



The Matchbox Diary

Paul Fleischman

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Newbery Medalist Paul Fleischman and Bagram Ibatoulline tell a breathtaking immigration tale with appeal across generations.

"Pick whatever you like most. Then I'll tell you its story."

When a little girl visits her great-grandfather at his curio-filled home, she chooses an unusual object to learn about: an old cigar box. What she finds inside surprises her: a collection of matchboxes making up her great-grandfather's diary, harboring objects she can hold in her hand, each one evoking a memory. Together they tell of his journey from Italy to a new country, before he could read and write — the olive pit his mother gave him to suck on when there wasn't enough food; a bottle cap he saw on his way to the boat; a ticket still retaining the thrill of his first baseball game. With a narrative entirely in dialogue, Paul Fleischman makes immediate the two characters' foray into the past. With warmth and an uncanny eye for detail, Bagram Ibatoulline gives expressive life to their journey through time — and toward each other.

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