

# MiJa Reviews

## Member Review



MiJa  
by Mark Atkinson  
Pub Date: 16 Jan 2023

### Review by



LADY Reading365 - Reviewer  
Last updated on 28 Jan 2023

My Recommendation ★★★★★

Wow just amazing. This story is the best I have read in a long time. It was so well written that I was hanging on the authors every word. I really couldn't put this book down. It's definitely been a long time that I have been this invested in a novel and I read a lot of books. This story was so sad, emotional and atmospheric it almost felt like a true story. It's certainly a story about resilience. It really shocked me in places. It is also inspiring, if Mija can get through all life threw at her then so can we. I really can't recommend this book enough. It's a fantastic historical fiction set in South Korea. The story goes through so many changes within the country. Through civil War, occupation, failing crops, school changes, kidnap and death. Its certainly a roller coaster ride. This story will stay with me for a very long time. I know we are only in the end of January and I will probably read another 400 books. But, this book is definitely likely to be book of the year. It will take a lot to knock it off my top spot. I was totally engrossed in this book and read it all in one sitting. The characters were amazing and well developed.

Only the highest of praise goes out to the author and publishing team for creating the most perfect novel. I really hope this author writes more books. I will certainly keep my eyes peeled.



### MIJA

by Mark Atkinson

Rating  
★★★★★

Reviewed on  
2022/12/30

Reviewed by  
kathryn mcleer

#### beautifully done historical novel

this was a beautifully done historical novel, it had what I was looking for from the description. The characters did a great job in being real people and they worked in this time-period. I really enjoyed the plot going on and am excited to read more from Mark Atkinson.



## MIJA

by Mark Atkinson

Rating



Reviewed on

2022/12/05

Reviewed by

Morag

### Compelling story

This is the story of MiJa and her family in Korea. It starts with her first day in school and goes through the events which she lives through including wars I just loved this book for the story which is anguishing so often. However there are moments of great joy too although they can seem very far between at times The other characters are given the chance to tell their stories too. From her mother who is only interested in herself to the boy she sits next to in class and soon develops a friendship with.

I am someone who had very little knowledge of the history of Korea in this time frame and although fiction it taught me a lot about the reality of this troubled country. We learn about the horrors of both WWII and the Korean war and how every family was affected

This book deserves a wide readership.

If you like books with a compelling story then this is for you.



## MIJA

by Mark Atkinson

Rating



Reviewed on

2023/01/02

Reviewed by

Rhonda G

### Good read

Love a good historical novel. This one has a lot of history and is hard to put down. Following the Journey of the characters sweeps you away into the history of the times and place. Good read.



J **Julia** left a review.

Oct 31, 2022

[Hide Details](#)



*MiJa tells the story of the titular MiJa, a Korean girl, from sometime in her early childhood in the 1930s until the death of her (horrible) mother in the 1970s. As expected for such a tumultuous time, it covers a LOT, including the Japanese occupation of Korea, WWII, and the rebuilding of Korea.*

*Although I generally don't like stories which just sort of follow the life of a character (without a lot of additional plot elements), I found "MiJa" incredibly engrossing. Some of this, I think, is due to the vividness of the writing as well as attention to historical detail. (I generally felt like I was there.) Some of this is due to what a fascinating time period this was.*

*With that said, this is a hard read as it does cover the horrors of WWII (I found the scenes with the comfort women especially unsettling). So if that's something that will disturb you too much, I do recommend avoiding. (It reminded me somewhat of Ha Jin's masterful "Nanking Requiem", which is also an exceptionally difficult book to read due to the subject matter.) But I do think these are \*valuable\* things to record and, if a reader is too sensitive, potentially he/she could skip over those parts.*



Intriga left a review.

Jan 31, 2023

[Hide Details](#)



*A historical fiction story about Choi MiJa. We follow along on her journey from childhood to adulthood. A difficult adventure that will pull at your heartstrings and root for her survival. A beautifully and poignant story.*



Jackie left a review.

Oct 30, 2022

[Hide Details](#)



*I thoroughly enjoyed reading MiJa. I could tell the author did his due diligence and researched this story well. The main character led a very difficult life and yet came to terms with the difficulties she had thrown in her way. Her life was successful despite all. So glad that he ended this on a good note. I have heard of some of what the Japanese did to the women of Korea - it is just horrific how they were treated.*

### Reedsy Discovery



Review [Read preview](#)

**Loved it!**

Rich storytelling which spans generations, MiJa is for those who wish to read tales which centre family, loss and fortitude.

Upon reading the synopsis I knew Atkinson's *MiJa* had the potential to be reminiscent of Min Jin Lee's *Pachinko* - a story about a Korean family who emigrate to Japan during the Japanese occupation of Korea - with the promise of capturing the experience of one family during times of joy, hardship and sorrow. *MiJa* primarily follows the eponymous *MiJa* from her childhood to her elderly years, with the geopolitical landscape of Korea altering dramatically in this time - through Japanese occupation, World War Two, puppet governments with strings pulled by the USA and the North/South divide. There are glimmers of hope, tragic moments of torment, and grief too heavy for a family to carry without consequence.

Atkinson's storytelling is good, especially considering the length and breadth of *MiJa*'s story. His characterisation of *MiJa*'s youth was engaging and the characterisation of her mother, Boknam, was sublime. The choice of a prologue and how much or how little to reveal was brilliant too; it is meaningful and purposeful. Atkinson also employs multiple narratives at times to widen the scope of the narrative - enriching our understanding of and empathy for *MiJa*'s family and the people of Korea. The only disappointment is the swift narrative turn and jump towards the novel's resolution. This felt rushed and in drastic contrast to the pacing previously.

Nonetheless, *MiJa*'s story was moving and Atkinson furthers this by continuing to include the narrative paths of secondary characters too, until the very end. *MiJa* is for readers who enjoy rich storytelling which spans generations, it is for those who wish to read tales which centre family, loss and fortitude, and it is especially perfect for readers intimidated by colossal reads such as *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Atkinson's writing is digestible and thoroughly enjoyable.

REVIEWED BY



Kristiana Reed

[Follow](#)