



2015

The Ugly One

Liz Kazandzhy

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr>

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation

Kazandzhy, Liz (2015) "The Ugly One," *Children's Book and Media Review*. Vol. 36 : Iss. 6 , Article 57.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol36/iss6/57>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.

Book Review

Title: The Ugly One

Author: Leanne Statland Ellis

Reviewer: Liz Kazandzhy

Publisher: Clarion Books

Publication Year: 2013

ISBN: 9780547640235

Number of Pages: 256

Interest Level: Intermediate, Young Adult

Rating: Excellent



Review

Micay is a 12-year-old Incan girl known in her village as “The Ugly One” because of a large scar that runs along the right side of her face. Because of being bullied relentlessly by the boys in the village, she has become secluded and tries to avoid others so as not to shame them with her ugliness. But all that changes one day when a stranger comes to town and gives her the gift of a baby macaw. As the macaw (named Sumac) grows bigger and more handsome (and also occasionally defends Micay from her bullies), Micay also grows in her own self-confidence, and as the new chosen apprentice of the shaman Paqo, she begins to integrate more among the village people. Meanwhile, the whole empire is suffering from a drought, and when Micay takes a journey to the most holy city, she helps to end this drought and learns just how special she is.

The storytelling skills of the author make *The Ugly One* an engaging book for intermediate readers. With a likable, sincere, but struggling 12-year-old girl as the protagonist, the target audience is definitely preteen/teen girls; however, even other audiences may appreciate the book’s intriguing setting as well as the main character’s struggle to accept herself. In fact, the main messages of developing self-esteem, overcoming the effects of bullying, and embracing your personal gifts are what make this book so relatable to the audience, especially if readers themselves have or are struggling with similar issues. The Incan setting may be hard to relate to since it is so different than our modern world, but this is also an advantage because it encourages a discussion on culture and religion and exposes readers to a way of life that they were most likely not familiar with before. There is also a helpful pronunciation guide at the end, which comes in handy considering all the Incan words used in the text. Overall, this is an excellent book that can help promote self-esteem and self-discovery, as well as educate the reader about the unique and fascinating Incan culture.