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In The Country We Love: My Family Divided



Synopsis

The star of *Orange Is the New Black* and *Jane the Virgin* presents her personal story of the real plight of undocumented immigrants in this country. Diane Guerrero, the television actress from the megahit *Orange Is the New Black* and *Jane the Virgin*, was just 14 years old on the day her parents were detained and deported while she was at school. Born in the US, Guerrero was able to remain in the country and continue her education, depending on the kindness of family friends who took her in and helped her build a life and a successful acting career for herself, without the support system of her family. *In the Country We Love* is a moving, heartbreaking story of one woman's extraordinary resilience in the face of the nightmarish struggles of undocumented residents in this country. There are over 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the US, many of whom have citizen children, whose lives here are just as precarious, and whose stories haven't been told. Written with best-selling author Michelle Burford, this memoir is a tale of personal triumph that also casts a much-needed light on the fears that haunt the daily existence of families like the author's and on a system that fails them over and over.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

People always mention how brave an actor is for altering their weight for a role or playing a sexual orientation different from their own but I don't think that's brave in the least. I think putting your life down on paper as honest and raw as Diane Guerrero has done is brave. Imagine being 14 years old when your family is deported and you fall through the cracks of

the system so no one from social services or any agency come to check on you, to make sure you're okay and cared for. This is what happened to Guerrero: an American born child whose brother and parents were undocumented immigrants. While you probably know her for her roles on OITNB and Jane the Virgin her memoir isn't about her acting career (although it does touch on her pursuit of her dreams) it's about the reality of undocumented life in the U.S. that never seems to be discussed while people are too busy shouting about building walls, deportation, and the terrible term "anchor baby." From her childhood, through her teen years struggling to live without her family, the years of resentment, her serious bout with mental illness, Guerrero bares her life showing her faults, her heart, her humor, that the saying kids are resilient is not so, and most importantly her fight to thrive and succeed. I could not recommend this book enough, especially if you liked *The Book of Unknown Americans*.

This was a good book. I love depressing memoirs and this fit the bill for 80% of the book. I didn't really like that it gave a weird 1/2 foreshadowing at the very beginning then goes all the back so then you know exactly when her parents get deported so you're not really getting into the full shock of it all for her. It wasn't like everyone didn't know, it says it on the book jacket but you otherwise it would have been more in keeping with the trauma of the story. She works hard to achieve her dreams and I really admire that about her. It gets a little preachy at the end which might be good to open someone up to the ideas that immigration is a good thing for America but I honestly don't know who would read this book that didn't already believe that? I had the Kindle version and I wish the formatting was better for the pictures because I'd get the description later which was awkward. All in all I'm glad I read it.

Dear Diane: thank you for your candor and vulnerability and honesty. I am in immigration and refugee lawyers, and I see the pain of our immigration system every day in the eyes of our clients, as well as the cost of living with insecurity on a daily basis. I admire your work, all of it (Jane is one of our favorite shows in the office!!!!!!). The book was just excellent and I will be highly recommending it!!

The headlines of Diane's story may seem like one of those fairy tale stories of triumph over adversary while enjoying the success of the hit show *Orange is the New Black*. ("but don't get it twisted") What is clear is that only through some incredibly dark days, resilience, falling and getting back up, did Diane overcome one of worst situations anyone could imagine. Her candid discussion

of mental health issues also inspires a conversation about those unable to access help. "Emotional wellness is a first world luxury", and already a neglected issue. Diane's story has already inspired so much conversation about this important topic and for anyone wanting a closer look, you will undoubtedly feel for this brave individual.

In this book Diane Guerrero, actress in the popular *Jane the Virgin* and *Orange Is the New Black* TV shows, details her experiences as the daughter of undocumented residents who, at the age of 14, suddenly finds herself alone in the US when her parents are deported. Readers will be shocked at how easily Diane slipped through the US system with no government agency contacting Diane, an American citizen, to make sure she was okay after her parents were deported. Instead she relied on the help of her community in Boston, her own sheer determination and the generosity of family friends to take her in. But even with their support, Diane feels quite alone and is forced to become an adult at too early an age. The issues of undocumented residents has been in the news quite a lot lately making this book relevant and timely. Guerrero gives a personal look into what life is like for undocumented residents - the constant fear of being caught, struggling to make ends meet and being victims of fraudsters out to take advantage of people who desperately want to become legal citizens. She also shows the strength, love and support of her local community and how they come together to help whenever they can. Her account is, at times, heart-breaking, maddening and shocking but always with a real honesty. She doesn't sugar coat her problems and faults with her readers as she struggles to remain connected with her parents, deal with her feelings of abandonment as well as confront alcohol abuse and mental health issues. She has a very casual and conversational feel to her writing with some contemporary slang (complete with occasional hashtags) thrown in. Sometimes this writing style can backfire and this book felt more like chatting with a girlfriend most of the time. But I think, for the most part, it works for this book and I couldn't help but imagine her saying some of these lines in a Maritza Ramos style. For those who aren't *Orange Is the New Black* fans, Maritza is the character that Diane plays on the hit show. Diane talks a bit about her *OITNB* experiences and cast mates - their banter and connection is just as solid on and off set as you'd imagine. Now when I watch *Orange Is the New Black* I have a much better understanding of this relatively new actress. You really cannot understand a person until you've walked a mile in their shoes. As a Canadian citizen, I have had a very different experience growing up but I appreciate how thoroughly she described her feelings and struggles to her readers to enable us to get a glimpse into her life and help us to sympathize with people in similar situations. While she has started on a successful career as an actress and has become an advocate

for immigrants, readers witness how the loss of her parents, at such an important juncture of her life, influences her positive and negative life experiences in such a dramatic way. While Diane accounts her own struggles in this book she has become the voice of many who continue to fight for the opportunity to be American citizens. She is a force to be reckoned with and I applaud her for sharing her painful upbringing, humanizing immigration and shedding the light on America's need for inclusivity.

Overall just a great read. Some of it is lighthearted while other parts are gut wrenching. I can't imagine growing up without my parents and handling it as well as Diane did. Being that I'm a huge OITNB fan and knowing how she's portrayed her character Maritza so well, I had high hopes for this book. However, she went beyond my expectations and delivered her message in a very passionate yet educated manner. Forever a fan of Diane! #Encore

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