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Blue Skies For Lupe



Synopsis

Blue Skies for Lupe will warm readers' hearts with its simple, but gripping story based on the real-life adventures of a Mexican immigrant born with physical disabilities. Linda Kurtz Kingsley's charming tale is supported by her beautiful watercolors, sensitively rendered to capture the landscapes and people in Lupe's life. Lupe's mother, Mami, leaves for America to get the best care for her daughter. They cross the desert at night and arrive in California where their new life begins. Mami works as a farm laborer, and while in the fields she sings Cielito Lindo to little Lupe. It means beautiful little sky, just like the blue skies of California and Mexico. The years pass, and Lupe is ready for school. She cannot walk, so she uses a wheelchair, and has an aide, who helps her understand her lessons in English. Lupe has moments of self-doubt, but is reassured by Mami with her quiet refrain, You'll do fine. A shared giggle in the classroom after an incident when Lupe accidentally runs over her teacher's toe--caramba!--leads to friendship. Encouraged by Mami, friends, and teachers, supported by accommodations, and respected for her Hispanic heritage, Lupe blossoms. She's on her way, confident that she can do anything she wants, and knows she'll do fine! This inspirational story is full of hope, offers life lessons about working hard to achieve your dreams, and shows the value of a supportive community. The book includes an update on the adult Lupe's accomplishments and future plans, as well as a short glossary of Spanish-language vocabulary words featured in the story.

Book Information

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Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Customer Reviews

Without being sentimental, *Blue Skies for Lupe* narrates the story of a girl with spina bifida who left her native Mexico for California when she was only a baby tucked in her mother's shawl. Author Linda Kurtz Kingsley has skillfully turned interviews with Lupe and her mother into a sweet and realistic story of perseverance in the face of physical challenges. Moreover, Kingsley's bright watercolors beautifully capture the colorful landscapes and people in Lupe's life. "When I was born," Lupe says, "I wasn't perfect. My spine stuck out, my head was too big, and my body was too small." Doctors told her mother that Lupe would never walk because she has spina bifida. Right from the start, Lupe's Mami encouraged her, "Just you wait. You'll do fine." Those weren't hollow words either. When Lupe's Mami heard that American doctors were best, she carried Lupe across the Mexican desert and into California. Unfortunately, the doctors couldn't help. Instead when Lupe's legs stayed short and weak, while her friends' legs grew longer and stronger, Lupe received a wheelchair and an aide to help her. Lupe also learned, among other things, how to use a whiteboard and marker so she could complete and show her schoolwork. In response to every adversity, with the help of family and friends, Lupe learned to do things in her own way and did just fine. As such, Lupe serves as an example to all of us how to be ourselves and to follow our dreams, a message that I appreciate both as a reader and as a special education teacher. "Cielito Lindo" means beautiful little sky, and the California sky was beautiful like the skies in Mexico. *Blue Skies for Lupe* isn't just about overcoming a disability, but is also a tribute to Lupe's Mexican heritage. In America, Lupe's mother got a job as a crop-picker.

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