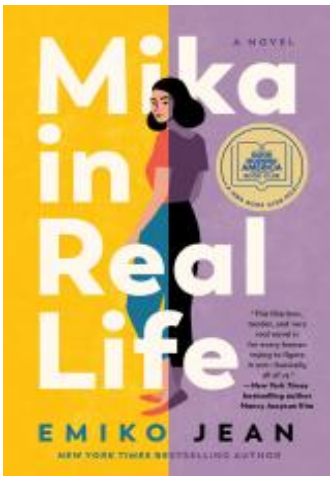
# Mika in Real Life

by Emiko Jean




## About the Book

**From Emiko Jean, the author of the *New York Times* bestselling young adult novel TOKYO EVER AFTER, comes a whip-smart, laugh-out-loud funny and utterly heartwarming novel about motherhood, daughterhood and love --- how we find it, keep it, and how it always returns.**

***One phone call changes everything.***

At 35, Mika Suzuki?s life is a mess. Her last relationship ended in flames. Her roommate-slash-best friend *might* be a hoarder. She?s a perpetual disappointment to her traditional Japanese parents. And, most recently, she?s been fired from her latest dead-end job.

Mika is at her lowest point when she receives a phone call from Penny --- the daughter she placed for adoption 16 years ago. Penny is determined to forge a relationship with her birth mother; in turn, Mika longs to be someone Penny is proud of. Faced with her own inadequacies, Mika embellishes a fact about her life. What starts as a tiny white lie slowly snowballs into a fully fledged fake life, one where Mika is mature, put-together, successful in love and her career.

The details of Mika?s life might be an illusion, but everything she shares with curious, headstrong Penny is real: her hopes, dreams, flaws and Japanese heritage. The harder-won heart belongs to Thomas Calvin, Penny?s adoptive widower father. What starts as a rocky, contentious relationship slowly blossoms into a friendship and, over time, something more. But can Mika really have it all --- love, her daughter, the life she?s always wanted? Or will Mika?s deceptions ultimately catch up to her? In the end, Mika must face the truth --- about herself, her family and her past --- and answer the question, *just who is Mika in real life?*

Perfect for fans of Kiley Reid?s SUCH A FUN AGE, Gail Honeyman?s ELEANOR OLIPHANT IS COMPLETELY FINE and Rebecca Serle?s IN FIVE YEARS, MIKA IN REAL LIFE is at once a heart-wrenching and uplifting novel

that explores the weight of silence, the secrets we keep and what it means to be a mother.

## Discussion Guide

**1.** The name of the novel is MIKA IN REAL LIFE. Do you think it?s fair to say Mika has not been living a "real life" until now? Why or why not?

**2.** Mika and Penny reconnect through the wonders of the internet, and yet letters form an integral part of this story --- in Caroline connecting with Mika, and in Mika connecting with Penny. Why do you think the author chose to use letters to show the emotional connections among the characters?

**3.** Mika and her mother, Hiromi, have a very difficult relationship. In what ways could Mika be more understanding of her own mother? Should she even try to be?

**4.** Why do you think Hiromi seems to find it easier to relate to Penny, a grandchild she has never met before?

**5.** How did you feel when you learned the identity of Penny?s birth father?

**6.** Hana, Leif and Charlie are just three of the secondary characters we meet. Who is your favorite and why?

**7.** Was there any point where you feel Thomas was being unreasonable or overly cautious? Why?

**8.** Imagine Penny, Mika and Thomas five years from now. What do you think their lives will be like?

## Author Bio

Emiko Jean is a *New York Times* bestselling author of young adult and adult fiction, including LOVE ME TOMORROW and LOVE ME ALWAYS. Her work has been published around the world and translated into over 30 languages. She lives in Washington with her family.

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