

THE SPICE BOX



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Meera Sriram grew up in India and moved to the U.S. at the turn of the millennium. She is the author of several picture books, including *A Garden in My Hands* and *A Gift*

for Amma, which *School Library Journal* called an “excellent story for young readers to enhance their understanding of color and an aspect of traditional Indian culture” in a starred review. An electrical engineer in her past life, she now enjoys writing for children and advocating for early and multicultural literacy. Meera loves yoga and chai, and lives with her husband and two children in Berkeley, California.

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ABOUT THE BOOK

A father and son share family stories through a spice box, handed down from generation to generation, in this tender picture book.

Rishi's grandma arrives from India today, and he longs to cook curry alongside his dad using the delicious flavors from his family's spice box. But this spice box is more than just fragrant spices in shades of gold and ruby. This spice box holds memories that were passed down from one generation to the next, as each found their place in this wide world. When Rishi drops the box that holds the family's heart and history, he draws courage and meaning from their treasured past to set things right.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Sandhya Prabhat is an independent animator and illustrator based in the Bay Area, California, who hails from Chennai, India. She holds an MFA degree in animation and digital

arts from NYU Tisch School of the Arts Asia and a bachelor's degree in literature from Stella Maris College. She has illustrated several picture books for independent publishers, including *I Am Brown* and *Today I Am*.

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PRE-READING

1. What is a spice? What are examples of spices?
2. What spices do you have at home? What does that tell you about your family?
3. What do you think the word paati means?
4. Make one prediction about what you think will happen to the spice box.

POST-READING

1. What does the spice box symbolize in Rishi's family?
2. What is the importance of the spice box to Rishi?
3. What are five adjectives that describe Paati's appearance? What are five adjectives that describe her character? Provide text evidence to support your answer.
4. Why do you think Paati took the box with her from the village to the city?
5. Choose a country and create a spice box for it, using at least five different spices. What can these spices tell us about this country?
6. The illustrator uses patterns, colors, and designs to show us which country this spice box comes from. Using the same concept, draw the spice box you created, using colors, words, and patterns to tell us which country this spice box comes from.

