

## Born in the Year of Courage

*Emily Crofford*

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It is the mid-1800s and Manjiro, a young fisherman, is shipwrecked far off the coast of his native Japan. At this time in history, Japan is an isolated country that allows its citizens no contact with the rest of the world. Foreigners are called "barbarians"--and none are more despised than Americans. But when Manjiro and his fishing companions are rescued by an American ship, Manjiro makes some startling discoveries about the world of the barbarians--and about his own country. His dramatic rescue leads to a series of amazing escapades, and in the end Manjiro travels farther than he ever dreamed he would.

*Born in the Year of Courage* is based on the true story of Manjiro's remarkable life. It is both an exciting adventure tale and a fascinating look at a bygone world.

## **Born in the Year of Courage Details**


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Author : Emily Crofford

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## From Reader Review Born in the Year of Courage for online ebook

### Dawn Roberts says

Really interesting true story of a Japanese boy who is shipwrecked and rescued (then adopted) by an American whaling captain, at a time when no one who leaves Japan is allowed to return.

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### Lori says

I, along with my youngest, just finished reading this excellent story based on a true account of Japanese fishermen who were shipwrecked in the mid 1800's, rescued by an American whaling ship and tried to get back to Japan. However, because Japan at the time was entirely closed to the outside world, anyone who ever left the country for any reason, was never allowed to return, on penalty of death. This remarkable story of "Manjiro" is fascinating in its scope. Read in conjunction with Commodore Perry in the Land of the Shogun brings multiple dimensions to the story and the history of Japan. This is a book specifically written for children, junior high level, but definitely worth a quick read for adults interested in the story. Highly recommended.

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### Katie says

Based on a true account of a lesser know historical figure - I had never heard of him before - this was a quick account of his experiences. It seemed a little rushed at times, but I think that was because of it's intended audience (juvenile). I loved having the details of his story so that when he is referenced in other works we are reading, we know something about this man that helped Japan open its ports and proverbial door to foreigners in the second half of the 19th century.

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### Marci Christensen says

A little slow, but overall it was a good story. Good references to other historical people and events.

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### Cathy Cole says

Based on the life of a real person, Born in the Year of Courage is the story of a poor, fifteen-year-old fisherman named Manjiro who, in 1841, was marooned on an island with his crewmates and later rescued by an American whaling ship. Since the American ship was not allowed to enter Japanese territorial waters, Manjiro and the others knew the only thing they could do was stay aboard the whaler.

When the whaler leaves Hawaii, the other fishermen choose to stay in that tropical paradise, but Manjiro follows Captain Whitfield. Manjiro is raised by the Whitfields as a son. He learns English, attends school, and signs on as second mate and navigator on board another American ship. Extremely hard-working and loyal, Manjiro remains true to both his Japanese and his American families, and as an adult works tirelessly to open Japan to contact with the rest of the world.

This book, geared towards pre-teens, is just as interesting to read for adults. Crofford shares much information into the lives of the Japanese in the first half of the nineteenth century as well as what life aboard a whaling ship was like. The chapters concerning the shipwreck and being marooned on a rather barren island are gripping.

Manjiro, a simple man whose culture didn't allow him to have a surname, is a truly inspiring person who believed that oceans link countries, not separate them, and he spent his life working for what he believed in. I am a long way from being a pre-teen, but I was very impressed with the power and insight of this book.

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### **Carol E. says**

It's a kid's book about a young teen boy from Japan who gets ship wrecked and then, after rescue, experiences many other adventures. It's based on a true story of a man who lived with courage and humility.

The book gave me an interesting thumbnail history of Japan, and the main character was an impressive person. This book would surely be a good historical/creative fiction book for a younger person.

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### **Michelle Albanese says**

This was an excellent book! I read this book aloud to my 12-year old daughter as part of her history studies this year. It is based on a real person and events. That always makes it more interesting to me. Manjiro was a fifteen-year-old Japanese boy who, in 1841, was marooned on an island with his crewmates of a whaling boat. After being rescued by an American whaling ship, Manjiro and the others are taken to America because American ships are not allowed in Japanese waters so they can't return them to their home.

While the other fishermen chose to stay in Hawaii, Manjiro follows Captain Whitfield to his home and is raised by the Whitfields as a son. He gets an education and decides to sign onto another whaling ship. He is extremely smart and hard-working. Manjiro is also resourceful and always comes out on top of his many adventures. What he truly wants is to open up Japan for trade with the rest of the world. But if he returns, he may be killed or thrown into prison.

This book is intended for preteens, but I really enjoyed it too. We also read "Commodore Perry in the Land of the Shogun" and Manjiro is mentioned in it as well.

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### **Lisa says**

A biography for young children about Nakahama Manjiro, a poor fisherman of Japan's "commoner" class who, after being shipwrecked on the island of Torishima in 1841 during Japan's period of isolation, was rescued by the American whaler ship John Howland and brought to Honolulu. Manjiro then went to live in Massachusetts, learned English, and ten years later returned to Japan and worked as a translator and interpreter to help open up trade between Japan and the United States in 1853.

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**Erin says**

3 1/2 stars. My boys (ages 9 and 7) and I enjoyed this based-on-a-true-story book. It correlated well with our history study and kept our interest.

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**Michael says**

I thought it was a good book and described the life of manjerro well and who he went on great adventures and helped change japan

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**Tammy says**

Interesting read. Moved kinda slow.

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**Skye says**

Pretty good. Kids level, but gives good info in an easy to read way.

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**Leichty Library says**

Copies: 1

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