

Found
by

Margaret Peterson Haddix

Book Information

Margaret Peterson Haddix, Found
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Thirteen-year-old Jonah, his friend Chip, and Jonah's sister, Katherine, are plunged into a mystery that involves the FBI, a vast smuggling operation, an airplane that appeared out of nowhere, and people who seem to appear and disappear at will. Book #1

Award: Golden Duck Award/Nominee

Topics: Family Life, Adoption; Recommended Reading, Junior Library Guild Selection; Recommended Reading, Junior Library Guild-2008 Spring Jr./Sr. High; Science Fiction, Time Travel; Series, Missing; What Kids Are Reading, 2012, 100 Most Read Fiction, ATOS Book Levels 4.0-5.9

Main Characters

Alex a boy from the survivors list who is sent to the past

Angela DuPre the airline attendant who discovers the unscheduled plane

Chip Winston Jonah's friend who is also adopted

Daniella McCarthy a girl on the survivors list whose family is moving to Liston

Gary Payne Mr. Hodge's assistant

James Reardon an FBI employee

JB a time traveler who wants to fix the broken past and honor time travel rules

Jonah Skidmore a 13-year-old adopted boy

Katherine Skidmore Jonah's younger sister

Linda Skidmore Jonah and Katherine's mother

Michael Skidmore Jonah and Katherine's father

Mr. Hodge a time traveler who provides babies to families for adoption

Vocabulary

baffled having had one's thinking or plans blocked; defeated, hindered, or frustrated by crafty or clever means; confused or puzzled; stumped or bewildered; having been eluded by someone

defensively in a way that strives to protect; in an apologetic manner; in a way that is intended to stop or deter; in a way that indicates that one feels attacked or abused

distraction an event or disturbance that takes one's attention away from its original task and focuses it elsewhere; a diversion

heartily enthusiastically; with gusto; truly or with sincerity; willingly; eagerly; without reservation; completely

intervention the act of occurring, falling, or coming between two things or events; an instance of coming between in order to hinder, alter, or stop an action, outcome, or situation

obsessed preoccupied with or to a great extent about something or someone; extremely focused on; consumed; overly concerned; fully absorbed or engaged

orientation a program that gives information about something to newcomers; an introduction to new situations or environments; the act of becoming familiar with a new place, thing, situation, group, or individual

physics the science of matter and energy and how they interact; the study of the laws and properties of matter; a class that deals with the laws and properties of matter

protocol a strict, formal code or set of rules for correct conduct or behavior, usually observed by diplomats, officials, or heads of state; behavior that is formal and ceremonial

steely hard, unyielding, and firm; decisive and cold; determined or tough

Synopsis

When an unscheduled flight mysteriously appears at an airport gate, airline attendant Angela DuPre discovers thirty-six infant passengers onboard, but no crew. Thirteen years later, Jonah Skidmore, adopted son of Michael and Linda Skidmore, receives a letter in the mail that says, "You are one

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of the missing." When Jonah's friend Chip receives the same letter, the boys at first think it's a prank until Chip learns that he, too, is adopted. The boys, assisted by Jonah's sister, Katherine, begin to look into the circumstances of their adoptions.

To help answer Jonah's questions, Jonah's father arranges a meeting with James Reardon, an FBI employee who is listed as a contact in Jonah's adoption agency file. In the meantime, Jonah receives a second letter that says, "Beware! They're coming back to get you."

The Skidmores go to Reardon's office, where Katherine sees a man appear, leave a file on Reardon's desk, and disappear. She thinks she has seen a ghost. In the bathroom, a man tells Jonah to look at the file on the desk and memorize as many names as he can from it. Back in Reardon's office, Jonah distracts Reardon while Katherine uses a cell phone to take pictures of the file. Later, Jonah, Katherine, and Chip look at the pictures and see two pages titled "Witnesses" and "Survivors," and they find Chip's and Jonah's names at the bottom of the survivors list.

Chip and Katherine call people on the survivors list and discover that they are all adopted, thirteen years old, live or will live in Liston or a nearby suburb, and have received the letters. Then Chip receives a letter from Angela DuPre, who is on the witnesses list, offering to talk with him at the library. There she tells Jonah, Chip, and Katherine about the plane and the infants and her theory about time travel. Their conversation is interrupted when two men begin fighting outside the conference room. Chip, Katherine, and Jonah escape through a window.

Later, Jonah's family decides to attend a conference for teen adoptees in Liston, where Jonah thinks he might meet some of the others from the survivors list. At the conference, the teens are split into two groups. Jonah and Chip's group includes all the survivors except Daniella McCarthy, whose identity Katherine assumes. Their leader, Mr. Hodge, and his assistant Gary lead the group on a hike to a cave. The teens must place a hand on an unusual

rock formation, which Jonah suspects is a hand scanner, as they enter the cave.

A door to the cave closes, and JB appears and attacks Gary. Angela arrives to help, and Jonah ties up Gary, Hodge, and JB. The group tries to figure out whom to trust. JB accuses Hodge of wanting the children for profit; Hodge says he is taking the children to a better place. JB says they must return to their time in history to save the world. The teens learn that they are "the missing children of history" who were sent as adoptees into the future to save them from brutal circumstances in their pasts. Both JB and Hodge agree that the teens do not belong in the twenty-first century. The teens must choose between being sent to a new future or a deadly past. Once again there is a struggle, and JB sends Alex and Chip into the fifteenth century, but not before Katherine and Jonah link arms with Chip and travel with him. Using the Elucidator to communicate, Jonah convinces JB to allow them to try to fix the past to be allowed to return to the twenty-first century.

Open-Ended Questions

Use these open-ended questions as the basis for class discussions, student presentations, or extended writing assignments.

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Literary Analysis

Think about the scene where Jonah and his family meet with Mr. Reardon at the FBI office. How does Mr. Reardon answer the Skidmores' questions? Why do you think he talks to the Skidmores as he does?

From the beginning of their meeting, Mr. Reardon is evasive and refers to secrets and matters of national security. He is also threatening, telling the family that "at the moment" Jonah's citizenship paperwork is in order, but that in some cases of baby smuggling, the children must be sent back. He tries to bully them, saying there might be "repercussions" if the family continues to ask questions. He obviously wants them to stop asking questions. As the Skidmores leave the building, Jonah's dad says it is up to Jonah to decide whether they should pursue the matter any further.

Inferential Comprehension

When Jonah receives the letters, he does not tell his parents about them although the letters are mysterious and threatening. Why do you think Jonah makes this decision? Do you agree with Jonah's decision?

At first Jonah thinks the first letter is a prank and probably doesn't want to draw attention to it or worry his parents. Later, Katherine reminds him that it makes their parents "mental" every time he brings up his adoption or birth parents. After the meeting with Reardon, Jonah worries about causing his parents more emotional pain and wants to protect them.

Teachable Skills

Understanding the Author's Craft

Responding to Literature

Comparing and Contrasting

Describing Actions or Events