

Lucky Boy

Shanthi Sekaran

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A heart-wrenching novel that gives voice to two mothers: a young undocumented Mexican woman and an Indian-American wife whose love for one lucky boy will bind their fates together

Solimar Castro-Valdez is eighteen and drunk on optimism when she embarks on a perilous journey across the US/Mexican border. Weeks later she arrives on her cousin's doorstep in Berkeley, CA, dazed by first love found then lost, and pregnant. This was not the plan. But amid the uncertainty of new motherhood and her American identity, Soli learns that when you have just one precious possession, you guard it with your life. For Soli, motherhood becomes her dwelling and the boy at her breast her hearth.

Kavya Reddy has always followed her heart, much to her parents' chagrin. A mostly contented chef at a UC Berkeley sorority house, the unexpected desire to have a child descends like a cyclone in Kavya's midthirties. When she can't get pregnant, this desire will test her marriage, it will test her sanity, and it will set Kavya and her husband, Rishi, on a collision course with Soli, when she is detained and her infant son comes under Kavya's care. As Kavya learns to be a mother--the singing, story-telling, inventor-of-the-universe kind of mother she fantasized about being--she builds her love on a fault line, her heart wrapped around someone else's child.

Lucky Boy is an emotional journey that will leave you certain of the redemptive beauty of this world. There are no bad guys in this story, no single obvious hero. Sekaran has taken real life and applied it to fiction; the results are moving and revelatory.



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Carol McElroy:

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