

# Journey into the Heart of Storytelling

## An Interview with Eva Dietrich

Eva Dietrich, acclaimed author of *The Giant Rainbow Hug*, shares her inspiration and narrative philosophy in an exclusive interview with Reader's House, revealing the timeless magic of storytelling for children.

In the enchanting world of children's literature, where stories serve as bridges between imagination and reality, we often find gems that not only entertain but also nurture young minds with invaluable lessons. Eva Dietrich, the creative force behind "The Great Rainbow Hug," exemplifies this fusion of storytelling magic and meaningful narratives.

Dietrich, a distinguished author celebrated for her literary contributions, graciously shares her insights in an exclusive interview with Reader's House magazine. With a background enriched by Masters' Degrees in Children's Literature from the University of Surrey, London, and Creative Writing from the Metropolitan University of Manchester, UK, Dietrich is a luminary in the realm of storytelling. Moreover, as the founder and director of Aladdin Books & Media Agency, she continues to shape the landscape of children's literature.

Dietrich's multicultural upbringing, blending Spanish and German heritage, adds depth and richness to her storytelling palette. Currently residing in Madrid with her three children, alongside a vibrant menagerie of pets, Dietrich's experiences infuse her work with warmth, diversity, and a universal appeal.

*The Giant Rainbow Hug* stands as a testament to Dietrich's narrative prowess, having been recognized by La Revue Des Livres Pour Enfants in 2011 as their annual selection. The heartwarming tale revolves around the endearing friendship between Sheiboob and Zipang, two unlikely companions who embark on a journey of discovery, love, and resilience.

In our interview, Dietrich delves into the genesis of her characters, shedding light on the inspiration behind Sheiboob and Zipang's unique bond. From the inception of these beloved characters as a monkey and a gorilla toy, to their profound friendship rooted in acceptance and courage, Dietrich unveils the layers of her storytelling craft.

Central to *The Giant*

*Rainbow Hug* is the symbolism of a rainbow jumper, a poignant gift that transcends distance and embodies the essence of love and connection. Dietrich eloquently shares her creative process, illustrating how simple yet profound elements can resonate deeply with young readers, imparting invaluable life lessons.

Throughout the interview, Dietrich's passion for crafting relatable characters and narratives brimming with empathy shines through. Drawing from her own experiences as a mother and storyteller, she underscores the importance of nurturing emotional intelligence and fostering empathy through literature.

As children's literature continues to evolve, authors like Eva Dietrich serve as beacons of inspiration, weaving tales that not only captivate young hearts but also sow the seeds of kindness, resilience, and understanding. Join us as we embark on a journey into the enchanting world of "*The Great Rainbow Hug*," where every page is imbued with the magic of friendship, love, and en-



ring power of storytelling.

### Can you share more insights into the inspiration behind the characters of Sheiboob and Zipang and their unique bond in the story?

Initially, Sheiboob and Zipang were a monkey and a gorilla toy. The uniqueness of their friendship lies in their ability to embrace their differences while having the courage to step out of their respective comfort zones and educate each other, all the while basking in the comfort of knowing they have each other's backs no matter what.

### What message or theme were you aiming to convey through the relationship between Sheiboob and Zipang?

The main message I wanted to convey was that true friendship and love can withstand a little separation, can even be born in spite of physical separation, and that we will always carry the people who have touched our hearts with us wherever we go.

### How did you come up with the idea of using a rainbow jumper as a significant gift in the story?

A warm, cosy jumper can easily be associated with a warm hug. If the jumper still carries the scent of a loved one, it can come very close to a warm, comforting hug. I think this is an image that young children can easily relate to.

A colourful rainbow is a symbol of hope, of the sun coming out after a storm, which can be associated with a soon-to-come reunion with a loved one, conveying the message that the separation is only temporary.

### What motivated you to include elements of loneliness, friendship,



"Enter the enchanting world of *The Giant Rainbow Hug*, where love knows no bounds and friendship bridges the gap between hearts."

### and comfort in the narrative?

Every child experiences the fear and anxiety of separation from a parent, a close relative such as a grandmother, or even a friend, sibling or cousin. Loneliness, friendship and comfort are present from early childhood and throughout our adult lives. It is important for children to understand that they are not alone with these feelings and that there are ways to compensate for temporary feelings of loneliness, while also understanding that feeling lonely and being alone are not the same thing.

### How do you approach creating relatable and engaging characters for children in your stories?

Staying connected to one's inner child is certainly one way to approach it. Having children of my own has given it a whole new meaning and perspective.

### What do you believe is the importance of including valuable life lessons or morals in children's books?

Reading is an essential part of a child's emotional development and growth. It increases their empathy and compassion, as well as their understanding of the world around them and their role in it.

PHOTO: Eva Dietrich: Crafting Heartfelt Tales of Friendship, Love, and Resilience in 'The Giant Rainbow Hug'