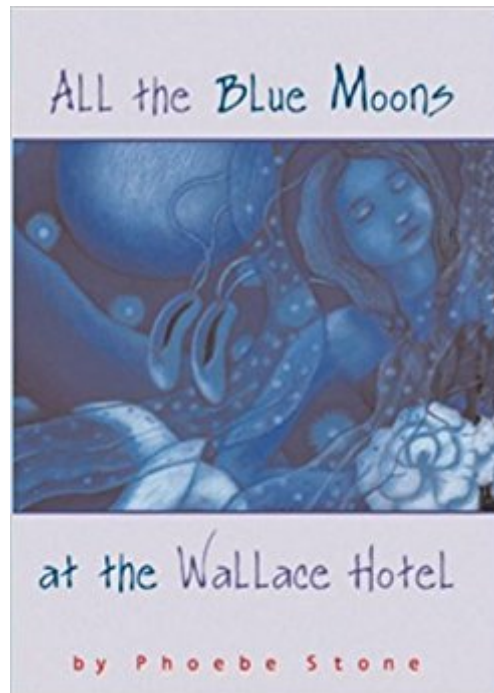




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# All The Blue Moons At The Wallace Hotel



## Synopsis

eleven-year-old Fiona wants to perform in an upcoming dance recital, but her family is unable to afford lessons. So Fiona practices by herself and attracts the attention of the dance teacher. But when her sister, Wallace, disappears, Fiona risks the dance audition and the acceptance she has worked so hard to get and finally finds her place in her family and in her life.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 10 - 13 years

Grade Level: 5 - 8

## Customer Reviews

Stone (When the Wind Bears Go Dancing) turns from picture books to middle-grade fiction with a novel about a family devastated by a shocking "incident." Set during the Kennedy administration, the story is heavy with references to period TV shows, hand-me-down poodle skirts and Necco Wafers, details that may seem to the target audience as mannered as the characters. The narrator, 11-year-old Fiona, who makes much of her admiration for Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, lives with her younger sister, Wallace, in a dilapidated mansion, surrounded by their withdrawn, ex-sculptress mother's unfinished statues. Fiona wants to fit in, and she also wishes more than anything to dance, but her passion (partly born from her father's likening of Fiona to his mother, a Russian ballerina) never transcends plot device. Indeed, Fiona remains more a lens than an effective central character, overshadowed by the unconventional, angst-ridden Wallace and their friend Kit. Allusions are made to better times four years earlier, but Wallace must run away, and be found, before the

author reveals the family tragedy. The father was shot to death in their home. The family's recovery from their grief seems pat, and readers who have labored through the lengthy build-up may feel let down by the conventional resolution. Ages 9-12. (Sept.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Grade 4-6-Fiona and her eccentric younger sister, Wallace, live in a corner of an old mansion that provides constant reminders to Fiona of happier times. Mom has lost interest in almost everything and barely seems to notice her daughters. However, this is not a sad story, as Fiona has a great best friend, Nell, and her neighbor Kip is a source of amusement, companionship, and support, even though they barely acknowledge one another's existence at school. The pace is slow with many memories and asides and descriptions of how the days go by for Fiona. Then one snowy day, Wallace disappears. Events speed up and changes come quickly. The first half of the story, even leavened by Wallace's entertaining take on life, is so dull that many readers will not stick around for the livelier ending. Occasional hints and references to the tragedy that changed their lives never seem to disturb the girls' quiet equilibrium. A nice, safe feeling pervades throughout, effectively destroying any tension, even during a treacherous trot across a trestle bridge with a train coming. Despite intriguing characters and a careful turn of phrase, this is mere comfort food in exotic packaging. Carol A. Edwards, Sonoma County Library, Santa Rosa, CA Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I started reading this book one evening and was hard pressed to put it down! This is a great 'stay in when the weather is bad and read' kind of story. And it's not just a children's story either; I am a mature adult with no children of my own. I recommend this book to anyone with a passion to achieve a dream and an obstacle to overcome in accomplishing it! The story and its characters is simply captivating! It only took a few pages before I found myself attached to the three main characters: Fiona, Wallace, and Kip. Their personalities take on real dimensions very quickly; I felt as if I actually knew them...they were so believably real! They most certainly could be young people any of us may have met in this present day. Each of the children has an endearing uniqueness: Wallace - a precocious, unconventional, idealistic, and sensitive child - unaware of her desire for value until it is 'given' to her. One is immediately drawn to her character because she is so easy to like, even love...it was as much for her I wanted to read this book as it was for anyone or anything else in the story! Kyp provides all the boldness, daring, eagerness and self-assuredness oft equated with a youthful spirit. With his genuine honesty and acceptance, he is the balm that adds balance to

the triangular relationship of these three children. Finally, Fiona's narration of this tale allows us to connect with her observations, her memories, her feelings, her desires, her hopes, her longings. She has been created with vividness and vulnerability! I think every child with an overriding dream in their heart can relate to her character...as can many adults. I know I did!

Phoebe Stone's hauntingly beautiful *ALL THE BLUE MOONS AT THE WALLACE HOTEL* stirs the heart and imprints the mind. Award-winning author and illustrator of *WHEN THE WIND BEARS GO DANCING*, this is Stone's first foray into the land of intermediate to middle school readers and she arrives radiant and appealing. Emotionally, her novel reads as if drawn from deep personal experience. Artistically, the story is vivid with the kind of imagery only an author with a tap root into art itself could manage. The book is a coming-of-age tale cast with luminous characters, hauntingly lovely descriptions and a poignant resolution that is both uplifting and plausible. I especially urge school librarians to purchase *ALL THE BLUE MOONS* and give book talks that include dialogue segments, interior monologues and scenic descriptions. Sensitive children will be drawn into the world of Fiona Hopper, her iconoclastic family and their responses to a world that first shuns then draws them to its breast. Burgess Needle, Librarian, Safford Magnet Middle School, Tucson Unified School District

comes a book this wonderful! This book made me laugh and cry and think. I loved the characters, particularly Wallace. Phoebe Stone uses language so beautifully and weaves a great story with surprising and gratifying twists. I strongly recommend this book to all girls who love ballet, or who have a sister, or who have a best friend...in fact, all girls!

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