



Reena's Bollywood Dream

Jewel Kats

Illustrated by Richa Kinra

**Reena's
Bollywood Dream:
A Story About
Sexual Abuse**

**By: Jewel Kats
Illustrated by Richa Kinra**

from the Growing With Love Series

Loving Healing Press

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DEDICATION

For Mom, Dad, Masi, Nidhi, Sharad, Gagan
and especially, Roopali



GLOSSARY

Nani means grandma. To be exact it means your mom's mother.

Masala are spices used to flavor food or tea.

Tandoori chicken is a hot food item served at lunch or dinner.

Lengha is an Indian outfit worn by girls and women. It has two main pieces, which are a blouse and a long skirt.



“Look who’s here, Reena!” Nani shouted.

I almost knocked over my grandma and parents as I raced to the front doors. I wiggled past the crowd. And then I saw my uncle.

I tackled him into a bear hug. “You look just like your photographs, Uncle Jessi!”

“Reena!” Daddy remarked gruffly. “You’re not showing respect to your elders.”

Uncle Jessi held me close. “It’s okay, there’s no need to scold her,” he said. “Reena and I are old pen pals.”

Uncle Jessi ruffled my curls. “I’ve brought a treat for you.” He reached into his fall jacket and pulled out a DVD.

I threw my arms into the air. “It’s a Bollywood movie!”



I watched my uncle's cab driver huff and puff as he dragged in four large suitcases. "I packed thirty years worth of memories from India," Uncle Jessi told me. I couldn't imagine what it'd be like to tuck away eight years of my life into a matching luggage set. Once everything was put aside, the grownups enjoyed hot masala tea. Meanwhile, I danced away to Indian movie songs. Nani looked at Uncle Jessi. "Welcome to this great country, son. I hope you enjoy your new home." "You really are lucky," I said with a twirl. "Now you have the chance to watch an American girl like me dance to Bollywood music."

Juvenile Fiction : Social Issues - Sexual Abuse

Reena wants to be a star... A Bollywood star. Unfortunately, her family won't stand for it. It doesn't help that Reena is only eight-years-old. However, a beacon of hope arrives in the form of Uncle Jessi. He's just emigrated from India to America, and is a welcome addition to her family household. Uncle Jessi and Reena share a special bond. Not only are they old pen pals, but he recognizes her desperation to become a Bollywood actress. One day, Uncle Jessi plans a secret surprise. He invites her to take part in a pretend acting game. Reena jumps at the chance. At first, she enjoys swinging her hips to Bollywood beats. She smiles brightly at his camera. However, halfway through her performance matters take an unexpected turn. The end results surprise both Reena and Uncle Jessi.

- **Children will learn that sexual abuse is NEVER their fault.**
- **Parents and children will be given a launching pad to discuss the warning signs of "grooming."**
- **Children will come away knowing they have the power to say: "NO."**
- **Children will discover that sexual abuse can occur in any cultural group.**
- **Children can be assured that they will be believed when reporting inappropriate behavior.**
- **Therapists and parents can exhibit that sexual abuse isn't an off-limits topic.**
- **Child abuse survivors will come away knowing they are not alone.**

"Reena's Bollywood Dream is exceptionally well-written. It works as an educational piece to foster awareness to children and their families regarding the realities of sexual abuse within the South Asian community. This informative book can help alter a child's life for the better."

Sadia Khaliq, B.A., B.S.W., M.S.W., Community Treatment Coordinator, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

"With a captivating story and beautiful illustration, and with a message that is cross-cultural and educational, Reena's Bollywood Dream can help children understand the sad reality that there are those who can hurt them but there is also means of staying safe – with others' help. I recommend this book highly to all families; it can be instrumental to starting a conversation about a difficult topic."

Pamela Pine, PhD, MPH, Founder and CEO, Stop the Silence



**For more info see
www.JewelKats.com**