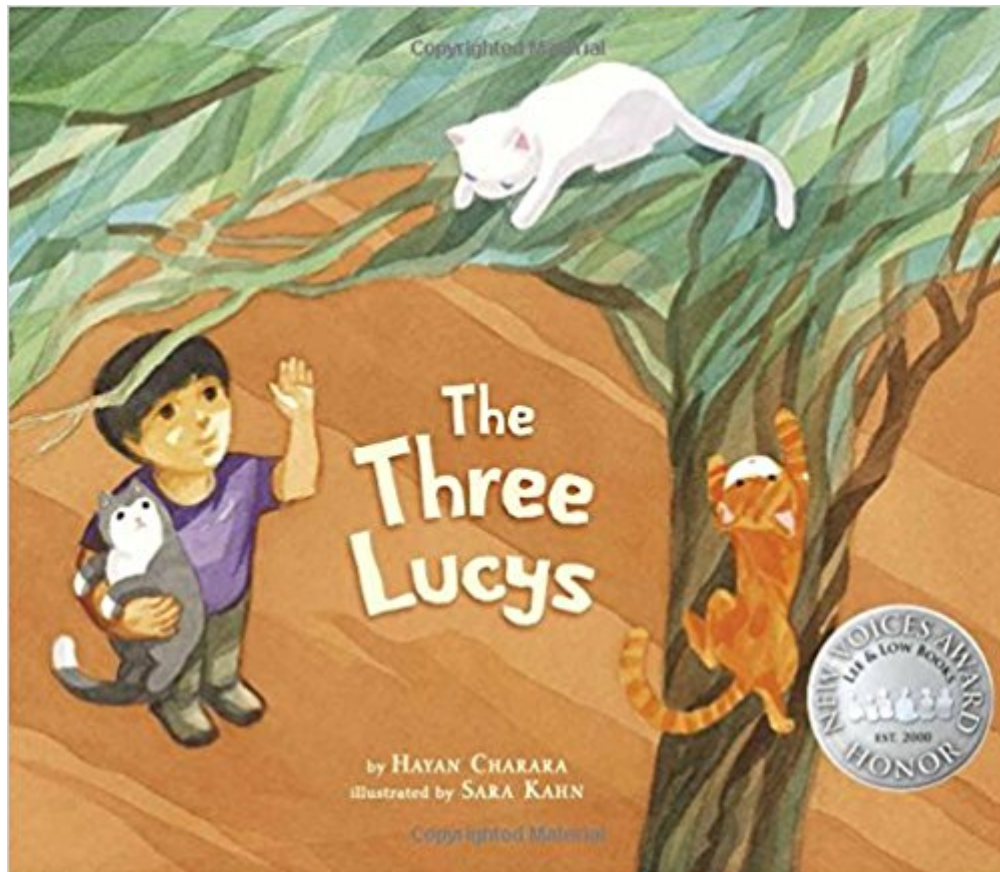




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The Three Lucys



Synopsis

Luli likes to sit in the shade of an olive tree with his beloved cats: Lucy the Fat, Lucy the Skinny, and Lucy Lucy. But when Luli and his parents go to the city to see his aunt and uncle one weekend, the cats must stay behind at home. After a fun visit with family, Luli is looking forward to going home and seeing the Lucys. But then Luli's hometown comes under attack and the family must seek refuge at his aunt and uncle's house. Luli doesn't understand what is happening and worries about his pets. Who will keep the three Lucys safe? And when will he and his family be able to return home? Recipient of Lee & Low's New Voices Honor award, *The Three Lucys* is inspired by real events of the July War in Lebanon. This tender story of loss, rebuilding, and healing is a tribute to the sustaining love of family, and to the power of the human spirit to hope for a peaceful future.

Book Information

Hardcover

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Product Dimensions: 8.5 x 0.5 x 10.7 inches

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Age Range: 7 - 12 years

Grade Level: 2 - 7

Customer Reviews

Gr 2-4 •Charara creates a tale based on his Lebanese family's experiences during the 2006 war between Hezbollah and Israel. Without shying away from the terror the family felt and the destruction they witnessed, the author has crafted a war story writ small for young readers. Luli, a happy young boy, has three cats •Lucy the Fat, Lucy the Skinny, and Lucy Lucy. He leaves them behind for what is meant to be a quick weekend with relatives in the city but turns into weeks of hiding and worry as the country is racked by air raids. After more than a month, a

cease-fire is declared and the family are able to return home and search for the cats. Lucy the Fat and Lucy the Skinny eventually appear – but no Lucy Lucy. Luli continues to search and hope for the feline to appear over the next few weeks but finally accepts that she is really gone. As Luli processes his grief, the missing animal becomes a comforting memory and a symbol of the peace he hopes for in the world. The complicated emotions of the family are highlighted in the sweeping watercolor illustrations, which add depth while avoiding scary imagery. On a particularly powerful spread, Luli and his family are driving home when the bombing starts, and the peaceful moonlit night changes to a scene where only the family's faces are shown, bathed in orange light as they stare out of the car in fear. VERDICT This book provides appropriate context for difficult topics, making it a good choice to spark discussion in libraries. – Anna Haase Krueger, Ramsey County Library, MN

HAYAN CHARARA makes his picture book debut with *The Three Lucys*, which is based on his family's experiences in Lebanon. He is also the recipient of a National Endowment for the Arts literature fellowship, author of three poetry collections, and editor of *Inclined to Speak: an Anthology of Contemporary Arab American Poetry*, which garnered glowing reviews. Born in Detroit, Michigan, to immigrant parents, Charara currently lives with his family and a cat in Houston, Texas.

The book is about loss, but the story deals with it in ways a child can handle (my kids, 5 and 6, handled it well). Following a short war, one of the three Lucys is not found. What happened to the cat, the child in the story, named Luli, does not know, and we don't know either. The cat is simply missing, and the boy must confront his feelings. So, the story is about war, which is something children around the world deal with. But it is also about the loss of a beloved pet, which is something that many kids, here and around the world, often deal with. Through Luli's story, which is written in accessible but beautiful prose and illustrated in inspiring paintings, the book provides children a way to know and manage the heartache of a lost pet, plus the fears any child may have when they do not feel safe. All this is dealt with carefully and beautifully.

Many children in the world experience war or danger, or have heard of their family members' experiences escaping or enduring periods of violent unrest. This book tells their story. For children lucky enough to have never experienced war or conflict, this book offers a small window into that experience. With gorgeous artwork and rich language, *The Three Lucys* teaches compassion, through the lens of the loss of a beloved pet. A book that speaks to both children and adults, this

would be a great addition to any classroom library or home bookshelf.

This is a tenderly written, richly illustrated gem of a book.

Children routinely experience loss, including deaths of family members and pets. We have to find a way to help kids deal with these "adult" problems and emotions. This book is an excellent tool for that purpose. It is also beautifully written and illustrated, which makes it not a mere tool, but a real story to be read more than once.

This book would need to be more for 12 and older and then I could see it as being a good book. Hard to see the greatness in something that most likely will cause my 6 year old daughter to have nightmares. Did not see what it was about, she grabbed it from school because it has 3 cats on it. Then the bombing and the car dying... Sorry for spoiler alert but it is very morbid. I know this stuff happens in real life but not a story a young one would want to read. UPDATE- after getting a message from the author, I realized I was a little harsh with my review. The seller nor the author deserved the low rating. It is a well written book just not for a 6 year old. I wrote a note the the library and asked if they could put a caution note on it or something because I do not believe it should be banned or removed.

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