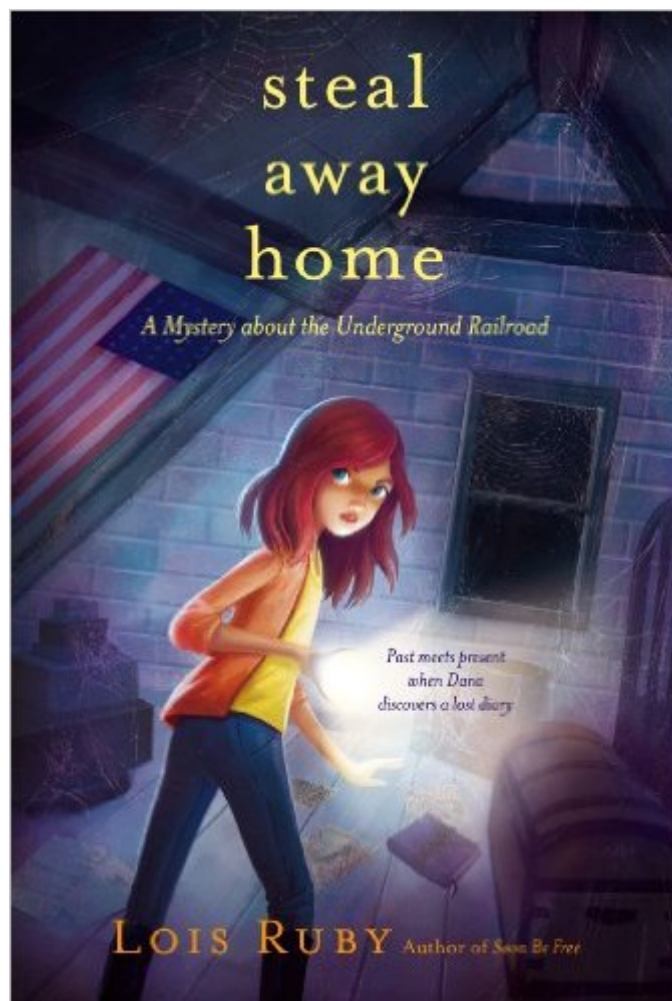


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# Steal Away Home (Aladdin Historical Fiction)



## Synopsis

When twelve-year-old Dana Shannon starts to strip away wallpaper in her family's old house, she's unprepared for the surprise that awaits her. A hidden room -- containing a human skeleton! How did such a thing get there? And why was the tiny room sealed up? With the help of a diary found in the room, Dana learns her house was once a station on the Underground Railroad. The young woman whose remains Dana discovered was Lizbet Charles, a conductor and former slave. As the scene shifts between Dana's world and 1856, the story of the families that lived in the house unfolds. But as pieces of the puzzle begin to fall into place, one haunting question remains -- why did Lizbet Charles die?

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 890 (What's this?)

Series: Aladdin Historical Fiction

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Aladdin; Repackage edition (January 1, 1999)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689824351

ISBN-13: 978-0689824357

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.7 x 7.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (48 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #128,690 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #166 in [Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > 1800s](#) #287 in [Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > African-American](#) #1006 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Girls & Women](#)

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

This is my first book by Lois Ruby, so I don't know her literary track record, but I must say: I am impressed! She offers detailed scholarship, twisting plots with tantalizing revelations of the mystery, good character development and the ability to juggle two different storylines, some 130 years apart. This book will capture the interest of today's teens; the coexisting stories feature a girl of the 90's

and a boy of the pre Civil War era. While enjoying the mystery and trying to piece together the historical puzzle, readers will effortlessly absorb information about the anti-slavery movement in Kansas, Quaker lifestyle and the underground railroad. Through it all as the chapters flip-flop in time, there emerges the character of a strong heroine--one Lizbet Charles, 23, an escaped slave and self-proclaimed "conductor". This undaunted young woman dedicates her life to aiding fugitives seeking freedom in Canada. Her sudden arrival impacts the home of the Weaver family, already embroiled in the anti-slavery wars in the Midwest. Ma risks her marriage to shelter escaped slaves, while Pa works through legal channels to establish Kansas as a Free state. All of which poses a difficult moral dilemma for young James; to fight fire with fire (and a gun) or to stand by the family's religious convictions. How will a conscientious Quaker youth respond under pressure? Whose Right has greater precedence? And how can the kids of the present honor the homespun heroes of the past? What would be fitting memorials to Lizbet's courage and James' dedication? This is one fast and fascinating read!

The book *Steal Away Home* by Lois Ruby is very good. There are two main characters. One is twelve-year-old James Baylor Weaver, who lives in Lawrence, Kansas, in the year 1856. His house is a station on the Underground Railroad, but only while his father is away. James and his mother and his sister Rebecca must keep this a secret from James's father. The other main character is twelve-year-old Dana Shannon, who lives in James's house about 140 years later. When she discovers a human skeleton in a hidden room behind a wall in her house, she and some scientists work hard to find out who the skeleton is. (Or was.) But Dana has something that the police don't - a diary that she found in the room, the diary of Millicent Weaver, James's mother. From the diary, she learns that the skeleton is Lizbet Charles. But why did Lizbet die? To find out, read this book. It is a very interesting book and I would recommend it to anyone who likes to read.

What would you do if you found a skeleton in your closet? This happens in the book *Steal Away Home* by Lois Ruby. Dana, a 7th grader, finds one in her new house. Next to the skeleton she finds a diary which contains the clues to the mystery. Dana and her friends use the diary to investigate the case and see who the skeleton was. The diary they discover was written during the time of slavery and was written by a woman named Millicent Weaver. The Weavers were a Quaker family that used to live in Dana's house. Slaves were running away using the Underground Railroad to escape slavery. Slaves came to the Weaver's house and the Weavers didn't know what to do with them. Dana, the main character in this story, is willing to take any risk in order to solve the case.

She has a good relationship with her parents even though she keeps the diary a secret for a while. When she makes a promise she keeps it which is why she has a lot of friends and is a likable person. When she gets an idea in her head nobody can get it out of her head which is why she tries hard to solve the mystery and not give the diary to the police. I think that the theme of this book is to learn how to keep trying and not to give up if you fail. I like this book because it has a lot of detail and at the end of each chapter it leaves you in suspense. This book takes you on a journey from present to past and back again many times. When I first picked up the book and started reading it, I was so into the book that I couldn't put it down. As I read I felt eager to find out what would happen next. I felt as if I were with Dana and the Weavers. If you like mystery and suspense then you will like reading this book. Don't forget to also read its sequel, *Soon Be Free*.

Dana and her parents bought and moved into a 100 year old house. But when they bought it, they didn't expect to find a dead body inside. The next chapter takes you back 100 years to when the house was brand new. I've never read a book like this before but I got it because it sounded interesting. " Behind the wall was a small room, and in the eerie shadows.....was a small crotch, two cots, and on one of them, a full skeleton." page 5. This part really catches the reader. You know inside Dana's head was confusion and that's what I felt. This book should be read by interested readers. People that like to sit on the edge of their seats. It is a book that most people would like.

This is a wonderful mystery for youth that's content can be trusted as not including any vulgarity or sexual content, no accomplishment of murder, and nothing that any parent wouldn't want their child to read. The intricacy with which the author has intertwined the history of slavery as it was ending in our country and the fight many yet had for their lives on either side as well as those coming out of slavery is far better and more accurate than many adult books have shown history along with a story.

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