ofelia has been intimidated by her mother-in-law for years. They are just scraping because she spends every spare and not so spare penny on crafting supplies only she has absolutely no talent. The last member of the trio is Crafty Chloe, a woman who has been sleeping her way to the top of her news career and meets Star when she interviews her about the vandals that defaced the mural. It gets off to a very slow start but eventually becomes entertaining and actively enjoyable. Ultimately, there was tremendous character growth that was shown and not told and that made the book worthwhile.

Liz says

Couldn't put this book down. I love that the characters are real and relatable.

Laura de Leon says

This is a 3.5 star book for me. It's a book that I have a hard time being objective about-- both my positives and negatives are largely personal.

This is a relatively light book, the story of a woman figuring out who she is.

What I liked:

+ The characters. This is a big one for me. While i was entertained by Star, I identified with Ofie-- her escape into crafts, her lack of skill at them, her inadequacy with the housework, her plus sized figure. I enjoyed the full cast of quirky but loving family members.

+ The craft aspect. I like crafts, and this gave me a hook into the story. I think the only other fiction I've read featuring crafts were cozy mysteries, and I haven't encountered many of those, so that was unusual. I also liked the tension of arts vs. crafts, something I haven't seen explored in fiction before.

+ The arc of the story. I liked that path that Star took through the book. She had a journey of self-discovery

to make, and she brought a definite flair to it.

+ The setting. I have spent my middle and high school years in Phoenix, but it was all spent in the suburbs, which are briefly described in the book. I never really saw the areas that had more personality, like those where this book happens. I think I missed out, although I doubt I would have appreciated that as a teen!

+ The humor. I frequently found myself smiling (and occasionally giggling) at the characters and the situations they found themselves in. There were also sad and touching moments, but the humor stuck with me more.

What I didn't like:

+ At first I thought I didn't like the writing. Then I changed my mind. It isn't that I didn't like the writing, but that the writing had an unusual flow to it for me-- almost like reading a translation. I think this might have been deliberate-- the flavor of a culture subtly different than mine. Even if so, I found it distracting.

+ The characters. I know, I'm listing them as both a plus and a minus. I really liked the outlines, but I wish they'd been filled in a little better. At moments they seemed like caricatures. They did learn and change as the book progressed, but it seemed a little too pat, too simple.

+ The decisions the characters made. Particularly before the story started, all of the characters made some boneheaded choices. I know, people make those kinds of mistakes, and they were necessary to set up the story. I still didn't like it!

+ How easy everything was. Once the characters figured out what their problems were, solving them was simple. I never find it quite that easy.

In the end, I enjoyed the book. I'll look for the author's craft books at the bookstore-- they sound like fun to flip through, and I could imagine taking one home with me. I hope she writes another novel-- I'd certainly pick it up, whether it has the same characters or a whole new set.

Caryn Uebelacker says

I bought this book on sale, and read it during one of my recent vacation. It was a very easy, and I loved every minute of it :-)

Jess Alexander says

Some people might get put off by the mere title having glitter in it. One of my friends flips out whenever a spec comes in close proximity to her. But thankfully, glitter is not the main glue of this story. It's friendship. Friendship tougher than any industrial craft adhesive, tougher than glitter.

This book touched me so that instead of just writing "it was awesome," I thought I'd get a little personal and show you the letter I sent to the author, Kathy Cano-Murillo.

Dear Crafty Chica,

First off, as a fellow Phoenician I want to say a HUGE gracias for writing a book that takes place in a city so

close to my corazón. I just finished reading your novel and not only did it have me in stitches (haha craft puns!), but it touched me on a level that was completely unexpected. Star could not be more like me if she had been my glitter-covered Siamese twin! Her inability to finish things, her hurricane energy, her inventiveness, her wandering through life. A paraphrase of a line that really resonated with me, from Chloe: Star may not know what she wanted to do in life, but she would sure help you if you did. I started crying at that point. That is me! I loved all the different layers of your characters and your passion not only for writing and crafting, but for forming characters you could read about forever. Thank you so much for this novel, and I know something that will be stuffed in all my amigas stockings this Christmas!
Viva Love and Glitter!
Jessica

Zulmara says

Waking up in the Land of Glitter
By Kathy Cano-Murillo
<http://www.craftychica.com/>

Reviewed by Zulmara Cline

Kathy Cano-Murillo's debut novel, *Waking up in the Land of Glitter*, is a delightful, fun read. Taking her passion for crafts, art, life, love, and glitter, Kathy has created memorable characters who live in our hearts long after the story has ended. These three very different and very passionate Latinas demonstrate the strength of our community, our families, and our loves.

Adult friendships among comadres is very important en la comunidad Latina, it is a connection that runs deep. Our girlfriends are here to stay and these friendships are bonds that get us through many of the trials and tribulations of life. Kathy captures the meaning and depth of these relationships with humor, emotion, and inspiration, while taking us through some very funny crafty moments.

Lest the book not be great and fun already, add Love Shrines to the book and you have a wonderfully crafty book that leaves you wondering and thinking about the love shrine that you will make...first, next, and then the one after that. The love shrines are made for all sorts of reasons and come in all shapes and sizes, cigar boxes, helmets, boxes, pots, and other assorted "holders" to commemorate the special people and events in our lives.

This book is a keeper. As a culturally sensitive story that captures the nuances de la comunidad Latina, *Waking up in the Land of Glitter* leaves you rooting for the characters and wanting to know more and more about their stories, their lives, their loves and their next steps. Kathy is truly a gifted writer who writes with a refreshing sensitivity about art, crafts, love, life y la comunidad Latina.

About the Author:

Kathy Cano-Murillo a creative talent in both depth and breadth. Not only is she a an amazing crafter, with fun, easy to make, very creative crafts that she shares on her award winning website, CraftyChica.com, she is also a very talented and imaginative writer. *Waking up in the Glitter*, her first novel, is a delightful and fabulous read, that gives us a glimpse into the la comunidad Latina, with all it loves--food, family, fun, music, novellas, and drama. Kathy lives with her husband and two children in Phoenix, Arizona.

Questions:

1. Who are your comadres that you can count on no matter what?
2. Pick three people you would make a love shrine for. What would you make it in and what would you include in it?
3. Star gets totally inspired to create her love shrines. Think of a time in your life when inspiration came and just took over your life.
4. Have you ever had a moment like Chole, when you knew you wanted to make some changes?
5. Describe your best and worst Ofie moments? How do you get through them?
6. Describe a time in your life when the karma gods had come to collect?

Quote:

The karma gods had come to collect (p. 173).

Opening Line:

"Um, you can't go on live TV with blood on your arm; our viewers are eating breakfast," the cameraman said, nodding at Star's elbow as eh hoisted his equipment up on his shoulder.

Dianna says

I have been listening to this novel via Audible in my car the last 2-3 weeks. I loved the idea of reading more novels with Latina/0 characters and I read another novel from this author (a novel about 1950's "patternless sewing" that I loved) but this book didn't do much for me. Sure, you have me at crafts but as a writing teacher I found the "I must attach an adjective to every single noun" super annoying. And then there are the cliches -- "She was as hungry as BBQ on an empty stomach" or something like that. By the final third of the novel, I just wanted it to end. And it did :)

Lizisu Miller says

absolutely loved :)

Georgiann Hennelly says

This is a cute story of friendships, heart break, family and unwavering love. It is partly about crafting and largely about friendship, love and finding your purpose in life. Chloe Chavez is a glamorous, ruthless T.V. Reporter who covers a crafting segment , even though she doesn,t like crafting. Ofelia is a frustrated housewife and avid crafter. She uses crafting to beauty and order in to her life. Than there is Star or Estella who wanted to be an artist but wound up running the marketing end of her familys business. The craft olympics brings them all together and they make a few solid friends along the way.0

Evelyn Torres says

Didn't think I was going to like it, turns out I loved it and would recommend this book for anyone.

Kate says

Not only is there glitter in the title of the book, there is also glitter on the cover. That's what drew me in. It's fun to look at but not so great to read. In fact, it's pretty cheesy. Easy, light read but some of the writing made me wince. It was just too predictable and some of the dialogue, while trying to be creative, missed the mark.

Tiffany says

Review as posted on my blog: <http://acozyreaderscorner.blogspot.com> 2.5 Stars

Estrella “Star” Esteban has been floating along through life until her most recent indiscretion causes her boyfriend to leave her and her parents to put their foot down. Star is given the choice to group up and make something of herself or get out. For Star, losing the man she loves is a far greater punishment than she ever imagined. Now, in effort to redeem herself, Star agrees to participate in a national craft competition. With the help of Ofelia, her best friend and craftier wannabe, Chloe, a local celebrity crafter with a secret, and a few other new found friends, star attempts to get her life on track and redeem herself. Through it all each of these women find comfort in each other, blessings in their differences and strength in friendship and the value of finding something you truly love.

“Waking up in the Land of Glitter” is a story that centers on crafts and art. Though I am a crafty person, this book was a little much for me. While the story was entertaining enough, it had a few flaws that made it less enjoyable and a little difficult to read. The majority of what I liked in the book is portrayed in my synopsis. From the synopsis on the back cover, I gathered the book would have some Spanish terms, names and cultural influences but I did not expect it to the degree it was used. Luckily for me, I checked out the whole book before reading it and found a glossary of terms in the back. This glossary would have served better to be in the front of the book before the story began. While the author mentions that the words can have multiple meanings based on region and that the definitions are specific to her characters in the book, I still found terms that had definitions that did not match up with very specific well known meanings. For example, the word “puta” is stated to mean “hootchie”. This word is widely known to have one meaning and that is bitch. Likewise the word “carbon” is used for “brat” and is widely known to be used as “bastard” or “asshole” in slang terms and literally translates to “billy goat”.

I took the liberty to ask many Spanish speaking friends from all over the country their opinion of translation and all of them agreed with the widely known terms. I then checked multiple internet sites that had Spanish/English translation and found the same conclusion. This seemed to mean the author most likely wasn't comfortable using the harsher language and instead used her own more subtle terms. I feel that if you are not willing to use the actual word and widely known meaning that it should just be omitted rather than replaced seeing it has no real relevance to the story. Calling someone a brat over an asshole does not give the same thought or level of emotion, just as hootchie doesn't give the same meaning as bitch.

In addition to the meanings of the language I felt the use of it and English terms didn't flow well. The author states that Spanish/Spanglish terms are sprinkled throughout the novel though it felt as if the novel was

saturated with them in parts and sprinkled in others. The words were sometimes used in a way where the reader would be able to understand the meaning without using the glossary, but more often needed it to help understand the translation. The use of the terms seemed to take away from the characters for me rather than draw me to them. I did not connect with the characters of this book. I found the main character to be quite annoying, childish and self centered. Each character was full of drama that they seemed to create for themselves out of boredom or need for attention rather than having actual issues. The book held my attention enough, but I was never attached to it. I didn't find myself with a reason to read faster, stay up later or finish an extra chapter just to keep reading. I was content to read when I had time, but also put the book aside for any reason that seemed more interesting than the story. My favorite part was the last third of the book when the characters were mostly spate from each other and finally getting their act together.

Overall, this book is probably best read by extreme lovers of crafts, those who are of the Spanish heritage and would not need the glossary or someone looking for a very different read. I cannot say I have ever read another book quite like this one. It is unique. While I am sure others will enjoy it more than I did, the book simply wasn't for me. Though I do not regret the read, I would not be able to read this novel again.

Reviewed for author exposure

Jess (Shepherdjel) says

This book wasn't perfect but I loved it! I enjoyed the characters and I really liked the lessons that were learned. If you put your mind to something, you can accomplish anything, and never give up on your friends <3
