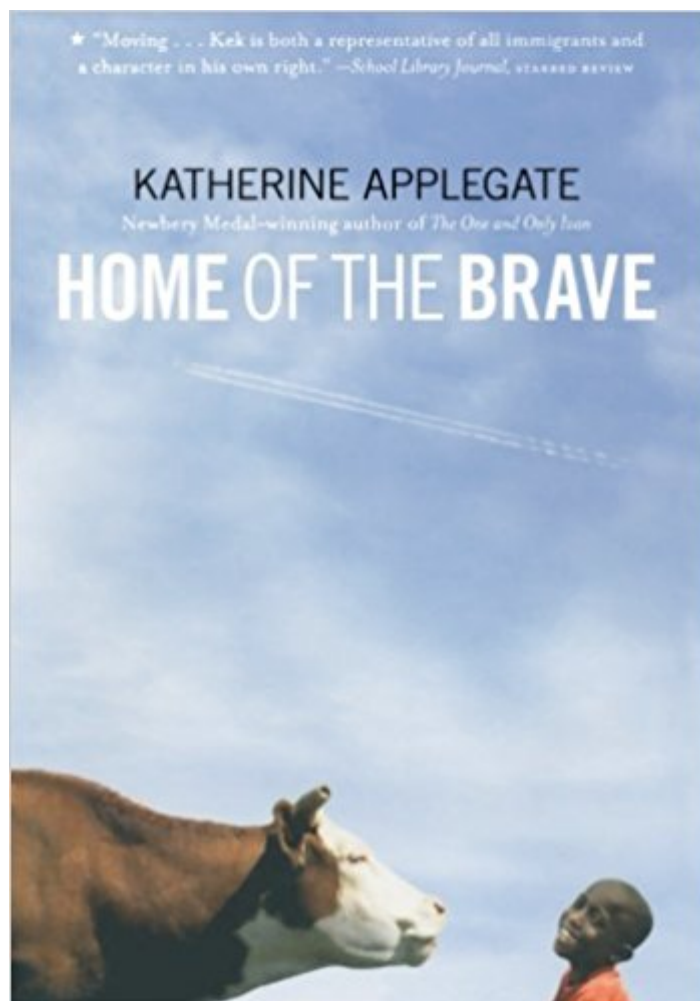


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# Home Of The Brave



## Synopsis

A man I helped to settle here taught me a saying from Africa. I'll bet you would like it: A cow is God with a wet nose. Kek comes from Africa where he lived with his mother, father, and brother. But only he and his mother have survived. Now she's missing, and Kek has been sent to a new home. In America, he sees snow for the first time, and feels its sting. He wonders if the people in this new place will be like the winter—cold and unkind. But slowly he makes friends: a girl in foster care, an old woman with a rundown farm, and a sweet, sad cow that reminds Kek of home. As he waits for word of his mother's fate, Kek weathers the tough Minnesota winter by finding warmth in his new friendships, strength in his memories, and belief in his new country.

## Book Information

Paperback: 272 pages

Publisher: Square Fish; Reprint edition (December 23, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0312535635

ISBN-13: 978-0312535636

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 18.4 x 194.6 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 85 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,622 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Children's Books >

Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Africa #15 in Books > Children's Books >

Growing Up & Facts of Life > Fiction #219 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life

Age Range: 10 - 14 years

Grade Level: 5 - 9

## Customer Reviews

Kek, a young Sudanese refugee, is haunted by guilt that he survived. He saw his father and brother killed, and he left his mother behind when he joined his aunt's family in Minnesota. In fast, spare free verse, this debut novel by nonfiction writer Applegate gets across the immigrant child's dislocation and loss as he steps off the plane in the snow. He does make silly mistakes, as when he puts his aunt's dishes in the washing machine. But he gets a job caring for an elderly widow's cow that reminds him of his father's herds, and he helps his cousin, who lost a hand in the fighting. He finds kindness in his fifth-grade ESL class, and also racism, and he is astonished at the diversity.

The boy's first-person narrative is immediately accessible. Like Hanna Jansen's *Over a Thousand Hills I Walk with You* (2006), the focus on one child gets behind those news images of streaming refugees far away. Rochman, Hazel --This text refers to the Library Binding edition.

“Beautiful. Thank you for publishing this book. Thank Katherine Applegate for writing it.”  
—Karen Hesse  
“Moving . . . Kek is both a representative of all immigrants and a character in his own right.”  
—School Library Journal, Starred Review  
“Precise, highly accessible language evokes a wide range of emotions and simultaneously tells an initiation story. A memorable inside view of an outsider.”  
—Publishers Weekly  
“This beautiful story of hope and resilience . . . is an almost lyrical story.”  
—Voice of Youth Advocates  
“The boy's first-person narrative is immediately accessible. Like Hanna Jansen's *Over a Thousand Hills I Walk With You*, the focus on one child gets behind those news images of streaming refugees far away.”  
—Booklist  
“The evocative sparseness of the verse narrative will appeal to poetry lovers as well as reluctant readers and ESL students.”  
—The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books  
“. . . beautifully written in free verse . . . a thought-provoking book about a topic sure to evoke the empathy of readers.”  
—KLIATT

My kid's 5th grade teacher is reading this outloud in class. She told me she was having trouble with it so we bought it to read at home where she can ask questions. Nice quality paper back book. It's written in poetry type format in the view point of a someone who doesn't speak English very well so describes items strangely. Seems to evoke much thought and teaches to visualize the text.

Ava babcockMs. ShineBook reviewMarch 23, 2017Persevere and be braveThe book *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate, is one of the most touching and entertaining books I've read in a long time and it never stopped making me want to read more. Keks journey through the book is very lighthearted but funny and he perseveres through the tough situations he goes through and doesn't stop believing in what he wants. This book has strong emotions to flow and carry you through book, strong and poetic descriptions to create a visual image in your mind, and finally, realistic characters to help you relate. In the end, we learn The most about persevering than anything else. This story takes place in present time. Kek is from Africa and has to move to America because his dad and brother died from an attack and his mother went missing. He doesn't want to live in America and really wants to find his mother. But eventually, he finds friends and has a fun time. He even makes a

special friend... A cow! Kek goes through a lot during these situations in the story but his friends and family help him throughout the way. This book can get very emotional. For example, at one point in the story Kek he's talking to his cousin, Ganwar. Ganwar is saying that Kek shouldn't believe what he does. He thinks that believing is not right. The text says, *“Finally Ganwar speaks/ They're all gone Kek/ They're all dead./ I want to hate Ganwar for his words./ But I am too weary for anger./ Already there are so many people to hate,/ too many./ Not all, I finally whisper./ Not Mama./ He sighs, it isn't good to fool yourself./ I've learned that much./ Hoping isn't foolish, I say.”* (p. 44) This was emotional because Keks cousin was just pushing all his hopes down the drain and not letting him think what he wants to think, even if it might not be true. The text also says, *“Listen, buddy, Dave says,/ I'm afraid I've got some more news./ I heard from Diane./ They tracked down the people made it to/ The two refugee camps I told you about./ Something grabs my throat/ and tries to steal the air away./ None of them was your mom, Kek./ I look away./ Nearby a crow flaps it's great, black wings.”* (p. 196) This was emotional because Kek was just figuring out that the people hadn't found his mom yet. He was super disappointed and from then on started little by little, not believing. This book can be very emotional. This book is very poetic and descriptive. For example, the text says, *“The cow is near a fine,/ wide-armed,/ good-for-climbing tree./ To say the truth of it,/ she is not the most beautiful of cows./ Her belly sags/ and her coat is scarred/ and her face tells me/ she remembers sweeter days.”* This part of the text shows me that it is very poetic and descriptive because reading this, I could really imagine what the cow looks like. The text also says, *“Lou puts her hands on her hips./ She's wearing jeans like mine and a big shirt./ Her hair is short and silver/ like a fresh moon./ She has many wrinkles/ to show her great knowledge/ of the world.”* (p. 118) this part in the book was very descriptive. It really helped me figure out and know what the lady looks like. Her description helped me know what her personality is like. This book is very descriptive. And last, this book has very realistic and relatable characters. Having realistic characters helps you relate to the book. For example, the text says, *“I reach out and touch/ a piece of bright green food/ I've never seen before./ And then I begin to cry./ Hannah rushes over to my side./ It's OK, she says./ We can leave if you want.”* This shows relatable characters because I think if you were new to a country, and has never seen a store before, you would most likely be overwhelmed with all the items and food. The text also says, *“Do you like the cold?/ I want to say/ No, this cold is like claws on my skin!”* This quote from the story may be short, but it sure is relatable. I can imagine that someone that hasn't been in snow before would dislike it. I know I would, with all

the stinging and coldness of it! This book is relatable. Throughout this book, Kek goes through very tough situations that finds a way to sneak through all of them. We learned that persevering and having grit is the best way to get through almost all the tough situations in life. Just be brave and try your best. I definitely give this book a five out of five star rating! You absolutely have to read this.

Wow! I'm a sixth grade teacher looking for a summer reading book that would be a great appetizer for our first unit of the year "My place in the world." The story is riveting and touching, with a perfect amount of humor that keeps it from being too heavy. The language is both rich and accessible to middle school readers. This is beyond my wildest expectations!

Katherine Applegate has an uncanny knack for writing from very different perspectives. This book will captivate young and more mature readers alike with such a warm and realistic story so important to these times.

Brought this for my daughter who is reading this book with her class so they are all enjoying this book for sure.

Great book written from the perspective of a refugee living in Minnesota. It taught my students a lot about different Sudan culture and how different other people's lives are from there own. There were some parts that were maybe a little too dark for my 5th graders, but Kek's hope always brought their spirits up again.

Young Kek comes to Minnesota from Africa, to a land so different from his own. This touching story lets young readers see a different point of view about finding a way to fit in without losing yourself.

My son really enjoyed this book.

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