

A book for, by and about brown girls

Brown Girl Magic

FATINHA RAMOS & DALILLA HERMANS

Noen comes home from school angry, sad and confused. After some urging she tells her sister Maan that she's being bullied by Teejo because of her dark skin and curly hair. He says this isn't her country and she should just buzz off. Although several people make clear to her that such bullying is unacceptable, Noen continues to wonder whether maybe Teejo was right. Maan tries to comfort her by pointing out what's special about Noen's skin and hair. She turns it into an ode to all brown girls, putting into words what brown girl magic means to her.

The descriptions are beautiful, with sometimes mischievous wordplay

MAPPALIBRI

'Brown Girl Magic' is a bilingual book (Dutch and English) in rhyme. The illustrations by Fatinha Ramos are deeply moving and speak, sometimes shout, without words. In a time of #browngirlmagic and #blacklivesmatter, it's important to be aware of the effect that racism has on children. After all, the stories children are told help to determine how they experience the world and what they regard as 'normal'. With 'Brown Girl Magic' Dalilla Hermans presents a beautifully nuanced view of the broad range of emotions and deep impact that racist comments can bring about. This book offers girls of colour not just a window on the world but a mirror in which to see themselves.

The warm, colourful illustrations give the book great added value. Emotions are captured vividly, in both colour and composition.

PLUIZUIT



AUTHORS



Fatinha Ramos (b. 1977) is an award-winning illustrator and visual artist originally from Portugal. Open-minded and known for her creative somersaults, she tears down all the classic conventions, avoiding the dangerous pitfalls of cliché. She takes us on a journey through her poetic imaginary world of singular textures and rich colours. Her strong conceptual illustrations and surreal compositions create a unique universe. Photo (c) Ann De Wulf

Dalilla Hermans (b. 1986) is an opinion former, politician and writer of Rwandan extraction. As a child she experienced time and again how complicated it can be to grow up in Western society as a person with a different skin colour. After an open letter about racism in 2014 the subject continued to occupy her mind. She frequently uses the media to appeal for more open communication between people, irrespective of their origins or skin colour, as a way to rid the world of stubborn prejudice and misrepresentation. Photo (c) Jef Boes

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