Exploring the Skies and Fields with REBECCA VICTOR

A Voice of Courage, Gratitude, and Rural Inspiration

Rebecca Victor, author and mother, shares her inspirations from rural upbringing, family values, and her daughters, crafting educational yet entertaining children's books fostering literacy and imagination.

Nestled in the heart of Wiggins, Colorado, author Rebecca Victor paints the landscape of her childhood memories with strokes of courage, gratitude, and rural charm. Married to her best friend Ronnie, and a mother to three inspiring daughters—Mya, Ellie, and Tessa—Rebecca's journey into the world of children's literature is a testament to the power of family, resilience, and the magic of storytelling.

From the humble confines of her 900 square foot farmhouse to the boundless skies above, Rebecca's upbringing in a farming community laid the fertile soil for her literary aspirations. Surrounded by the warmth of family tales and the backdrop of the Buckingham Ranch, Rebecca imbibed the spirit of adventure and the value of hard work, shaping her into the storyteller she is today.

With a backdrop steeped in aviation, Rebecca's books soar to new heights, with characters like Ellie, Tessa, and Mya taking centre stage in tales of bravery, gratitude, and cultural exploration. Inspired by her daughters and their diverse interests, each character embodies a facet of Rebecca's own journey—be it resilience in the face of adversity, the courage to embrace one's uniqueness, or the gratitude for life's blessings, no matter how challenging the circumstances.

But Rebecca's stories transcend mere entertainment—they serve as windows into worlds both familiar and unknown, educating young readers about the wonders of agriculture, aviation, and diverse cultures. Through meticulous research and personal anecdotes, Rebecca weaves a tapestry of learning and discovery, inviting children to explore, question, and dream.

Yet, perhaps the most rewarding chapter of Rebecca's literary voyage lies in the classrooms and communities she touches. As she shares her books with eager minds and curious hearts, Rebecca fosters a love for literacy that transcends the pages of her stories, inspiring children to embrace their creativity and imagination in a world often dominated by screens.

Looking ahead, Rebecca's pen is poised to craft new adventures on the pages of children's literature, with upcoming projects delving into the world of dairy farming and beyond. With each story, she hopes to find a place on every bookshelf and in every classroom, enriching the lives of young readers and igniting the spark of imagination that lies within each child.

In a world where the rush of daily life often drowns out the whispers of storytelling, Rebecca Victor stands as a beacon of hope—a storyteller who reminds us of the magic found in the simplest of tales and the power of courage, gratitude, and rural inspiration.

What inspired you to write children's books, particularly focusing on themes of courage and gratitude?

I have always wanted to write a children's book and because I'm in the dental field I always thought it would be something in that genre.

Take flight with 'Ellie The Crop Duster Saves The Farm,' where courage and gratitude soar high above the fields, inspiring young hearts to reach for the skies.

However, when I became a mother and our youngest was diagnosed with autism her preference was any book that had something to do with modes of transportation. After reading all that we could find in the local libraries and amazon, I noticed a big gap in the aviation related books and so, I chose planes. I specifically chose little girl planes because of my three girls, but I also feel like aviation has been a field that strong and determined women have always been a part of. As for the themes of courage and gratitude, we always try to teach that to our girls. There's always something to be thankful for, even in the tough times. My grandpa, before he passed away, would remind me every time we would end a visit or a phone call "Sis, don't forget to count your blessings" and so that's become my mantra, trying to see the good and the light in the experience no matter how hard it is. This hasn't always been easy. In 2019, a distracted driver hit us at a stop light traveling 65mph and the worst of Mya's injuries was a moderate brain injury, Tessa's autism diagnosis followed the car accident, and I suffered my own injuries physically, but emotionally as a momma, this was the hardest thing we've had to go through to date. Thankfully Ellie wasn't in the vehicle that day or the spare tire that ended up in her car seat would have been a deadly outcome.

How do you incorporate your own childhood experiences growing up in a farming community into your stories?

I didn't always appreciate growing up on the farm, in fact as a kid I often grumbled about having to help out during those long summer days when my classmates and friends were at the baseball field. However, the work ethic I gained, the freedom from things that now tie our younger generations to screens inhibiting their sense of adventure and discovery, and the time we shared as a family even in the hot and sweaty hay field, is something my husband and I are working towards getting our family back into the country and into the dirt! Agriculture is such an important and yet dying industry in today's society, so I'm hoping to inspire and share the love of it with readers young and old! In Ellie The Crop Duster Saves The Farm, my love and nod towards my little family farm shines through as our farm dog Roman stars in the story, Miss Frizzle is inspired by a chicken we had growing up, and my mom is illustrated in the pumpkin patch (the woman holding the pumpkin in the air). I'm currently working on my next book that will also highlight a different area of the agriculture industry but this time on a dairy farm. In the fall I would work in the scale house at our local dairy weighing silage trucks and we live in an area of Colorado where there are 5 or 6 dairies and feedlots within a 10-15 mile radius.

Can you tell us about the process of creating your characters, such as Ellie, Tessa, and Mya?

I was going to start with just one book, but with 3 girls, how do you just pick one?! So Ellie became a crop duster, Tessa became an airtanker, and Mya a plane on an island. I chose Ellie for the book cantered around farming because she is my brave and determined one, the one I see myself in the most as far as her "farm girl" traits. Not afraid to pick up the toads or get dirty helping with the garden or whatever the task is, she will do it with courage and grit. Tessa's character, the air tanker, came from her love of all things firefighting. My dad, his brothers and their dad were all Denver Firefighters, so maybe that's where her love for fire fighters come from. Tessa's character is also a reflection of her determination and struggle as a kiddo on the autism spectrum, she is often misunderstood by her peers, and yet her intelligence and way she perceives the world has stopped me in my tracks with appreciation and awe so often. Mya, as I mentioned, suffered a moderate brain injury at the age of 7. She has had and continues to overcome difficulties that aren't often seen (like a cast on a broken arm) and so I wanted her character to demonstrate gratitude and seeing things from a different perspective when she ends up in a situation that she wouldn't have chosen for herself. My husband Ronnie also grew up in the Caribbean on the island of Trinidad, so I wanted to highlight a different culture and dialect in one of my stories. I chose Curacao specialty after finding a blog about an airplane that someone had carried the pieces of into the jungle and had planned to turn into a kitchen, however, plans must have changed and now it's overgrown with plants and jungle.

What message do you hope young readers take away from your books?

I hope young readers take away the love of reading and learning about different things or cultures, and that it inspires them to even write down their own creations. That's why I chose my motto to be, "Inspiring the love of literacy one character, one story, and one book at a time."

How do you approach writing stories that are both entertaining and educational for children?

I love to read and I think the stories that I love the most are the ones that make me think a little deeper or learn something or see something in a new and interesting way that I haven't experienced before. So with all of my books I wanted to do the same. For Ellie's book, I reached out to our local pumpkin farm for information about how crop dusting is used in pumpkin farming as well more about crop dusting including the history and different ways crop dusting planes can be used. In Tessa's research, living in Colorado we often have wildfires, so I wanted to learn more about aerial firefighters and how they are used in fighting fires. For Mya's book, I wanted to be sure that the animals I picked were unique but also that they lived on the island. In Colorado we have lots of deer, but I wondered how on earth did a deer get to an island? I also felt like it was important to not only highlight another culture, their people of history (like Tula), and their dialect that makes them unique.

What has been the most rewarding aspect of sharing your books with classrooms and readers?

Sharing my books with schools whether it's in the classroom or a bigger group presentation have been my favourite part of being an author so far! I love seeing their eager listening ears and inquisitive questions that not only get them thinking, but me too! I hope that I can inspire them to write their own stories and step outside of the world of screens where creativity and imagination are being robbed from their childhoods.

Are there any upcoming projects or new characters you're excited to introduce to your readers?

I am currently working on researching for my 4th book centred around a dairy farm. There are things like murmuration (the term used to describe the groups of birds that fly above dairy farms) and help readers understand where their food comes from when they open their refrigerator. Something that I again would love to help little readers learn about and older readers enjoy with silly puns and "old time" phrases that I often hear from my grandma Shirely as a nod to the old days! I am considering having the main character in this story be a tractor and Ellie just be a guest in her part of dairy farming.

How do you see your books fitting into the larger landscape of children's literature, and what sets them apart?

I think every author's dream would be to have their books on every bookshelf or bedside table, and be in every classroom or school library, so that's my dream too. I also try to make my stories unique with the additional information in the back of the stories, adding personal connections that I can share in more detail to my school groups, and adding the fun worksheets that go with each story on my website for families or schools to print and do together as a family. I don't know if there's anything that warms my heart more than to hear my girls read to me or to pull my little nieces and nephew into my lap and read them a story. You can't beat that time together and the bonding that happens around a story book.