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Dance Like a Leaf

Jennifer Padgett

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Book Review

Dance Like a Leaf

Author

AJ Irving

Illustrator

Claudia Navarro

Reviewer

Jennifer Padgett

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Rating

Excellent

Level

Primary

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Pages

32

Year

2020

ISBN

9781646860579

Publisher

Barefoot Books

Amidst the beautiful autumn leaves, a girl and her grandmother sip tea together and send greetings to the trees. They sing sweet melodies and twirl aimlessly, dancing like the leaves. As months pass by, Grandma starts forgetting things. Grandma is fading as if parts of her are simply disappearing in the wind, so the girl watches over her, mentioning the beauty that surrounds them and ensuring they do the things they love. Soon, Grandma no longer gets up, watching from her bed as the girl paints a picture of the two of them playing in the gentle breeze. As winter rolls around, Grandma's bed lies empty. But when autumn arrives again, the girl welcomes the chance to celebrate what was always Grandma's favorite time of year with hot tea, her scarf, and dances in the wind.

This is a heartwarming story about love and loss, healing and remembrance, and the influence of the relationship between a grandmother and her grandchild. Children who have experienced similar connections will treasure this book, and those who haven't will be touched by it as well. The illustrations throughout are vibrant and expressive, appearing in an assortment of illuminating colors. They are welcoming, captivating, and complement the text. The words are relatively easy to read, and they are poignant and laced with a plentiful supply of figurative language. Though the book introduces the concept of death and the absence that prevails, it rejoices in the memories that remain, a message that will resonate with a broad audience.