



Finding Me
by Kathryn Cushman
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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS WITH KATHRYN CUSHMAN

1. Where do you get your ideas?

Often there is a real-life event that gets the idea flowing. In the case of *Finding Me*, there were actually two. I saw a couple different news stories about men who had disappeared from their old lives, took on new identities, and started fresh somewhere else. It made me wonder what would make someone go to these lengths, and what it would feel like to be the one left behind. The story grew from those questions.

2. What kind of research did you do for this book?

There were some legal and insurance questions I had to address up front. After that, I spent quite a bit of time driving the Tennessee countryside, looking for the perfect country store after which to model Moore's More Store. My niece and her boyfriend are both in the restaurant business, so they helped me set up my fictional about-to-open restaurant.

3. What is the theme of this book?

Taking the truth and altering it to fit your circumstances does not change the truth. The truth will always be the truth. It's easy to cheat it "just a bit" and "just a bit more" and just a bit more," justifying each successive step.

4. What was the hardest part about writing this book?

Determining how it was going to end. I was torn between two different scenarios and could not make up my mind which would work best. After I worked through that and finished the book, we decided VERY LATE in the publishing process to delete the epilogue. (We were all wavering over whether it was a powerful way to end the book, or a depressing way to end it. Very last minute, the scales tipped toward too dark, so we pulled it.)

5. Does that happen to you a lot?

Unfortunately, yes! I usually do know the way the story will end, but what happens in the meantime is always in flux. I envy those writers who can make an outline and stick with it. It would save me a lot of time and heartache if I could figure out how to do that.