

Praise for the Abigail series

“In the Abigail books, Bethany McIlrath demonstrates how a family’s commitment to their shared faith can help a nine-year-old girl navigate the everyday problems that children face. Each book not only tells a clever, funny story about Abigail but also successfully unpacks the biblical truths that Abigail discovers along the way.”

Bob Hartman, Author and Storyteller

“Bethany has created a delightful series that helps young readers connect their faith with their everyday life. Abigail’s adventures are fun and relatable, delivering valuable lessons for all kids and making this series a great one to add to your bookshelf.”

Laura Wifler, Cofounder, Risen Motherhood

“Delightful. Relatable. Entertaining. Accessible. True. I am so eager to introduce *Abigail and the Big Start Over* to all of my elementary-aged friends so that they too can adventure with Abigail, identify with her, and discover the incredibly beautiful and immensely applicable power of the gospel in their own very real lives, right alongside her. These stories about Abigail will doubtless impact the stories of their readers in a powerful way.”

Abbey Wedgeworth, Author, Training Young Hearts series

“Bethany McIlrath truly understands how to construct an easy-to-connect-with narrative around a gospel-rich passage! Kids who read about Abigail will be entertained, feel understood, and, most spectacularly, come away better equipped to press God’s good news into their everyday lives.”

Caroline Saunders, Author, *Kids in the Bible*

“Abigail wants to be perfect like Jesus, but she keeps failing. This book will help girls see that you don’t have to be perfect to make God proud. My favorite part was when Police Officer Dave saved Abigail from falling off the monkey bars!”

Adelaide, age 9 (review for *Abigail and the Career Day Catastrophe*)

“It was REALLY good. I like how Abigail is trying to impress God and then she realises that she doesn’t need to. God just loves her anyway. It was a reminder that you don’t have to earn God’s love. He’s always proud of you.”

Jess, age 9 (review for *Abigail and the Career Day Catastrophe*)

“I love this book! It has been the most relatable chapter book I have read to my daughter. It portrays the struggles, conflicts, and pressure that Christian 9-10-year-old girls face. I hope the author writes many more books like this one.”

Amazon.com review for *Abigail and the Big Start Over*

“Christian children’s novels can be really preachy, but this was great! The author incorporates Abigail’s church experiences and thoughts about God into the story in a very natural way, and through this, she represents the lives of her readers. It’s wholesome and fun.”

Amazon.com review for *Abigail and the Big Start Over*

“My 7-year-old read this chapter book in one sitting from start to finish. Then, she brought it to school to read during free time. This story contains a unique kind of humor which appeals to children, but also adds in Christian values through the biblical principles taught. We can’t wait for the rest of the series to come out.”

Amazon.com review for *Abigail and the Big Start Over*

Abigail Gets LEFT OUT

Written by
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Illustrated by
**Katie
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the goodbook
COMPANY

Abigail Gets Left Out

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Chapter One

Flora's Surprise

“Okay then, class,” Mr. Ukiyo, the art teacher, called out. “Get to work!”

“Want to guess what I’m going to make?”
Abigail asked her best friend Flora.

“Umm,” Flora replied, drumming her fingers happily on the sheets of tinfoil they’d been given to turn into little statues. “A panda?”

“Good try,” Abigail grinned, knowing Flora was thinking of her favorite stuffed toy at home, “but I would need two different colors for that.”

“A... house?” Flora guessed. “Or... a flower?
Give me a clue!”

“It’s a person,” Abigail smiled. Flora loved guessing games, and this must be a good one if she needed a clue!

“Your brother! Your mom! Your dad!” Flora began to exclaim, jumping off her stool as she got into the game. “Your grandpa! Your nana!”

“Nope,” Abigail laughed, shaking her head as she began to twist and bend and roll the tinfoil. How was she going to make the hair curly? Hmm...

“I give up,” Flora exclaimed. “Who is it?”



“You!” Abigail grinned.

“Beeeeest Chica!” Flora cheered, giving Abigail a high-five. Chica was Flora’s special name for Abigail.

Flora looked down at her own tinfoil. “I would try to make you too, but...”

“Yours has to be a dancer,” Abigail finished for her. She knew all about Flora’s secret goal to squeeze something about dance into every single art project she made while she was 9 years old. So far, she hadn’t missed a single one!

“I guess I could make *you* as a dancer,” Flora smiled, looking thoughtfully between Abigail and the tinfoil. Abigail thought that sounded nice. She didn’t take ballet classes like Flora, and she was kind of bad at balancing and stuff, and she hated being on stage... but it was okay to just *imagine* being a dancer!

CRUNCH. CRUNCH.

They twisted and rolled and trimmed and squished and...

“Voila!” Abigail smiled a little later, holding up a little statue of a girl, with tiny bits of tinfoil rolled up as curls on her head.

She’d added a tiny metallic flower headband too.

“It’s me!” Flora squealed. “And this is you!”

She held up her shiny statue of a girl with straight hair, holding a box in one hand—and arching her other arm overhead like a ballerina. Her legs were bent like she was mid-leap.

“Can you tell it’s your Amazing Adventure Box?” Flora asked happily.

“Of course!” Abigail answered, squinting at the rectangle shape the statue held. She imagined her multi-pen and sticky notes inside, all made of tinfoil. “It’s so good!”

“Now,” Flora smiled, handing Abigail her real Amazing Adventure Box, “let’s pose!”



“Ahem.” Mr. Ukiyo was walking over to them. He cleared his throat, looking like he was trying not to laugh as Abigail swayed on one foot, trying to balance in a mid-leap pose while Flora stood next to her holding a paint brush like it was a flower.

“Have you become statues instead of making them?” he teased.

HA! Abigail giggled, and relaxed from her pose just before she was sure she would fall over. She held up her statue of Flora. Flora held up her statue of Abigail.

“I see,” Mr. Ukiyo smiled. “Well done. But you’re not finished yet. Next, please draw a scene to place your statues on or in front of.”

“Hmmm,” Abigail said, picking up a purple marker pen as their art teacher walked away.

“Where should I put you? In a garden?”

“The grandest garden ever, please,” Flora said.

“Like one from a fairytale. One where music

plays all day long and it never rains but the flowers still bloom, and—oooh, doesn't that sound like a song?"

"You could sing it," Abigail said, as she began to draw a garden with as much enchantment as she could imagine. She could just picture Flora there, talking in her energetic, happy way to anyone about anything. Even the flowers would want to listen!

"Da-da-da," Flora hummed softly to herself as she sat on the stool next to Abigail and drew too. Flora was good at singing. Unlike Abigail.

RINNNGGG!

"I guess we'll finish next time," Abigail sighed happily as the school bell sounded. She collected her statue and backdrop to put on the shelf Mr. Ukiyo used for their class projects.

"I was almost done," Flora grinned, holding up her paper. She had drawn lights, a stage, and the backs of the heads of an audience.

BRRR. Abigail shivered. She had such bad stage fright, she didn't even like to imagine her statue being up in front of everyone!

"I put you in a musical," Flora explained, not noticing Abigail's shiver. "Which reminds me, I have a surprise for recess!"

Abigail waited eagerly while Flora paused to put her project up on the shelf.

"So...?" she asked. "What's the surprise?"

"Sooooo... Brianna and Maggie and I were talking on the bus," Flora began, her dark curls bouncing as they headed toward the door to go outside. "And we all watched the same movie this weekend—isn't that crazy? It was all about this musical, and all these people who watched it and how it made them happy..."

"Uh huh," Abigail said, not seeing what this had to do with a surprise at recess.

"Sooooo," Flora said again dramatically, "we

thought we'd spend recess doing a song and dance from a musical too!"

"Oh," said Abigail.

A song-and-dance routine? That was *not* her kind of surprise.