

To Catch a Rainbow: Connecting People, Play and Places

Thandie M. V.

Susan Shorter, Illustrator

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The world is indeed a small place, and Thandie M. V. has crafted a playful and educational book that highlights diversity and similarity.

A children's book about how small our world really is, *To Catch a Rainbow: Connecting People, Play and Places*, by Thandie M. V., is a lovely story about how easily our lives link with other countries. Simple, bright illustrations draw in the eye, while the story of the life of a young girl links the chain of our connected globe.

Rose was born in South Africa, and while she was still quite young, her family moved to Kenya, where Rose began school for the first time. Next the family moves to Zimbabwe, where Rose makes new friends with differing backgrounds. Here, she starts dance school and plays tennis, just like children all over the world. A classmate points out that she does not look like her mother, but her mother teaches her that she likes things that all children do, such as playing and swimming and dancing; therefore, children are more alike than different. Next the family moves to Switzerland, and Rose is excited for the snow there. Even though she has lived in and traveled to many places, Rose still finds that many things are alike, such as what children enjoy and even how food can be similar from two very different places.

Thandie M. V. was trained as a journalist in Zambia and has worked with the United Nations for many years in international relations. She writes in a pleasant, childlike voice and organizes chapters with a young train of thought. She excels in drawing the parallels between what most would assume are very different worlds. After Rose moves to Switzerland, she enjoys the different foods and the similar foods: "The two of us enjoy *nshima* from Zambia together. ... I ask Arthur as we munch along, 'Don't you think *nshima* is like polenta that we eat at school?'" Who would think that there would be similar food between Zambia and Switzerland? The narrator also points out in multiple chapters that no matter where she is living, or where she has lived, people enjoy doing the same things, no matter their backgrounds.

Simple, bold colors celebrate the diversity and similarities in the illustrations by Susan Shorter. The book begins with a table of contents for the first portion of the book, and is interrupted with another table of contents halfway through.

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BETH VANHOUTEN (November 30, 2015)

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