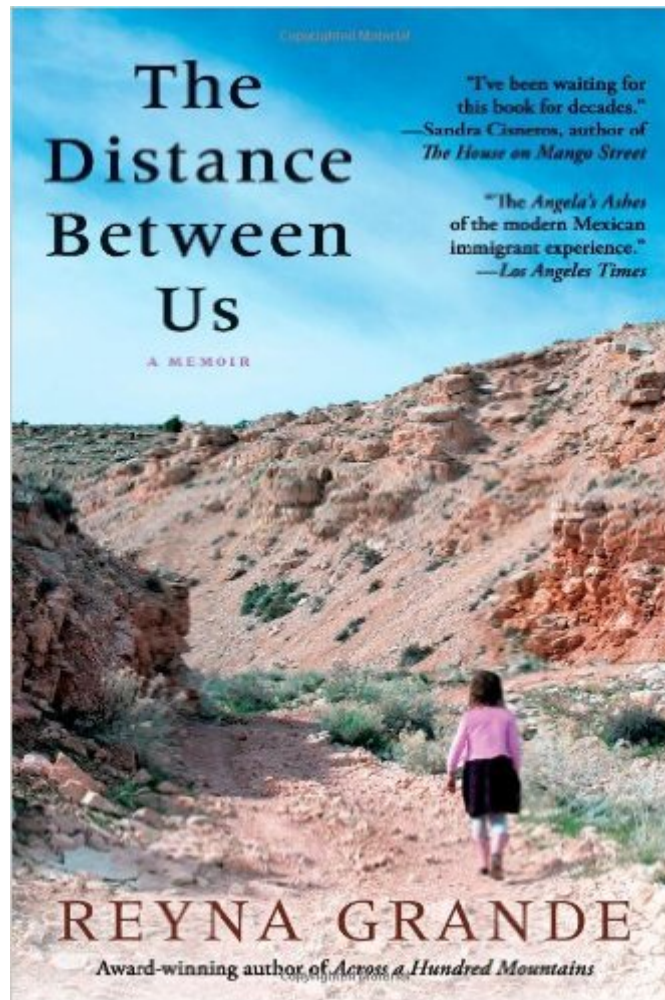


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The Distance Between Us: A Memoir



Synopsis

“A brutally honest book” akin to being the Angela’s Ashes of the modern Mexican immigrant experience • (Los Angeles Times). Reyna Grande vividly brings to life her tumultuous early years in this “compelling . . . unvarnished, resonant” • (BookPage) story of a childhood spent torn between two parents and two countries. As her parents make the dangerous trek across the Mexican border to “El Otro Lado” • (The Other Side) in pursuit of the American dream, Reyna and her siblings are forced into the already overburdened household of their stern grandmother. When their mother at last returns, Reyna prepares for her own journey to “El Otro Lado” • to live with the man who has haunted her imagination for years, her long-absent father. Funny, heartbreaking, and lyrical, *The Distance Between Us* poignantly captures the confusion and contradictions of childhood, reminding us that the joys and sorrows we experience are imprinted on the heart forever, calling out to us of those places we first called home.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"The Distance Between Us" may be the most important book you read this year. No matter what your politics are, the immigration debate is definitely one of the most, if not the absolute most, contentious issues of this tumultuous election season. It becomes easy after awhile to let the images of fences, government legislation, and faceless bigotry cloud our perspectives. Reyna Grande has provided us with a very personal narrative, one that puts a special "face" on the issue. The face belongs to little Reyna...a four year old resident of Iguala, Mexico, who is delegated

to the care of her paternal grandparents when her parents make the decision to flee (illegally) to "El Otro Lados" (The United States) to earn enough money to eventually return to Mexico and their children to build their "dream house." Reyna is the youngest of three, her older brother and sister provide much needed solace to Reyna during the ordeal, which lasts way, way too long. We follow the Grande children through their breathtaking struggle to cope with surviving the life of "little orphans" in Mexico and all the way through the difficult path that comes with the remainder of their childhood. All of it expressed through the musings of Reyna, or "Nena" as she is lovingly referred to by her "little mother", her sister, Mago. As memories perceived through the eyes of a child, become the reader's guide, the book takes us on an intimate tour of the Mexican immigrant's experience both left behind in Mexico and across the perilous border into El Otro Lados. This book is not as heavy on poetry, beautiful prose, and magical realism as many previous Latina/Chicana pieces of literature that I have read.

The Distance Between Us by Reyna Grande "The Distance Between" is the inspirational coming-of-age memoir that captures a girl's challenging journey to reach her dreams.

Award-winning writer Reyna Grande candidly shares her childhood that is reflective of the difficult challenges of the modern Mexican immigrant experience. This extraordinary woman shares her life with frankness and along the way provides a voice for many immigrants. This heart-warming 338-page book is broken out into the following two parts: 1. Mi Mamá; Me Ama, and The Man Behind The Glass. Positives: 1. A well-written, engaging, heartfelt coming-of-age memoir. Honest, personal storytelling. 2. A fascinating topic: the immigrant experience through the eyes of a Mexican girl. 3. The book has a very good flow. Grande is very descriptive and you never feel lost as a reader. It's her innate ability to tell a story and to adequately capture the emotions is what makes this reading experience very real. 4. A good story needs conflicts, challenges and this book is full of them. Some of the stories are gut wrenching and disturbing but ultimately heart-warming. 5. Touches on many topics of interest: poverty, immigration, politics, domestic abuse, alcoholism and education. These topics are not discussed as a separate issue but form part of the narrative. Grande asks big questions even as a little girl. 6. Thought-provoking. Some quotes will stick with you. 7. Family dynamics are very interesting. Growing up with very different grandmothers highlights how personalities impact a child. Parents leaving to "El Otro Lado" with the goal of providing for their families. Children desperately seeking role models and guidance. 8.

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