

BRAIDING

Crowns of Friendship



STORY BY
CHRISTINE ALDRICH

ILLUSTRATED BY
ARI SILVA

“Christine Aldrich is a wonderful writer, who picks up on themes of diversity and being unique. As a teacher and a mom to multicultural children, I believe ‘Braiding Crowns of Friendship’ is a must read for children across the globe. I enjoyed every part of this story, which takes the reader on a journey of discovery.”

Pashmina P.

International bestselling author of
‘The Cappuccino Chronicles Trilogy’ and *‘What is a Gupsey?’*
Founder, Agent and Advisor, The Online Author’s Office (OAO)

“Christine Aldrich celebrates diversity in her debut children’s book, ‘Braiding Crowns of Friendship’. She shares a wonderful story of self-love as the main character learns to value and appreciate her beautiful braids. As a teacher, I believe this book can impart many valuable lessons in classrooms globally.”

Charlotte L. Taylor

International bestselling author of
‘Broken Twigs: Farewell to Faerie Forest’
Senior Education Consultant, The Online Author’s Office (OAO)

Christine, what a wonderful children’s book! It reminded me of my first days in a new school. The messages of acceptance and loving yourself are so positive. This is a great book to read to children of all ages!

Linda Owens

Chief Facilities Officer
Compton College

'Braiding Crowns of Friendship' is a beautiful story of friendship, family and perseverance. It takes a village, and sometimes one "little friend" to make a difference. Christine Aldrich's ability to simultaneously hone in on a child's own self-reliance and, at the same time, illustrate how important inclusion is in a child's life is both timely and timeless. This story's message will transcend with each generation and will remain relevant.

Minolie Gordon

Compliance and Support Group Administrator UCLA

As an educator of elementary and secondary children, I will definitely be adding 'Braiding Crowns of Friendship' to my classroom library both for reading aloud to the children and for their own independent reading. This book will not only teach children about diverse cultures, embraced here through the differences and uniqueness of all types of hair styles, but it will also teach children the power of friendship.

Nadra Marts

Teacher, Barak Obama Charter School

Braiding Crowns of Friendship by Christine Aldrich, perfectly addresses issues of friendship, faith, and culture in a way that will allow young readers to relate to times in their lives where they may have felt different and gives them the confidence to embrace their unique gifts. A must read for teachers and parents who want to empower their children.

Zolita Fisher, Ph.D.

Educator

Braiding Crowns of Friendship tells a story that both children and adults can relate to. It reminds us that differences should be celebrated! Christine, who I've known for 40 years, wanted to share her story, so that children, specifically, could know the importance of building strong friendships as well as surrounding yourself with folks who praise you for being you. Christine is one of the most passionate authors I know. She wants to include everyone in her journey, and as a result she decided to share her voice. I admire Christine's passion, desire and courage to bring her first book to publication. Anything is possible when you put your mind to it. We should never feel uncomfortable in our own skin. Thank you Christine, for sharing a story that makes me feel that being myself is not just okay, but is necessary for me to live my most authentic life. ."

Dushanthie Jayamaha (aka "Little Friend")

Sr Director, Transformational Projects

How wonderful to see young people in the book solve a negative experience with support and in such a positive way. May it inspire other people and young people to come to similar, empowering solutions!

Mom

It looks like Christine Aldrich is a natural storyteller — succinct and focused. Plus, she has great insights on social issues, and she has that rare ability to translate to all audiences. Her spotlight at this point in her career as an author is clearly on the right age group, since children are our future. A clear winner!

Dad

Braiding Crowns of Friendship
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Permission should be addressed in writing to Christine M. Aldrich (email)

Literary Advisors: The Online Author's Office (<https://www.pashminap.com/>)

Illustrator: Ari Silva

LCCN:
ISBN:



DEDICATION

I want to thank my mom, dad and brother
for their everlasting love and support.

Also, this book is dedicated to every little girl
in the world to help them learn to love their
beautiful crown.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

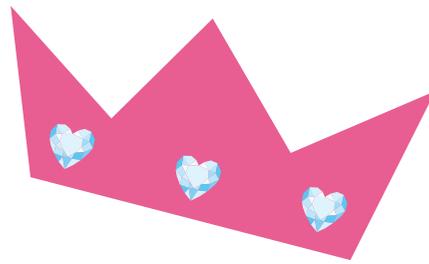
I want to thank Elizabeth Gordon for inspiring me to write a children's book that will help to educate young girls about diversity, friendship and learning to love their beautiful crown.

I also want to thank my best friend, Dushanthie Jayamaha, aka "Little Friend" in the book, who has taught me what a powerful gift a true friend can be.

Finally, I want to thank my amazing family and friends for all of their love and support.

Let's embrace diversity, cherish friendship
and learn to love our beautiful crowns.

— Christine M. Aldrich —

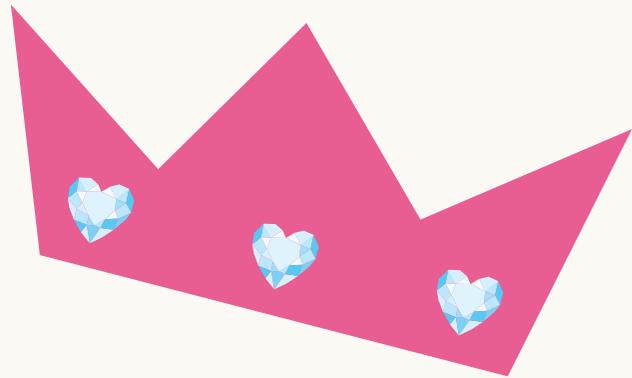








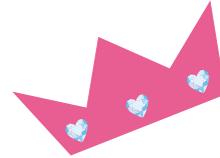
There was a little girl named Christine,
who moved from Fairfax, Virginia, to Los
Angeles, California, with her mom, dad,
little brother and their dog named Reggie.





Christine was still getting used to her new home, and she was feeling nervous about going to a new school. She missed her friends and their old neighborhood.





Her mom told her she would meet new friends and that she and her little brother would fit in with the other children.

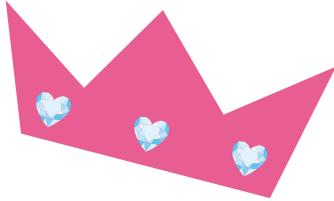


That night, they ordered their favorite pepperoni and sausage pizza, and Dad took them for ice-cream.





Their parents
always had a
way of making
them feel better.



Christine went to sleep happy, ready to meet her new classmates the next day.

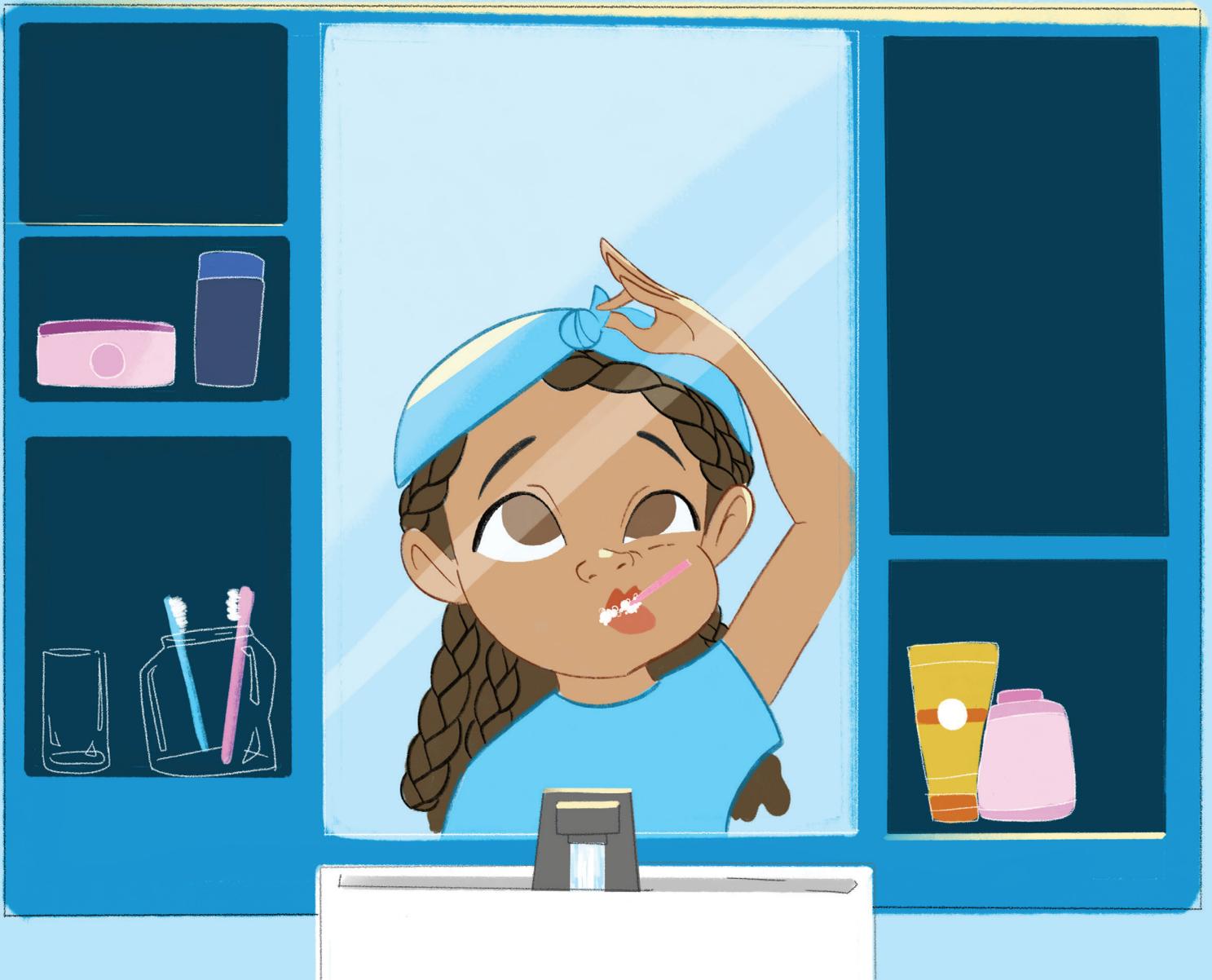




Christine woke up early the
next morning to get ready
for school.



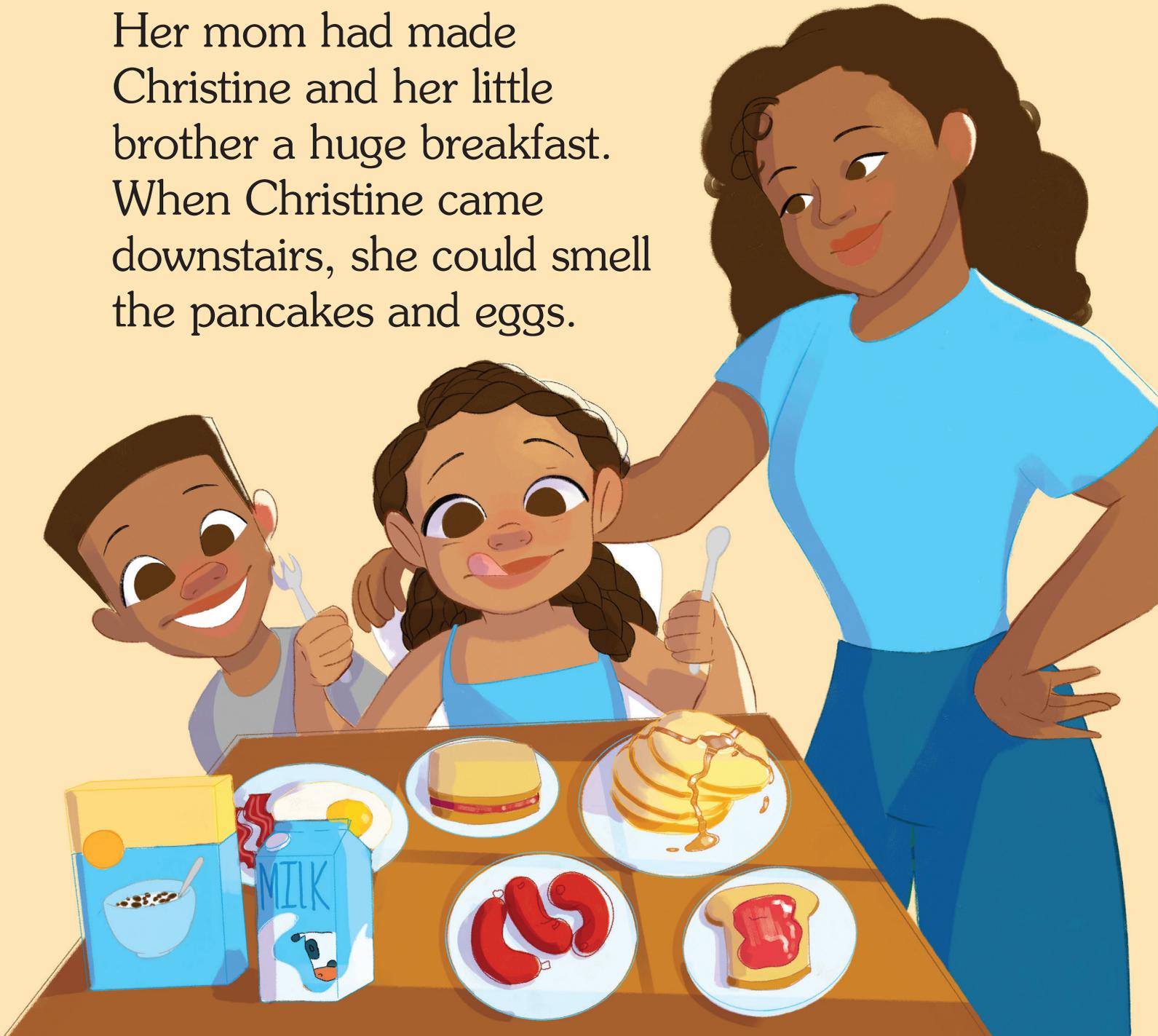
She took off her headwrap,
brushed her teeth



and put on her favorite
blue dress.



Her mom had made Christine and her little brother a huge breakfast. When Christine came downstairs, she could smell the pancakes and eggs.



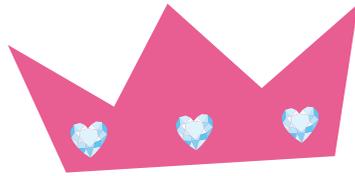


She sat down with her family, said a prayer and then ate her breakfast.



Dad dropped Christine and her little brother off at school. He gave them a hug and told them to have a great day. Christine looked back and saw her dad smiling. He always put a big smile on her face. She waved and went into the school.





When Christine walked into the classroom,
all eyes were on her. Her teacher, Mrs.
Smith, introduced Christine to the class.

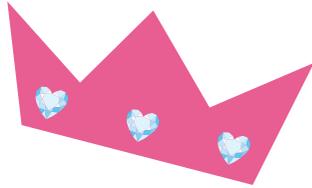


Christine saw a little girl with big brown eyes and long hair smile at her, so she decided to sit near her.



When Christine sat down, the girl smiled and said, “Hello.” She made Christine feel so much more comfortable.





When class was over, the little girl walked outside with Christine and said her name was Little Friend. She said, “If you want to have lunch together after our next class, join me outside on the patio.”



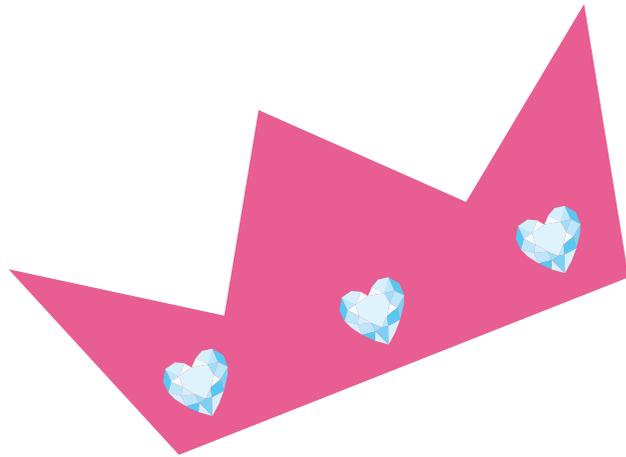
Christine felt so much better now that she would have someone to eat with on her first day of school.







After that, she went to check on her little brother, and he had lots of children around him. He gave Christine the thumbs up, so she went to her next class.



Everyone in the class was nice to her.
Christine started thinking, “I am going to like
my new school.”



Christine had lunch with Little Friend and then went to two more classes.

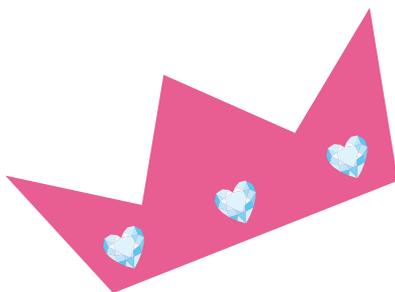


In Christine's last class, she sat in front of a little girl with long blonde hair. The little girl laughed at Christine when she sat down. She pulled on Christine's braids and said, "Why do you have those ugly braids in your hair?"



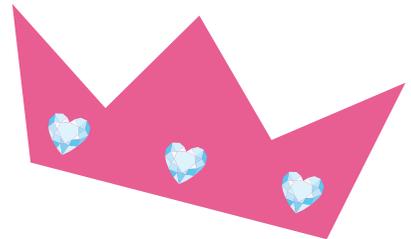


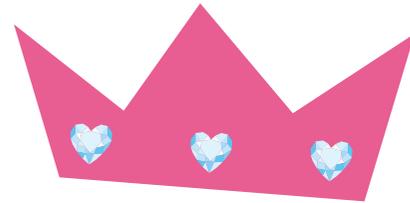
Christine wondered why the little girl had asked about her hair. “I love my braids,” she thought.





When Christine looked at the little girl's hair, she saw that it was straight. When she touched her own hair, she knew that it was thicker. Christine looked around the class and saw that most of the little girls had long straight hair.





But Christine remembered that her mom would always tell her to love her hair, saying that it was her beautiful crown.



Then a couple of other children in the class started joining in with the blonde girl, laughing at Christine's hair. Christine started crying and ran out of the classroom.

Little Friend came to find Christine and asked, "What is wrong?"



So Christine told her. Little Friend gave her a big hug and smiled at her. She had a way of making Christine feel better.

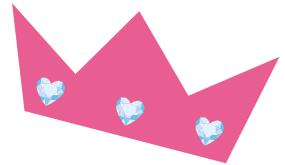
“Well, I am going to wear my hair in braids tomorrow, too! We will show them,” Little Friend said.





Christine smiled, took a deep breath, and went back into the classroom.

When Christine's mom came to pick her up, Christine told her what had happened.



Mom took Christine's hands in hers and said, "God made each one of us different, and we have to love the differences we have. We are all God's children. Do not let that little girl make you question who you are. You are beautiful just the way you are."

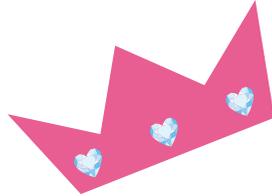


Christine's little brother gave her a hug, and her dad let her pick the family movie for the night. Christine loved her family because they always made her feel better.



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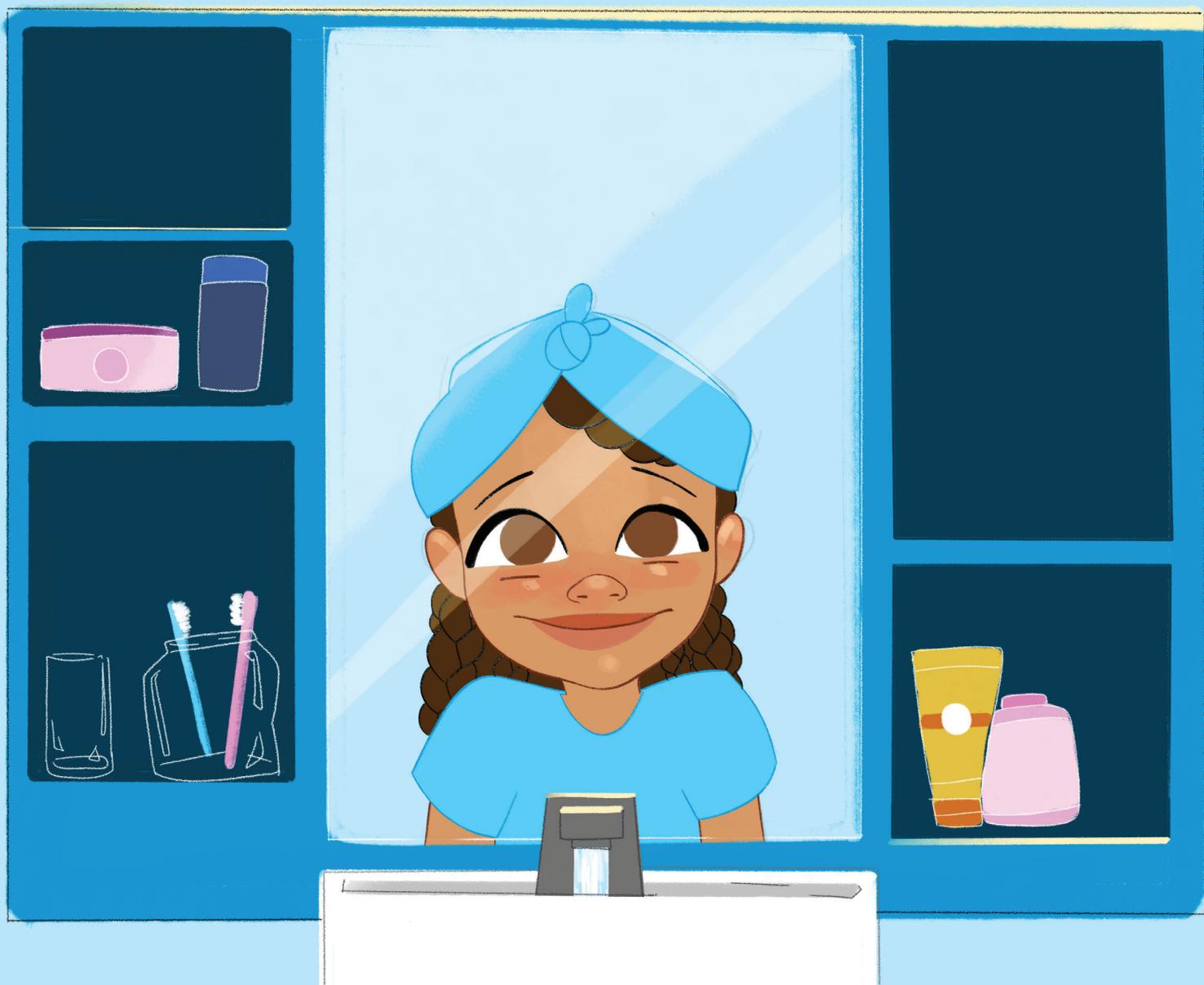




That night, before Christine went to sleep, she looked at her face in the mirror. Then she looked at her braids. Christine decided that her mom was right - everyone was different, with different noses, mouths and hair. She took out her headwrap and wrapped her braids.



Christine prayed that she would have a better time at school the next day, and then she went to sleep.

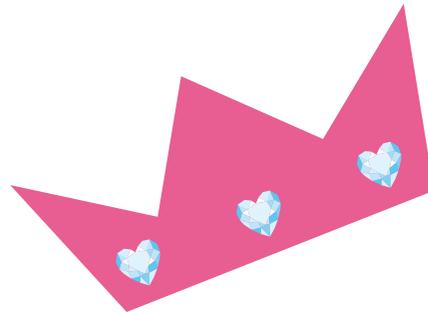


When Christine got up the next morning to go to school, she remembered Little Friend had told her that she was going to wear her hair in braids. Christine wondered if she would forget.





Christine's dad and brother
gave her a hug and told her to
have a great day.



When Christine got to class, she saw that Little Friend had not forgotten - she was wearing braids, along with many others.

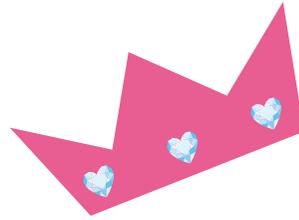


Several little girls walked past Christine and smiled, saying that they liked her hair. Christine started smiling too, and she began to feel great.



The next day before class, the little blonde girl came up to Christine and told her she was sorry for being so mean, and that she had never seen hair like Christine's before.



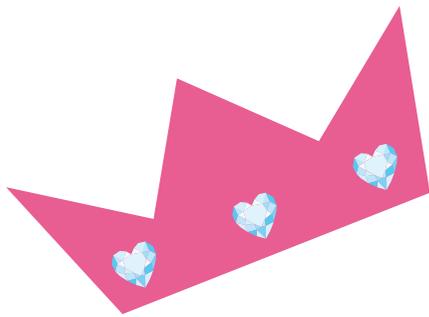


Christine smiled at the blonde girl and they walked into the next class together.



That night Christine touched her beautiful crown and smiled.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Christine Aldrich has a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of California, Irvine, and a master's degree in Counseling from Cal State University, Fullerton. She has worked with low-income families in higher education for over twenty years. For over six years, she has had the opportunity to serve as the director of the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services and the Cooperative Agencies Resources for Education (EOPS/CARE) at Compton College.

Christine decided to write children's books to help educate young African-American girls on how to enhance their self-esteem, hoping to build their confidence by teaching them to love their skin tone and hair texture.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Ari Silva is a 17-year-old illustrator for the OAO (the Online Author's Office) who has been able to reach out to authors like Christine Aldrich to bring her heartfelt story to life. The book has a strong message that makes sure every young child who has ever been made fun of for being different is being heard and supported by family and friends.