

★ **The Girl Who Flew Away**

Lee Dean

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A woman seeks direction in her life in the gorgeous graphic novel *The Girl Who Flew Away*.

In 1976, Greer is pregnant with the child of her married boss, Dick. With few other options, she complies as Dick shuttles her from Pittsburgh to Key West to stay with his old Vietnam War buddy Donald and his wife, Kate. While there, Greer pines for her lost love, Chris, and meets the inhabitants of the area, including Pablo, the family's gardener. Feeling bored, isolated, and trapped, she retreats to an imaginary world where a girl, Eugenie, enjoys the freedom that Greer so desires.

The book is a literary and visual feast. Topics of women's independence, race, and class are addressed. Greer is imperfect but sympathetic, and the others, even low-talking Donald, are fleshed out in fascinating terms. Pablo's halting English results in a deeper understanding of who he is, and lines like "I can live *through you*, right?" foreshadow future developments in a tantalizing manner.

The artwork is delicate and evokes emotions well. The images include visual touchstones of the 1970s, including old television sets, and the colors emphasize green and orange with arresting nostalgia.

The Girl Who Flew Away is an unforgettable book about a soon-to-be mother finding the strength and wisdom to choose the course of her and her baby's future.

PETER DABBENE (January / February 2025)

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