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The Story of Diva and Flea

Rachel Wadham

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Review

Diva, a very small dog who lives at 11 Avenue Le Play in Paris, feels safe in her garden even though big feet might step on her. Flea, a cat who lives on the street, loves to explore and has adventures every day. One day Flea’s travels go past Diva’s garden and the two strike up a friendship. Flea regales Diva with stories of the wide world and eventually convinces her to take a few small steps to see the tower that pierces the sky. In return, Diva introduces Flea to the wonders of the indoors like food that is there for the taking and brooms that don’t chase you away. Together the pair discover new worlds as they face down their greatest fears and Diva learns to confront the feet entering her garden.

Willems’s signature playfulness balanced with DiTerlizzi’s rich illustrations create a beautiful storybook perfect for developing readers. Diva and Flea are delightful characters whose personalities shine through with the humorous text and detailed illustrations. The setting is perfect for the plot and the illustrated backgrounds expertly reinforce the scenes adding richness to the story. The subtle theme about facing your fears and exploring the world is effortlessly displayed though both Diva and Flea’s point of view in such a way that young readers will certainly respond. Along with the work’s division into brief chapters and the supportive illustrations balancing each page of text, this story is perfect for sharing or for a young one’s independent reading.