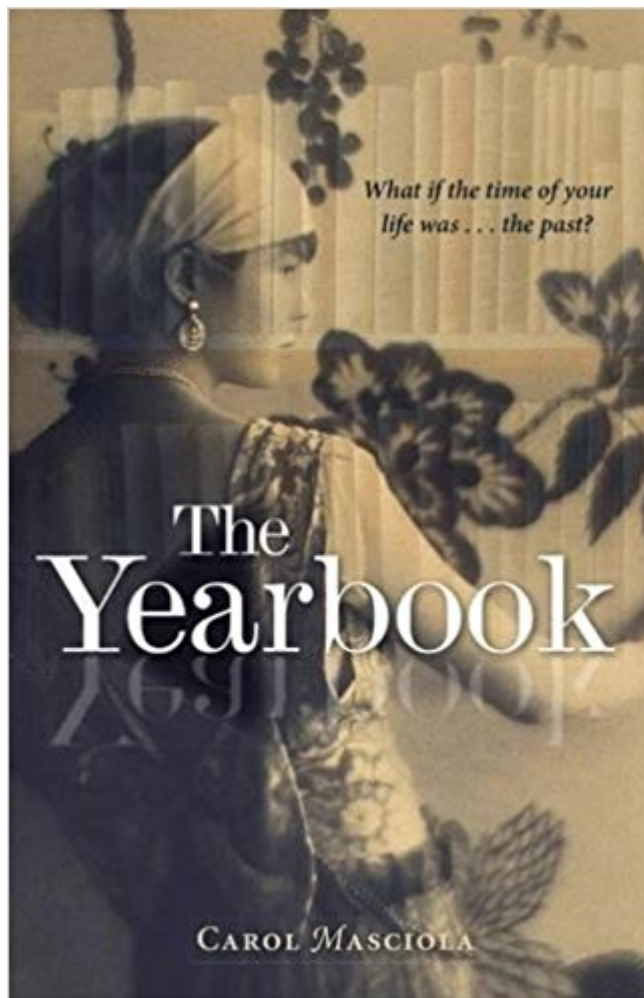




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The Yearbook



Synopsis

* A USA Today Bestseller * Misfit teen Lola Lundy has every right to her anger and her misery. She's failing in school, living in a group home, and social workers keep watching her like hawks, waiting for her to show signs of the horrible mental illness that cost Lola's mother her life. Then, one night, she falls asleep in a storage room in her high school library, where she's seen an old yearbook--from the days when the place was an upscale academy for young scholars instead of a dump. When Lola wakes, it's to a scene that is nothing short of impossible. Lola quickly determines that she's gone back to the past--eighty years in the past, to be exact. The Fall Frolic dance is going full blast in the gym, where Lola meets the brainy and provocative Peter Hemmings, class of '24. His face is familiar, because she's seen his senior portrait in the yearbook. By night's end, Lola thinks she sees hope for her disastrous present: She'll make a new future for herself in the past. But is it real? Or has the major mental illness in Lola's family background finally claimed her? Has she slipped through a crack in time, or into a romantic hallucination she created in her own mind, wishing on the ragged pages of a yearbook from a more graceful time long ago?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 9 Up - Lola lives in a group home and battles with the mental illness and poor choices that run in her family. While cleaning a fire-damaged library room, Lola finds a portal that transports her to the 1920s, where she hangs with a cool crowd and falls in love. Masciola clearly defines the eras

that Lola inhabits, with unobtrusive references to all aspects of culture. Readers may be confused as to whether the protagonist is truly time traveling or these experiences are the result of her rocky mental state, as Lola hallucinates and acts erratically during a meeting with her present-day psychiatrist. Yet two women in the present, her social worker and a friend from the past, see evidence of Lola's time travel. A yearbook that Lola finds while cleaning the library room provides tangible evidence of her time travel, too. Lola is likable and real in her interactions with a thrift store manager, her social worker and therapists, and Whoopsie, a 1920s friend. Other characters, such as Lola's current roommate and her 1920s benefactors are one-dimensional. Mental illness and its effects are honestly and sensitively portrayed, but the time-travel element muddles the story. Readers will likely overlook the flaws, however, because they care about Lola and want to discover her fate. VERDICT An additional purchase where there is a high demand for romance-infused science fiction. — Hilary Writt, Sullivan University, Lexington, KY

"Masciola writes a solid debut novel that teen girls will love.... The suspense and surprises will keep readers eager to learn how the story ends." --VOYA Magazine "The ending. Wow. Grand conclusion. The Yearbook is obviously a standalone. Loose ends tied, amazing scenes, a gripping piece of dialogue.... An amazing story of a girl who may or may not be insane.... It's a great story to sink my feet into." --YA Books Central "A troubled girl in foster care... finds a high school yearbook and becomes fascinated with it, suddenly finding herself back in the 1920s at a school dance.... Masciola keeps pages turning by focusing on Lola's emotional rebellion while providing entertaining details about life in 1923. An entertaining, undemanding time-travel romance." --Kirkus Reviews "Lola... battles with the mental illness and poor choices that run in her family. Lola finds a portal that transports her to the 1920s.... Masciola clearly defines the eras that Lola inhabits, with unobtrusive references to all aspects of culture. Lola is likable and real in her interactions.... Mental illness and its effects are honestly and sensitively portrayed.... Readers will... care about Lola and want to discover her fate." --School Library Journal "The novel also explores the fears, prejudices and societal expectations of those coming from a background of mental illness.... The sweet ending is a perfect collision of the past into the present. I am a sucker for a good time-travel romance, and this is a story that will resonate with many readers--teen and adult." --USA Today "An intriguing book. Lola Lundy is a fabulous character who all can relate to. Each and every one of you will root for this character to get everything she wants. The setting plays a big part in this book and the author depicts it with excellent detail. Well written and I will follow this author in the future." --Night Owl Reviews

I liked the book. The character Lola was very well developed. Even with her not so pleasant past and her idiosyncrasies, you like her and can relate to her. You believe her, even when what she thinks is unbelievable. Besides Lola, there is a colorful cast of characters, from the antacid munching social worker to the eccentric vintage clothes proprietor, to the outgoing flapper with big dreams, Whoopsie. The characters are drawn sharp enough so that even though there is a large cast it is never confusing and each one is very distinct. However, this is Lola's book so none of the other characters has as much depth as she does. I really like some of the details. Occasionally Ms. Masciola would contrast something from the 1920s with the present day. Often they were the types of things that a kid might not think of right off, yet they are simple enough that the pages don't get bogged down in the details and references that the target audience might not understand. Overall I really liked the book. Being a YA book it was a quick, easy read yet there were enough twists and turns to stay interesting. Ms. Masciola was able to create tension in the key spots to ensure her readers wouldn't want to put the book down, particularly while reading the last quarter. Most of the little niggles I have with the book are really more because of the genre and target audience. For instance, I would have liked to have seen more tension about if the time travel was real or only in Lola's mind, but in a book like this it could have only been written in at cost to another part of the story, such as the romance. In an adult book of twice the length there could have been more of that psychological edge and the romance could have been deeper and broader, but as it is, I think Ms. Masciola did a very good job of balancing the different aspects of the story, creating a world that is complex enough to be interesting and simple enough to be fun. That being said, I think the biggest accomplishment is the compelling character Lola, someone we care about and want to see happy.

I loved this enchanting and compelling novel about a teen in trouble who time travels! Lola Lundy, the girl at the heart of this beautifully written book, lives in a group home, has a history of running away, no close friends, and like many teens caught in a system that is supposed to help them, she is labeled but not really understood. Her mentally ill mother is dead and there is no one who really cares about her. From the opening pages, it is clear that she does not feel at home anywhere. When an old yearbook magically transports her back to 1924 she finally finds a place where she belongs. From the whimsical slang like "for the love of cucumbers" that peppers the dialogue, to the exquisite descriptions of flapper fashion, places, and food, Masciola evokes the 1920s vividly. I felt like I was right there with Lola, cheering for her as she feels

the joy of family, friends, and love for the first time. I liked that Peter, the boy she falls for, is not your typical high school heartthrob. He's as curious about Lola as he is about the things he likes taking apart to see how they work, and once Lola meets him she never wants to return to the present. But she does. Lola moves back in forth in time without elaborate devices like the car in *Back to the Future*. It's more like the way you move from reality to a dream, and that feels appropriate as the world she travels to is very much the place of her dreams. While the novel gives a nod to some of the more puzzling aspects of time travel like what happens when you change the past, this is not a major focus. Rather, like many of the best time travel novels, the journey to the past, reveals the present in a new light. The town where Lola lives has changed physically for the worse, and the way people relate to each other is worse too.

There's something very attractive about the slower paced, less technological, and kinder world of 1924. When Lola ends up back in the present day she is misunderstood and gets in more and more trouble. I really feel for her as she becomes increasingly ensnared in a system that means well but keeps making things worse. I'm not going to give anything away but there are lots of twists and turns, and the ending is unexpected and very satisfying! I highly recommend *The Yearbook* to anyone looking for a beautifully written story about time-travel, and finding a place to call home.

Full disclosure: I am not a young adult. I primarily read nonfiction: history, biography, science, and math books. When I read fiction, I tend to choose historical fiction or a light, chatty, witty book along the lines of Maeve Binchy or Liane Moriarty. I also enjoy reading YA fiction, primarily because a) with children in the house, it's readily available, and b) there are no cringe-inducing sex scenes. I'm referring to the scenes where inexperienced partners suddenly have toe-curling, perfect sex where everyone is completely satisfied. (I'm talking about you, Eileen Goudge. I lean toward gouging my eyes out when I read the term "down there".) As a YA novel, this is one of the better books I have read recently. The author deftly avoids the questions everyone has about the nitty-gritty details of time travel by making it unclear if time travel has occurred or if Lola Lundy is merely mentally ill. Ms. Masciola addresses the perennial YA issues of fitting in, people's perceptions of you and how they affect you, how your actions affect others, and how to use one's skills and talents positively in an offbeat, refreshing way. Her light style of writing and her sense of humor lend just the right touch. If this were a novel for adults, I would have given it four stars. There needs to be more character development and sophistication in her writing for it to rate five stars as an adult novel. There is also a glaring anachronism: in 1923, they would not be dancing the Lindy Hop, as Lindbergh had not

flown across the Atlantic yet. As a YA novel, however, it completely hits the mark. I am looking forward to reading more of Ms. Masciola's work.

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