

When i was puerto rican by esmeralda santiago

Literature



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She and her husband founded the award-winning film and production company Contomedia. Her prestige also lies in the vast amount of dedication she has shown by working with victims of domestic violence. In this same spirit of giving she is also prided for her assistance in founding the Massachusetts based shelter for women and a Youth Service Center. Esmeralda Santiago is not only an internationally acclaimed author but also a dedicated editor, who has written for many diverse publications such as the Boston Globe, New York Times, and many more.

Summary of the book:

When I Was Puerto Rican is a personal recollection of growing up and having to live in the ever-changing world due to hopes and dreams that need to be fulfilled. It highlights the issues that were important in the author's life, especially in her childhood. The most crucial of these issues is becoming acquainted with the way of life and traditions in Puerto Rico. Esmeralda also brings up the importance of taking action, this being seen by how her mother left her father. It also tells in a very creative and understandable sequence how Esmeralda Santiago's life changed when her family moved from the small village in Puerto Rico to become immigrants in New York City.

The book creates an understanding of the cultural challenges that the author was faced with and how she aimed to overcome them. The story also places emphasis on the love and strength that a family can give to each other. Most of all it is a story about personal perseverance to making the best out of one's life regardless of the circumstances.

Themes of the book:

The theme that seems most dominant in the book is culture. This can be seen when Esmeralda and her family move to Brooklyn. The cultural

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diversity and difference are evident in her need to find a place to belong when her family arrives in America. Another crucial theme that allows the book to function is family. Again the author makes us aware that her family has played a crucial role in her life. It is also clear that self-sacrifices and personal adaptation without losing your heritage are an important theme in the book. This shows that people who really want to make a change can and will if only they are willing to make the sacrifices.

Conclusion:

Esmeralda Santiago has done a great service for many people. It is clear that even though her story does reflect many typical families, due to her telling of the story it still makes it unique and unheard-of before in the reader's mind. The book *When I Was Puerto Rican* is very inspiring, as the reader feels more than part of the book. They can share in the character's lives and feel the sorrow and joy that comes with living. It always you to find the inner strength to say if Esmeralda Santiago who grew up in a small village in Puerto Rico can do it, that means I can do too and my situation is not all that bad. It opens up one's own inner achiever regardless of your culture.