



Bluish

By Virginia Hamilton

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In this powerful novel researched in NYC schools, Newbery Medalist Virginia Hamilton documents the struggle young people face as they simultaneously assert their independence and yearn for guidance.

Friendship isn't always easy. Natalie is different from the other girls in Dreenie's fifth-grade class. She comes to school in a wheelchair, always wearing a knitted hat. The kids call her "Bluish" because her skin is tinted blue from chemotherapy. Dreenie is fascinated by Bluish -- and a little scared of her, too. She watches Bluish and writes her observations in her journal. Slowly, the two girls become good friends. But Dreenie still struggles with with Bluish's illness. Bluish is weak and frail, but she also wants to be independent and respected. How do you act around a girl like that?

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Bluish By Virginia Hamilton Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Bluish is unlike any girl 10-year-old Dreenie has ever seen. At school she sits in a wheelchair, her skin so pale it's almost blue. Dreenie, herself new to the New York City magnet school, is fascinated by her, but wary as well. Unaware that the name Bluish could have derogatory connotations ("Blewish," for Black and Jewish), she fixates on the moonlight blue skin tones of this curiously fragile child. Together with Tuli, a biracial girl who pretends to be Spanish (often with poignantly comical results), the three carefully forge a bond of friendship, stumbling often as they confront issues of illness, ethnicity, culture, need, and hope.

This novel has an edgy quality that may disconcert some readers until they find the rhythm. Bouncing back and forth between Dreenie's first person journal entries and a third person narrative, the motion is a little unsettling. The overall theme is powerful, however, and Virginia Hamilton's skill in addressing the intense and subtle nuances of female friendships is impressive. No surprise, there; with over 30 books for young readers under her belt, and an armful of honors including the Newbery Medal for *M.C. Higgins, the Great*, three Newbery Honor Awards, the National Book Award, and many more, Hamilton is a formidable voice in children's literature. (Ages 9 to 12) --*Emilie Coulter*

From Publishers Weekly

When she starts at a new school, Dreenie feels drawn to a frail classmate, whom everyone calls "Bluish." In a starred review, PW said, "Readers will come to cherish Dreenie's openheartedness." Ages 9-12. (June)

Fiction REPRINTS

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From Library Journal

Grade 5-8-Ten-year-old Dreenie, a recent transfer to a New York City magnet school, is fascinated with her fellow classmate Natalie, a girl battling leukemia. Kids call her Bluish, not a derogatory term for her black and Jewish heritage, "Blewish," but because of the effects of chemotherapy on her skin. Dreenie's other friend, Tuli, is a flamboyant girl who is looking for the stability and normalcy that Dreenie and her family have. Through four weeks in December, these three girls move into a closer circle of friendship, with alternating feelings of fear, generosity, and kindness. Together, they are able to reach out to the rest of the class in accepting and celebrating Bluish as she is. Though her future is uncertain-it will take five years of remission before any assurance-readers are left seeing curly copper hair hiding under her skullcap, delighting her friends and inspiring hope. The narration alternates between Dreenie's journal and a third-person narrator, allowing readers to glimpse the firsthand incredulity of a child witnessing serious illness and also the reaction of a classroom community as it follows the highs and lows of Bluish's health. This structure doesn't always work, and readers may be puzzled when the narrative voice switches from third person to include Dreenie's journal entries. Hamilton occasionally slips into a heavy-handed adult perspective that does not reflect a 10-year-old's experience. At times, topics are introduced but are never fleshed out, such as Tuli's capricious living situation or Dreenie's sister's accusation that Dreenie "sure ain't one of us Anneva and Gerald Browns." A sensitive and quiet story that is not fully realized.

Katie O'Dell Madison, Multnomah County Library, Portland, OR

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Andrew Meadows:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Book is very important thing for us to find out everything in the world. Each guide has different aim or even goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their a chance to read a book. These are reading whatever they get because their hobby is reading a book. Think about the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, person feel need book when they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will need this Bluish.

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Brandy Anderson:

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Mary Brown:

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