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Elena's Serenade (Americas Award For Children's And Young Adult Literature. Commended)



Synopsis

Who ever heard of a girl glassblower? In Mexico, where the sun is called el sol and the moon is called la luna, a little girl called Elena wants to blow into a long pipe...and make bottles appear, like magic. But girls can't be glassblowers. Or can they? Join Elena on her fantastic journey to Monterrey -- home of the great glassblowers! -- in an enchanting story filled with magic realism.

Book Information

Lexile Measure: 780L (What's this?)

Series: Americas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature. Commended

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; 1st edition (March 1, 2004)

Language: English

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 25 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #117,076 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Mexico #37 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Central & South America #122 in Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Music

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

Customer Reviews

A delightfully fresh take on the "anything you can do, I can do better" theme, Elena's Serenade follows a feisty little Mexican girl on a quest to prove to her father--and herself--that she can be a glassblower, even if she is a girl. Magic realism abounds as Elena journeys (dressed as a boy) to Monterrey to learn from the great glassblowers. Along the way she meets a burro, a roadrunner, and a coyote, helping each of them accomplish their goals as she blows tunes through her father's cast-off glassblowing pipe. Arriving in Monterrey, our little "muchacho" is mocked at first, but soon silences her detractors (who continue to think she's a boy) when she creates beautiful glass stars through her pipe. If only her Papa could see what she can do! Perhaps if she blows a giant bird (golondrina), she can fly home. A lovely story penned by Campbell Geeslin, with lyrical acrylic and

crayon art by the illustrator of Jonah Winter's *Frida*, Ana Juan. Readers will revel in the whole experience--words, pictures, message, and all. (Ages 4 to 8) --Emilie Coulter

Kindergarten-Grade 4--In this story set in Mexico, a young girl longingly watches her papa blow into a pipe to create bottles, and dreams about doing the same. Papa disapproves, with comments about her size and gender. Hurt and angry, Elena takes her brother's advice and, disguised as a boy, begins a journey to Monterrey, home of the great glassblowers. Stopping to rest along the way, she pulls out her pipe to blow and is surprised when a melodious sound emerges. Her beautiful notes give lost and lonely Burro comfort, help hopeless Roadrunner to move faster, and allow shrill-sounding Coyote to make sweet melodies. With newly acquired confidence in her abilities, the girl finally reaches Monterrey. Although the men laugh at her, she closes her eyes and plays "Estrellita" while blowing a star out of glass. Desperate to share her talent with her father, Elena blows out a giant bird and flies home, and Papa soon realizes how special she is. The story flows well and Spanish words are smoothly incorporated into the text. The alluring acrylic-and-crayon illustrations have a stylized folk-art quality that helps to set the stage for the tale. Juan uses striking color combinations and shifting perspective to keep attention focused on the child and her changing emotions. The final images of Elena, complete with smiling face and flowing hair, reveal her blossoming identity along with her talents. A fascinating adventure that explores issues of gender roles, self-confidence, and the workings of an artist's heart.--Tracy Bell, Durham Public Schools, NC
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This book has a wonderful message, and the writing is beautiful. It feels very musical in a way, which fits right in with the plot. I bought it for my 5- and 2-year-old. Not only does it have a good message (be true to yourself), but I love that words in Spanish are peppered throughout, making it easy for little ones to pick up, and the illustrations are wonderful, too.

This is very fun to read. The book is particularly empowering for little girls and for women who have been told they can't do something just because of their gender. I love how the Spanish words help emphasize some parts of the story. Illustrations are stunning!

I bought this book as it was listed as one of the girls empowering books on A Mighty Girl Facebook page. Since the purchase and despite having so many children books in our library, my 5 years old is only asking for this one: before breakfast, on the way to school, after school, bedtime ...you name

it. Very imaginative writing using as an excuse a skill which is very uncommon these days: glassblowing. Everyday now we have to watch a video too about glassblowers, just lovely .

This book is about Elena who is a little girl living in Mexico with her glass-blowing daddy and brother. She wants to be a glass blower too but her daddy says that girls are not glass blowers. Elena decides to travel to the big city and learn glass blowing. It's a magical, musical, empowering story. In the end, Elena comes back home with a truly unique gift. My 3 3/4 year old daughter loves the book and so do I!

We've had this book for 2 years, and my 7-year-old still loves this book. It was a big hit at read aloud in her class too.

It was a great read for my incoming 2nd grader.

Wonderful story and beautiful illustrations.

gift for a favorite 4 year old who loved it above the others I sent!

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