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*Across a hundred mountains* by Reyna Grande

Reyna Grande was born in Iguala, Mexico on September 7, 1975. She is a Mexican author that has written a lot of novels winning awards, as well as a writer she is also a inspirational speaker. Reyna Grande is the author of *Across a hundred mountains*, published in 2006, winning the American Book Award. Even though it is a fictional novel, it reads a lot of true stories. This book has had a big impact on a lot and most of the readers, speaking truth about how there are events in the novel that can said to be true, or that someone had lived or has someone that lived something similar to the protagonist.

*Across a hundred mountains* main characters are, Juana, Adelina, Miguel Garcia the father of Juana, Lupe the mother of Juana, Don Elias, and Don Ernesto. The narrator in the novel is Juana which means it is written in first person. The argument on the story is that Juana's sister has died, and her mother fell in a depression. Juana's father left to the other side of the border, which is the United States of America to get a better job and have money. After two years, Juana decides to go look for her father since they are in desperate need of money. As Juana goes off to find her father she encounters Adelina Vasquez who is a lady that went in search for her lover leaving her family behind in California. Juana and Adelina meet in jail and then they become really close to each other. Adelina ends up getting killed by her boyfriend and Juana steals her identity, she finds out her father also is dead, and encounters her brother Miguelito. She goes

back to her mom and takes her brother with him so that her mother can see him one last time before she dies. This novel has a lot of themes but one that I will be focusing on is on the American Dream.

The novel *Across a hundred mountains* makes reference to the American Dream in how the father talked about “El otro lado” and how he came over to get a better future for his family. The sad part of the novel is that they never really got to experience the American Dream, her father died in the border with the hope of making it, and Juana did not get the American Dream. This novel made the American Dream sound so real and beautiful but at the end it made me as the reader doubtful that there is an actual American Dream. Juana’s father says “Look at those houses over there, aren’t they beautiful? See those lights flickering on? They have electricity there, running water, gas. When it rains, the houses never get flooded, and the roofs don’t leak, and the people stay warm” (pg.20). This is when Juana’s father talks about El otro lado, and how different it is from where they are in at the moment. Although all he said is true, there is a price that one has to pay in order to attain all that he described, and Juana’s father unfortunately paid with his life. Another time when the American Dream is brought up is when Juana’s father’s friend talks about El otro Lado, “ Apa’s friend wrote about riches unheard of, street that never ended, and building that nearly reach the sky. He wrote that there’s so much food to eat, people there don’t know what hunger is” (Pg. 27). The people in this novel are describing the scenery and the commodity that people live in here in the states, and for people here this is normal, and it seems that everyone has about the same, but little do we know that it is not the same for other people. I felt as if I am taking for granted all the little things that seem normal to me, and impossible to see and live for other people.

*Across a hundred mountains* is a book that truly opened my eyes, not only to appreciate where I live and how I live but also, it was an eye opener for me to not take things for granted. Juana had a it rough to finding out her father passed away and unexpectedly finding her missing brother, not forgetting that her sister died as well. The American Dream to that family was unreachable, and to many it is that way unfortunately. To me it was handed, and I am lucky to say that, my parents gave up everything for us, and this is something that we (the people who are handed with it) might forget sometimes, and take it for granted. There is a clear message that the author is trying to send, but to me it was to appreciate what I have in my life, because not everyone runs with the same luck as I did. This novel questions the American Dream, Juana's father was the perfect example for it, he was not able to achieve it, and it is similar to many stories, that people come for a better future, but sometimes they don't even make it.