



Winging It

Megan Wagner Lloyd
and Michelle Mee Nutter

Winging It: A Graphic Novel

by Megan Wagner Lloyd
and Michelle Mee Nutter

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The Story

Twelve-year-old Luna never wanted to move from California to Virginia, even if it is near historic Washington, DC, and no matter how excited her dad is to introduce her to the area where her late mother grew up. And she definitely doesn't want to live with a very formal grandmother she barely knows. But during a visit to the National Museum of Natural History, the rarely seen luna moth for which Luna was named sparks her curiosity. Using her mother's old naturalist notebooks as a guide, Luna, who has always preferred the indoors, endeavors to see a real luna moth with her own eyes. Learning more about nature just might help her make a new friend, figure out how to feel at home in her new life, and understand the mother she never got the chance to know.

Megan Wagner Lloyd and Michelle Mee Nutter have again teamed up to tell a charming and funny story of family, friendship, adventure, and appreciating all life has to offer.

Reading Group Questions

1. Luna is surprised when her dad tells her that they're going to move across the country, from California to Virginia. What would your reaction have been? How have you dealt with a big change in your life?
2. Luna connects with her late mother and nature through her mom's old nature journals. What mix of feelings do you think Luna has as she explores nature with new friends, starts at a new school, tries to get to know her grandmother, and learns more about her mother?
3. In *Winging It*, readers experience the Washington, DC, area through all four seasons of the year. What was your favorite season in the book and why?
4. Luna really wants to see a live luna moth in nature. Why do you think it's so important that she find one?

About the Creators

Photo by Seth Lloyd



Megan Wagner Lloyd is the cocreator, with Michelle Mee Nutter, of *Allergic* and *Squished*, both instant bestsellers. Megan is also the cocreator, with Abhi Alwar, of the Super Pancake graphic novel series and is the author of *Haven*, a novel, and several picture books. She lives in the Washington, DC, area. Visit her online at meganwagnerlloyd.com.

Photo by Greg Marquis



Michelle Mee Nutter is the cocreator, with Megan Wagner Lloyd, of *Allergic* and *Squished*, both instant bestsellers. Michelle graduated with a degree in illustration from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Her work has been recognized by the Society of Illustrators, 3x3, *Creative Quarterly*, and more. Michelle lives in Boston. Visit her online at michellemee.com.

Creator Q&A

Megan, how did the idea for *Winging It* come to you?

Megan: I've moved a lot, including back and forth across the country three times! When I moved to the Washington, DC, area, I learned about luna moths—beautiful and short-lived moths who can only be found on the eastern side of the country. This helped me realize that there would be special and unique things about my new home. Since so many kids deal with the difficult experience of moving, I thought this might be the beginning of a new story idea.

Michelle, how did you respond to the script when you first read it? What did you think about in terms of how you'd start to create the artwork and design the characters?

Michelle: I loved it! Right from the start, I was excited to draw all of Luna's nature adventures. Going outdoors to draw is one of my favorite things I get to do as an artist, and I was inspired by my own adventures with my friends. Each character is a fun mixture of my loved ones.

Do you have a personal connection to any of the story's themes?

Megan: I can relate to Luna's struggles with starting over in a new place. Also like Luna, I've learned to connect with nature to help me process life's many ups and downs. I even briefly kept a nature journal like hers when I was a teenager!

Michelle: Luna finding connection through nature, not only to her own identity but also to her mother, really resonated with me. Her journey of discovery reminded me of my own experiences finding my artistic style, making friendships, and my experience as an adoptee.

Creator Q&A (continued)

This book takes place in Northern Virginia, in the Washington, DC, area, which is a wonderful setting for Luna's exploration of nature throughout the seasons among such great historical landmarks, museums, and parks. Megan, what part did the setting play in developing the story and how did you decide to place the story there?

Megan: Washington, DC, shows up in a lot of books and movies, but usually in stories about spies or politics. I wanted to show a different side to the area, because lots of people just live their regular lives here. And one thing that many people who live here love is the nature! There are so many parks and bike trails, as well as special events like the cherry blossom festival, along with lots of animals to see, like squirrels, deer, raccoons, bats, foxes, and more.

Michelle, what steps did you take to ensure the artwork felt visually accurate and in line with both the seasonal and emotional beats of the story?

Michelle: It's important to me and Megan that our books feel as real as possible. So, taking time at the beginning to research and collect reference material is a priority. Megan was kind enough to send many reference photos and I made a couple trips out there to location scout as well. Since I live in Massachusetts, I really enjoyed seizing the opportunity to be on location and take down as many notes and references as possible.

Including *Allergic* and *Squished*, you've now created three relatable, charming, and funny stories together. How has your working relationship changed over the course of three books?

Megan: Working with Michelle is a dream come true, and it seems like our collaboration grows stronger with every book. We trust each other to do our separate work, while at the same time we have grown more comfortable brainstorming story elements together and giving each other feedback and encouragement.

Michelle: I couldn't ask for a better teammate! It really feels like a dream, and we continue to grow as cocreators with every book. There's a lot of respect and trust throughout the process and I love when we get excited about story elements or ideas. Over the years, we've grown stronger as collaborators and friends and I'm so excited for where we'll go next.