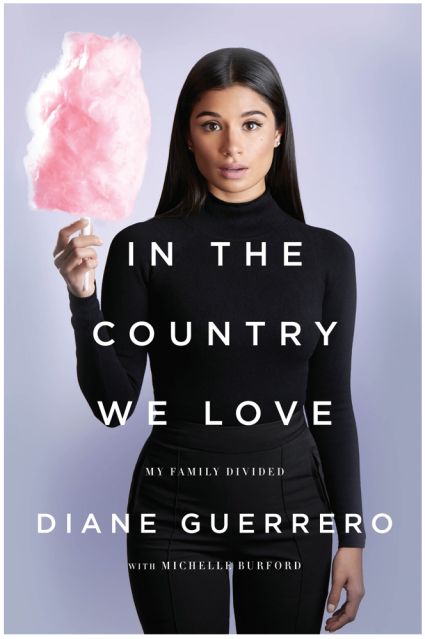
In the Country We Love
By Diane Guerrero



About the Book

Diane Guerrero, the television actress from the megahit *Orange is the New Black* and *Jane the Virgin*, was just fourteen years old on the day her parents were detained and deported while she was at school. Born in the U.S., Guerrero was able to remain in the country and continue her education, depending on the kindness of family friends who took her in and helped her build a life and a successful acting career for herself, without the support system of her family.

In the Country We Love is a moving, heartbreaking story of one woman's extraordinary resilience in the face of the nightmarish struggles of undocumented residents in this country. There are over 11 million undocumented immigrants living in the US, many of whom have citizen children, whose lives here are just as precarious, and whose stories haven't been told. Written with bestselling author Michelle Burford, this memoir is a tale of personal triumph that also casts a much-needed light on the fears that haunt the daily existence of families likes the author's and on a system that fails them over and over.

Discussion Questions

1) Early in the book, Diane details how her parents relocated from Colombia to the United States. Where is your family from? How does your family history inform your sense of identity?

2) Diane says of her parents:

> "I knew [Papi] and Mami adored me as much as any parent can cherish a child, and yet I felt like I didn't belong to them anymore. Like I didn't have a home. A center. A base. A foundation. A place where I was from and could go back to when things got rocky."

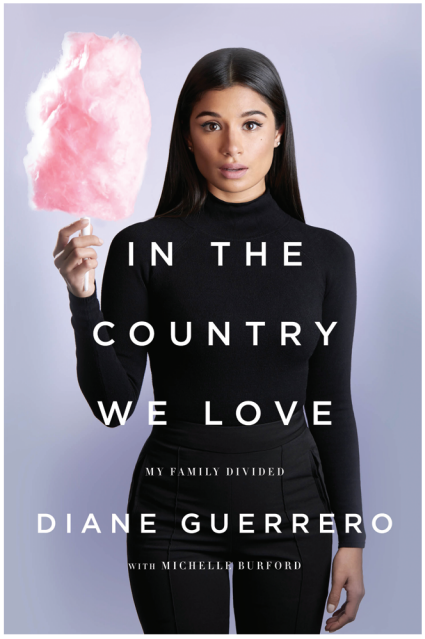
What person or place in your life serves as your "foundation"? How would you function without that support system?

3) Even though she was very young, Diane often had to support her parents by serving as their translator. Have you ever been in the position of supporting your parents? How did you feel about this role reversal?

4) The first time that her mother was deported, Diane became convinced that it was her fault—that she had done something so "unforgiveable" that God was punishing her and her family. What do you think about a child carrying such a burden of guilt?

5) When Diane's parents were both deported, she had to decide whether to join them or remain in the

United States. What did she take into consideration when making this decision? How would you have handled such a decision?



6) Why do you think it was difficult for Diane to keep in close touch with her parents after they were deported? Have you ever had a long-distance friendship or relationship? How did you maintain close communication?

7) In your opinion, what was the most unexpected revelation in the book?

8) Diane endured many setbacks on her journey to become an actress. Did you ever have a dream that you pursued despite the odds? How did you overcome adversity? What was that like?

9) Diane describes many traditions that her family kept—her trips to the beach with her father, observing La Novena with her family and neighbors. What are some of your family traditions? How do they sustain you?

10) Diane often notes how much her parents wanted to protect and support her, particularly her father. If you have children, can you describe your desire to protect them? If you were put in a situation like Diane's parents, how would you handle being separated from your child? Or how would you handle being separated from your parents?

11) When her parents were deported, social services never checked on Diane. If it weren't for the kindness of family friends, she would have been abandoned. What does this say about support for immigrants and the path to citizenship in the United States?

12) Diane often says that if it wasn't for her passion for acting and the arts, she very well may have ended up more like the character she plays on *Orange Is the New Black*. What are you passionate about?

Visit www.inthecountrywelove.com to learn more about the author and the book.