



My Name Is Sangoel

By Karen Williams, Khadra Mohammed

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Sangoel is a refugee. Leaving behind his homeland of Sudan, where his father died in the war, he has little to call his own other than his name, a Dinka name handed down proudly from his father and grandfather before him.

When Sangoel and his mother and sister arrive in the United States, everything seems very strange and unlike home. In this busy, noisy place, with its escalators and television sets and traffic and snow, Sangoel quietly endures the fact that no one is able to pronounce his name. Lonely and homesick, he finally comes up with an ingenious solution to this problem, and in the process he at last begins to feel at home.

Written by the authors of the acclaimed *Four Feet, Two Sandals*, this poignant story of identity and belonging will help young readers understand the plight of the millions of children in the world who are refugees.

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My Name Is Sangoel By Karen Williams, Khadra Mohammed Bibliography

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- Brand: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers
- Published on: 2009-06-01
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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 1–3—When eight-year-old Sangoel comes to the United States from war-torn Sudan, everyone mispronounces his Dinka name until he has the bright idea to make a rebus of a sun and a soccer goal on his T-shirt. This simple story puts a child-friendly spin on a common immigrant experience as the child's classmates respond with similar puzzle pictures of their own names. Stock's mixed-media illustrations include scenes from the sun-drenched refugee camp, the U.S. airport with its confusing messages, and the family's new home in a snowy city. The diversity of the boy's schoolmates is evident in Stock's skillfully detailed watercolor and collage illustrations. An endnote gives more information about refugees and refugee camps as well as about Dinka naming practices. This picture book by the authors of *Four Feet, Two Sandals* (Eerdmans, 2007) is an excellent addition to the growing body of immigration stories for young readers.—*Kathleen Isaacs, Children's Literature Specialist, Pasadena, MD*

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Review

AWARDS and RECOGNITIONS

Smithsonian Magazine, Notable Books for Children (2009)

Children's Book Council, Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People (2010)

International Reading Association-Children's Book Council Joint Committee, Children's Choices (2010)

Maine Association of School Libraries, Chickadee Award Nominee (2010)

Pennsylvania Library Association, Carolyn W. Field Award, Honor Book (2010)

Children's Africana Book Awards, Noteworthy (2010)

Washington Children's Choice Picture Book Award, Nominee (2011)

Arkansas Diamond Primary Book Award, Finalist (2011)

Keystone State Reading Association, Keystone to Reading Book Award Nominee (2010-2011)

Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC), Choices (2010)

Friends of the Roanoke County Public Library, Roanoke Valley Reads (2011)

Junior Library Guild, Selection

United Society of Friends Women International (USFWI), Reading List

School Library Journal

"This simple story puts a child-friendly spin on a common immigrant experience. . . an excellent addition to the growing body of immigration stories for young readers."

Kirkus Reviews

"A sensitively written, hope-filled immigrant story. . . Though a skinny eight-year-old with downcast eyes, Sangoel is such a picture of quiet dignity that readers will come away admiring his courage and self-possession."

BookPage

"This is the gentle story of one refugee boy from Sudan and his adjustment to life in his new country, the United States. . . Through soft watercolors and the occasional torn photo or fabric collage, Stock's

illustrations let the reader understand exactly how Sangoel is feeling and what a tremendous challenge it is to move to a new country and continent. . . Most schools in America have refugee children or children who are adjusting to a new culture and language; this is a book. . . that should help build compassion in many classrooms."

About the Author

Karen Lynn Williams has written several books about the difficult lives of children around the world, including *Galimoto*, *Tap-Tap*, and *Circles of Hope*. Karen has lived in Haiti and Malawi, and currently lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Khadra Mohammed is the executive director of the Pittsburgh Refugee Center and has worked with refugees both in the U.S. and abroad for more than twenty years. She and Karen Lynn Williams previously collaborated on the acclaimed *Four Feet, Two Sandals*. Kh

Catherine Stock is the author and illustrator of *Where Are You Going, Manyoni?* (Morrow) and *Gugu's House* (Clarion). She has illustrated numerous other books, including Karen Lynn Williams's *Galimoto* and the *Gus and Grandpa* series of books by Claudia Mills. She lives in New York and France.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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