

# An island like you

[Family](#)



Yee Yee it's my essay Check this An Island Like You, by Judith Ortiz Cofer is about a bunch of teens who live in the barrio of New Jersey. The short stories you read throughout the book will show you how they come of age and learn values and connect to their heritage. One theme that I like is be thankful for those who keep bad influence away. This theme is portrayed in the stories of bad influences and catch the moon. "Bad Influence" details a summer in the life of a young Puerto Rican girl from Paterson, New Jersey. In keeping with the other stories in the collection, "Bad Influence" speaks to topics specific to young Puerto Rican Americans, while addressing issues universal to young people. At fifteen, Rita, the narrator, is at odds with the world of her Puerto Rican grandparents, whose eccentric, old-fashioned ways strike her as ridiculous. A typical teenager, she is hypercritical of the adults around her, and finds them invasive and disrespectful of her boundaries. Rita has been sent to the island to stay with her grandparents to keep her out of trouble with boys. Initially she is brutally caustic and critical of everything from her grandmother's telenovelas to her grandfather's spiritual powers (which she satirizes as Ghostbusting). Her take on Papá's approach to curing a family of an evil spirit (or mala influencia) is both hilarious and believable. Over time, however, Rita makes a new friend and comes to appreciate her grandparents and life on the island. In the course of the summer, Rita manages to assert her individuality while incorporating her heritage, in her effort to navigate both the American and the Puerto Rican in herself. "Catch the Moon" is about a trouble-making juvenile named Luis Cintron that just got home from a detention center. He dislikes the joy of working or dedication but he changes dramatically throughout the story to become hardworking and caring. This change occurs because the presence

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of a girl named Naomi, also the remembrance of his mother how passed away from cancer. At first Luis is thought of to be a juvenile delinquent and doesn't like authority. He seems to be rather lazy and lacks hard-working qualities. He also pays little attention and has no interest in the things his father talks to him about especially dealing with the junkyard he owns. A girl named Naomi came to the junkyard looking for a hubcap to go on her car. He was immediately attracted to her and looked very familiar. He realized she had been at his mother's funeral, this brought up memories of his mother before her death. That night his father allowed him to take the car out, while driving around Luis found himself thinking about his mother and becoming very emotional. He parked the car and started crying, to his surprise he had parked in front of Naomi's house and she was drawing a picture of him. It showed him holding up the hubcap. I feel as if Naomi's picture was him reaching for the moon or a star which can be interpreted as him being able to reach any goal as long as he puts forth the effort. Right away he went to the junkyard determined to find her hubcap. After searching long and hard he found her match and brought it to her door. Luis changes through this story as soon as Naomi came into the junkyard. She inspired him into doing something he doesn't enjoy doing which is working. His dedication into pleasing her really opened him up and showed who he really is deep below all the trouble he got himself in. The remembrance of his mother was finally brought out through his emotions which he never wept till then. He starts caring about things now and wants to please himself and others that are important to him. He understands some of his father's words and knows that hard work is important in life and pushing yourself for a cause makes you feel good. Luis is a good person overall, he just gets into trouble sometimes

but it seems to be all changing because of a special girl, Naomi. In life people tend to hide how they really feel because they want to be tough or they don't want people thinking something else of them. A lot of times it takes someone who you care about to bring out the real person and be yourself. People can influence each other in positive and in negative ways. In " Catch the Moon" Luis seems to be negatively influenced by his friends but changes after a positive desire for change and the reaching out of Naomi. An Island Like You, in my opinion is one of the best books I have read in a long time. I don't usually read but this book caught my attention with its vivid description of what the teens were going through and was kind of like how my was a few years ago.