

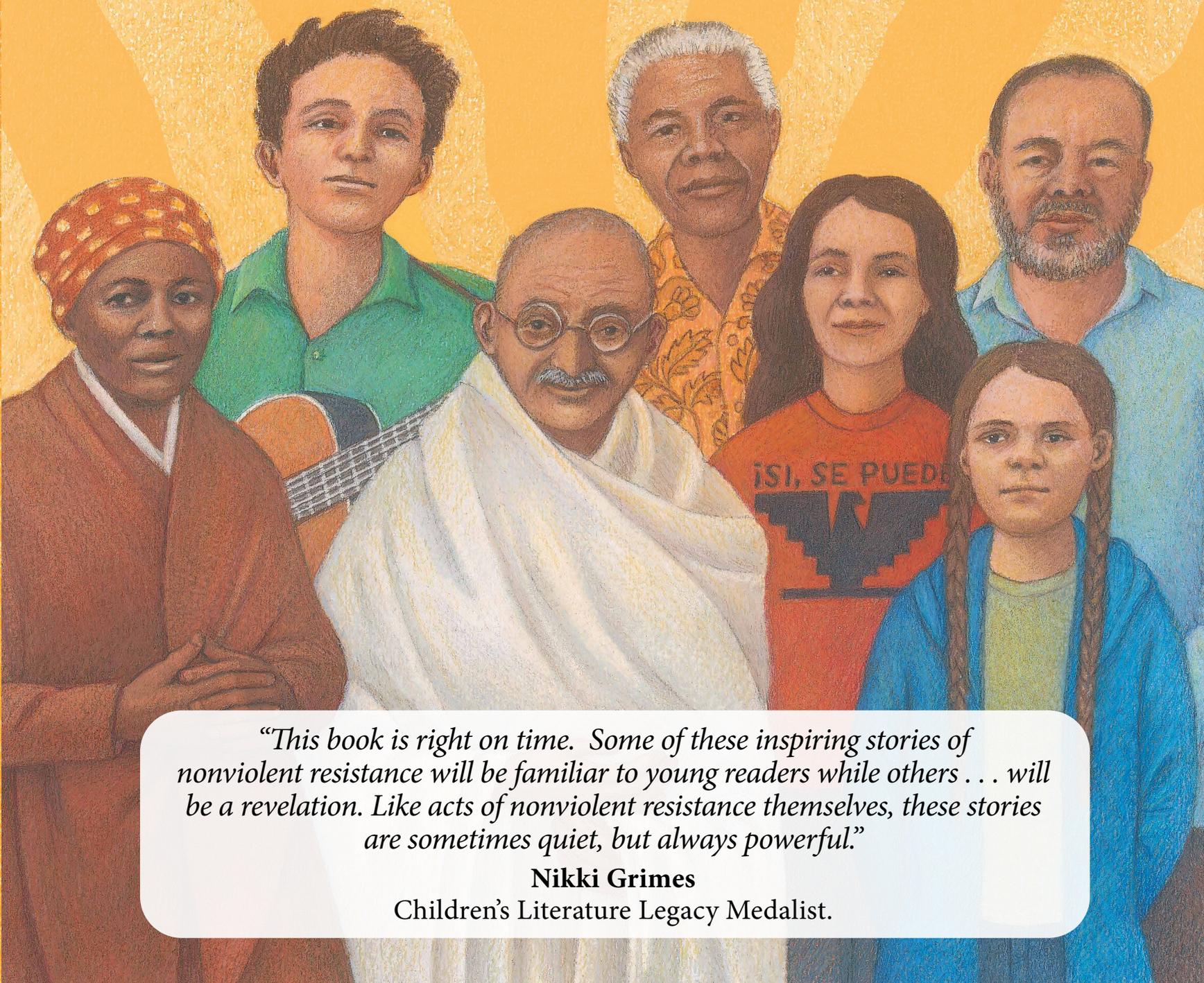
A note from award-winning author-illustrator

DIANE STANLEY

and selections from

RESIST!

Peaceful Acts That Changed Our World



“This book is right on time. Some of these inspiring stories of nonviolent resistance will be familiar to young readers while others . . . will be a revelation. Like acts of nonviolent resistance themselves, these stories are sometimes quiet, but always powerful.”

Nikki Grimes

Children’s Literature Legacy Medalist.

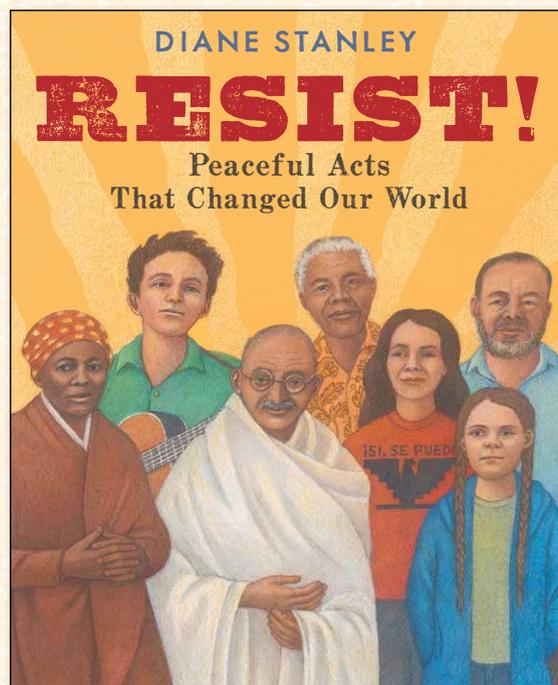
Nonviolent resistance is all around us.

The idea for Resist has been with me for years. I would read a book or an article about a great leader of an important social movement—Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Elizabeth Cady Stanton, César Chávez—and I'd think, why not take a step *beyond* that person, or that particular event, to the very concept that inspired them all? Why not write about the *idea* of nonviolent resistance, with examples from the past and present and subjects from around the world? As I began collecting names, I was stunned by how many different ways there are to peacefully bring about social change—also how effective they are.

Today, nonviolent resistance is all around us. Through marches and rallies, news reports and blogs, people across the globe are speaking out about issues that matter to us all and tirelessly working to bring about change. This book is the story *behind* their story.

Diane Stanley,

Author-illustrator of **RESIST!** *Peaceful Acts That Changed Our World*



CLAUDETTE COLVIN AND ROSA PARKS

Standing Up by Sitting Down

Claudette Colvin was an ordinary fifteen-year-old girl riding the bus home from school. She came from a poor African American family with very little education, but Claudette worked hard and made good grades. She had dreams for her future. She believed in herself. So when the bus driver ordered her to give up her seat to a white woman, something inside her snapped.

She said it “felt like Sojourner Truth was pushing down on one shoulder and Harriet Tubman was pushing down on the other, saying ‘*Sit down, girl!*’” So that’s what she did. It was a daring thing to do in Montgomery, Alabama, in 1955. Claudette was arrested and found guilty of breaking the segregation laws. Her minister bailed her out of jail.

Nine months later, a well-dressed middle-aged woman named Rosa Parks also climbed onto a bus. She paid her fare, walked past rows of empty seats reserved for whites, and sat down in the “colored” section. But it was rush hour and pretty soon the bus was full. So the driver told the four passengers in the front row of the colored section to give up their seats and stand in the back so a single white man could sit there. Three of them did as they were told.

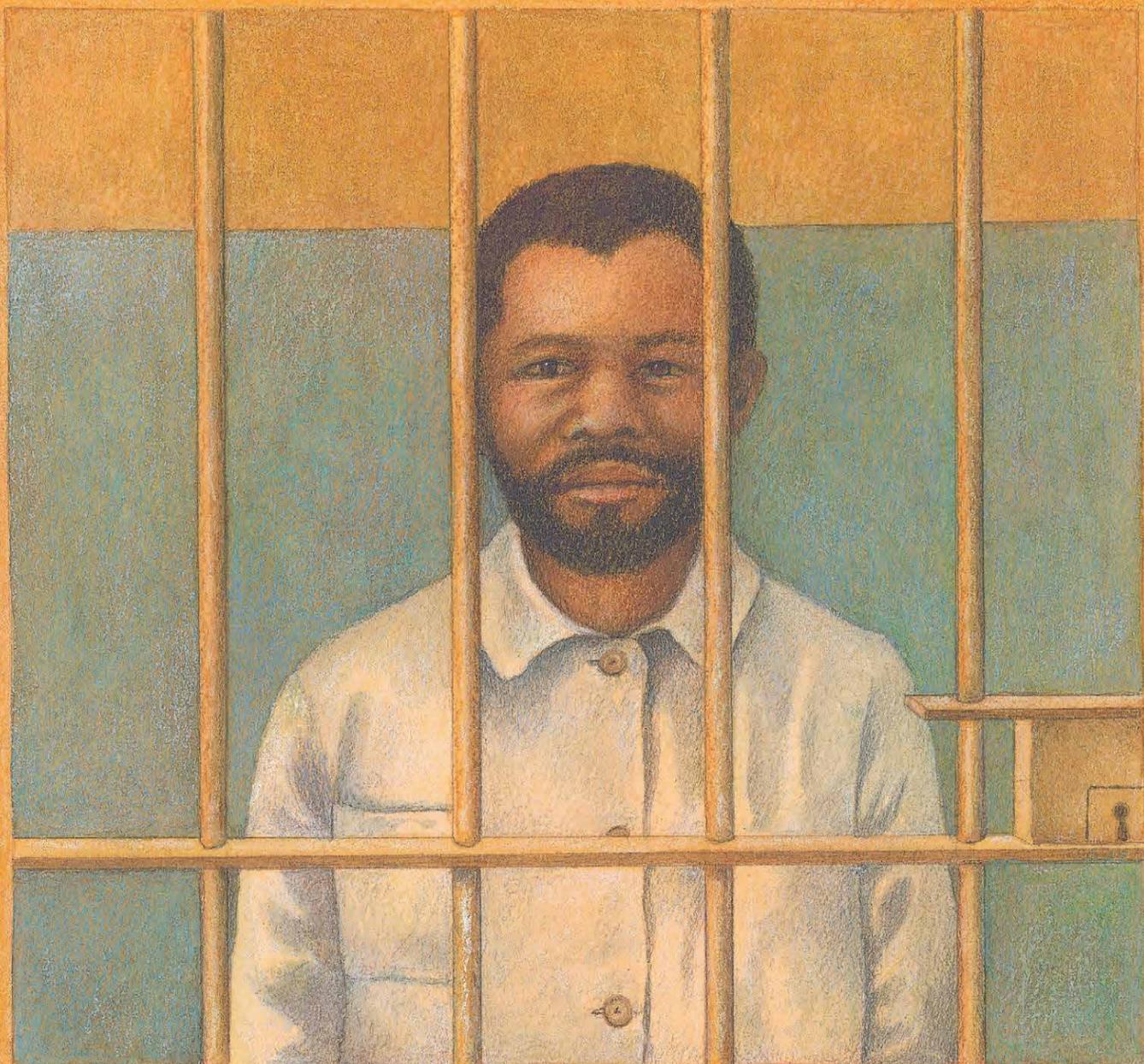
But Rosa was tired—and not just because she’d been on her feet all day. She was tired of being treated badly because of the color of her skin. Tired of the assaults on her dignity. Tired of giving in. So, like Claudette before her, she refused to budge and was arrested.

But that’s not the end of either story. Rosa was a highly respected member of her community and the arrest deserved a response. So, under the leadership of a new young minister, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., they planned a protest that would be peaceful, legal, and highly effective: they would simply stop riding the buses. It would mean hours of walking to work or to school, then more hours of walking to get home, but everyone agreed to do it. Before long, sympathetic whites had joined the protest. And all over the country, people read the news and cheered them on. So it continued—through the cold, and the rain, and the muggy heat of summer, while city buses sat idle and the transit company’s finances tanked—for 381 days.

Meanwhile, as the first person arrested in Montgomery for refusing to give up her seat on a bus, Claudette had become a plaintiff in a federal lawsuit that went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Almost two years after her arrest, segregation on public buses was ruled unconstitutional and the boycott came to an end. But the civil rights movement had just begun.



FREE MANDELA



NELSON MANDELA

The Most Famous Prisoner in the World

For nearly three hundred years, South Africa had been ruled by Dutch and British colonists. Though the population was overwhelmingly black, only whites could vote or hold office. And they governed the country under a system called *apartheid* in which the races were kept strictly apart. Nonwhites could work in the cities, cleaning houses or tending gardens, but they had to live elsewhere—in squalid black townships, many with no electricity, clean water, or schools for the children. And they were required to carry passbooks at all times, showing their racial designation and where they belonged. Naturally, the black majority hated these laws.

In 1943, a young law student named Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress, a party that was working to bring an end to apartheid and gain voting rights for all. Mandela was a natural leader and quickly rose through the ranks, soon coming to the government's attention. Over the next twenty years, he would be frequently arrested or banned from speaking in public. Finally, in 1964, Mandela and seven others were charged with conspiring to overthrow the government and sentenced to life in the notorious Robben Island Prison.

Mandela would grow old there, spending his days at hard labor, living in a tiny concrete cell with a straw mat on the floor to sleep on. Yet he never stopped working, studying, and planning, as if he somehow knew his story wasn't yet over. When the moment came, he'd be ready.

Meanwhile, the apartheid system and the arrest of Mandela had made South Africa the "skunk of the world." Sports teams refused to play there, musicians wouldn't sing there, and the song "Free Nelson Mandela" became a Top Ten hit in Britain. The United Nations voted to ban the sale of weapons to South Africa. Britain and the U.S. imposed economic sanctions.

Finally, under intense international pressure, the government set Mandela free and ended the apartheid system. In an odd twist of fate, Mandela shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize with President F. W. de Klerk, the man who had released him from prison. The following year, with all citizens allowed to vote, Mandela was elected South Africa's first black president.

Mandela's dream was to make South Africa a "Rainbow Nation" in which all races could prosper. So he appointed whites as well as blacks to important government positions. Then he formed a Truth and Reconciliation Commission where victims could be heard and crimes confessed. Then, following Mandela's example, all was forgiven "for the sake of peace."

TANK MAN

No One Ever Learned His Name

In the spring and summer of 1989, a massive wave of protest rolled across China. From Mongolia in the north to Hong Kong in the south, people were out in the streets waving flags, carrying banners, and calling for change. They wanted democracy, the right to speak freely, and an end to forty years of repressive one-party rule. The government responded by declaring war on its citizens.

As many as three hundred thousand troops, along with tanks and armored personnel carriers, were sent to the capital to put the rebellion down. The standoff reached its climax on June 3 in what has come to be known as the “Beijing Massacre.” By the time it was over, thousands had died, the army was in complete control, and still more tanks were rolling in to occupy and reinforce the city. It was then that something remarkable happened: a young man, neatly dressed in a white shirt and black pants, a leather satchel and a shopping bag in his hands, walked into the street and stood directly in the path of an advancing column of tanks. When the lead driver tried to go around him, the man skipped to the side and stopped, once again blocking the way. He shouted and waved his shopping bags. *Stop!* his gestures said. *Go away!*

The crowds lining the sidewalks and the press photographers out on the balconies of the Beijing Hotel, frantically shooting pictures and taking videos, were stunned by the man’s incredible determination. Surely any moment he’d be killed. Yet he doggedly refused to give up.

Next, he climbed up onto the body of the tank and started banging on the turret, shouting at the soldiers inside. Two hatches opened, and heads appeared. After a brief exchange, the man climbed down and the tanks started moving. Once again he blocked their way.

Finally, two figures ran out, grabbed the man by his arms, and hurried him away—whether to help him or harm him, nobody knows. No one ever learned his name.

Tank Man’s protest didn’t bring change to China. But courage is contagious, and the stunning image of an ordinary man single-handedly facing down a column of tanks was broadcast all over the world. Far away, in Eastern Europe, pro-democracy activists looked at those photos and thought, *If he can stand up to power like that, then so can we.*

Five months later, on November 9, 1989, the Berlin Wall came down. Two years after that, the Soviet Union collapsed and the Cold War came to an end.

Tank Man, wherever you are, you made a difference.



LARRY ITLIONG, DOLORES HUERTA, AND CÉSAR CHÁVEZ

¡Sí, Se Puede!

The migrant farm workers of California were among the poorest and most desperate in the country. Laws that protected other workers did not apply to them. They labored in the fields from dawn to dusk, often without a break, for as little as \$5 an hour. Often they had no access to clean water, bathrooms, or medical care. At night they slept in shacks, sometimes on the floors. And since the harvests were seasonal, they were always on the move, picking peas and lettuce when the weather was cold, then moving to another farm for cherries and beans, then corn and grapes, winding up with cotton in the fall. With no permanent home, their children couldn't go to school and break the cycle of poverty. They just worked in the fields with their parents.

Larry Itliong, a labor organizer, had been helping Filipino American farm workers for thirty-five years. In September of 1965, as the grape harvest was just beginning, his union voted to stop working till they were paid a living wage. Then Larry met with César Chávez and Dolores Huerta, labor organizers whose union members were mostly Latino. Would their workers be willing to join the Filipinos' strike? If they all stood together, the growers might be forced to make concessions. *Someone* had to pick those grapes or they'd rot in the fields!

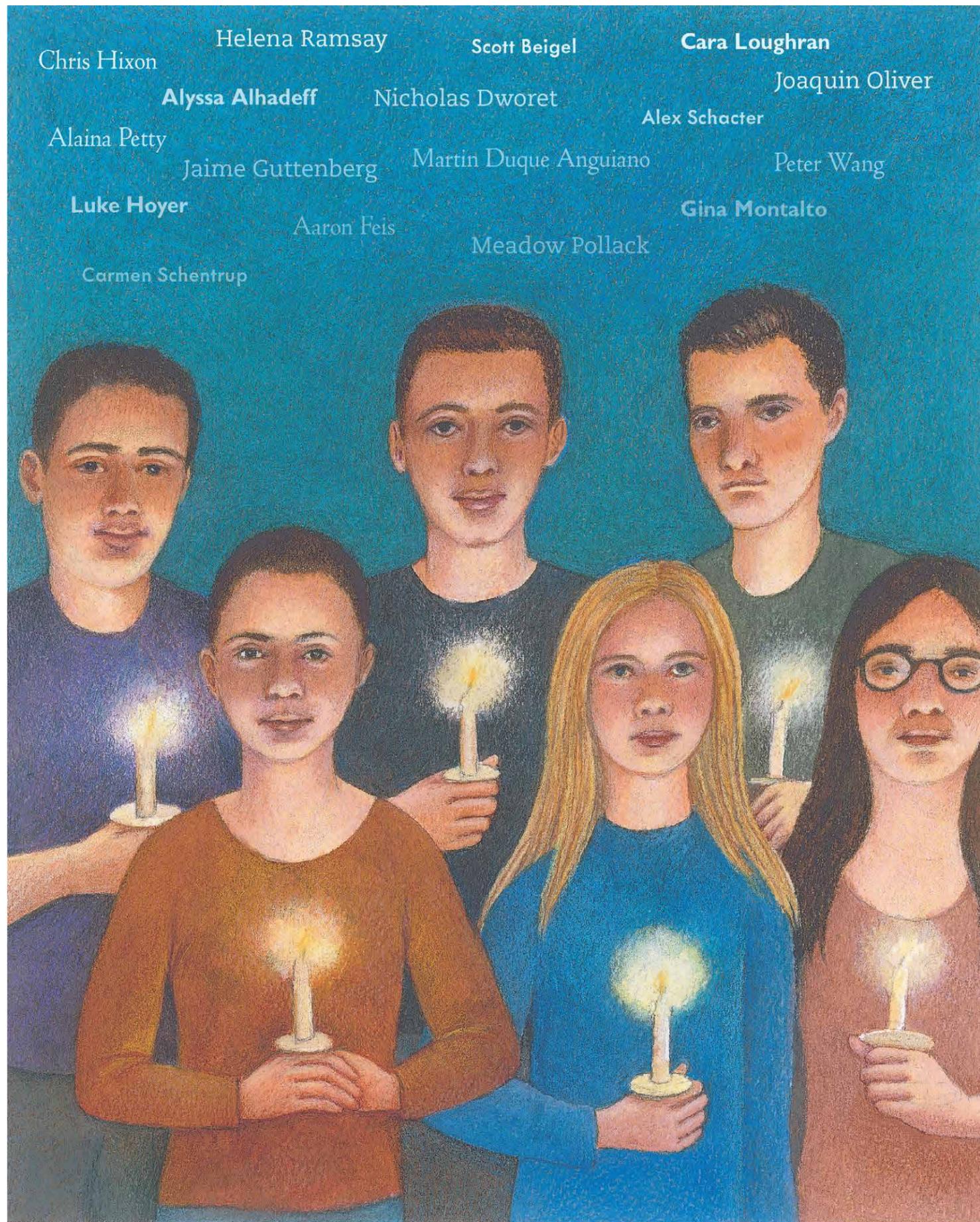
The Latino workers knew what voting yes would mean for them. Without jobs to bring in money, they would lose what little savings they had. Yet they agreed to join their Filipino brothers and sisters. It was the only way that things would ever change. César insisted that the two groups always work together, and that they never resort to violence. Dolores came up with a motto for their first joint effort: *¡Sí, se puede! Yes, it can be done!*

In December they announced a boycott of grapes from nonunion farms. Inspired by Gandhi's March to the Sea, César organized a three-hundred-mile walk from the grape fields of Delano to Sacramento to raise awareness of their cause. Then he went to work convincing the public that the lives of more than two million workers could be changed for the better by something as easy as giving up grapes. He was a famously charismatic speaker and very persuasive. Soon, families all over the country proudly stopped buying grapes because it was the right thing to do.

Finally, after five years of hardship, the growers agreed to sign their first union contracts, giving their workers reasonable pay and appropriate benefits.

¡Sí, se hizo! Yes, it was done!





MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

Snowflakes

On Valentine's Day, 2018, a troubled former student returned to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, armed with an AR-15 semiautomatic rifle. Before the nightmare was over, seventeen students and staff members lay dead. Seventeen more were injured. The survivors were left with a mountain of grief—and a mountain of rage. Why did this keep happening? Why couldn't kids feel safe in their schools? Why was no one doing anything about it?

The next evening, following a candlelight vigil, three of the survivors—Cameron Kasky, Alex Wind, and Sofie Whitney—went to Cameron's house to talk. They felt very strongly that something needed to happen in response to the shooting: a powerful movement to prevent gun violence. But they'd have to work quickly, before the news cycle moved on to something else. They chose a name for their movement, "Never Again," and stayed up all night making plans.

Others soon joined the group, including David Hogg and Emma González. And within four days they had gone on Twitter to announce a demonstration, the March for Our Lives, to be held in Washington, D.C., on March 24.

The results exceeded their wildest hopes. Not only did hundreds of thousands travel to Washington for the protest, but millions gathered in eight hundred cities across the U.S.—and in thirty-two countries around the world—to march in solidarity with them.

That summer, the Parkland students embarked on a two-month cross-country bus tour, visiting seventy-five cities, holding rallies and giving speeches, calling for commonsense gun laws, and encouraging people to vote for change. The tour ended in Newtown, Connecticut, where five years before, another shooter had walked into Sandy Hook Elementary and killed twenty first-graders and six adults. The survivors of that horrific shooting, now in middle or high school, were inspired to start protests of their own.

Some critics made fun of the students by calling them "snowflakes"—fragile and weak and sure to melt away. David Hogg responded on Twitter. "What happens when all the snowflakes vote?" he wrote. "That's called an avalanche." And indeed, their efforts brought an avalanche of change. By the end of that year, sixty-nine separate gun-control measures had been passed by legislatures in more than half of the states in the union. And there's more to come.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TAKE A STAND

Several of the stories in this book are about young people taking a stand—Claudette Colvin, the Greensboro Four, the children who marched in Birmingham, Ryan White and Jill Stuart, the Marjory Stoneman Douglas students, and Greta Thunberg. And of course there are many others, from Malala Yousufzai, whose courageous fight for girls' education earned her a Nobel Prize, to the countless students, over the years and across the globe, who have protested wars and fought injustice.

So you may be wondering if you, too, could make a difference. The answer is yes. Whatever you're concerned about—whether it's homelessness, intolerance, bullying, climate change, or something really small and local that is hurting someone else—reach out to those with the power to make big changes. Then ask yourself what part you can play. Be creative.

Melati and Isabel Wijsen, sisters living on the Indonesian Island of Bali, were only ten and twelve years old when they asked themselves that question. They were concerned about the masses of plastic trash that was covering Bali's beaches, flowing down its waterways into the ocean, turning their beautiful home into a polluted “island of garbage.”

One night they sat on the couch and had a brainstorming session. Then they gathered a team of kids who wanted to help. They chose a motto (“Bye Bye Plastic Bags”), designed a logo, and printed them on T-shirts and stickers. They wore the T-shirts and gave away the stickers to any stores that agreed to stop handing out plastic bags. They built a website. They organized clean-up-the-beach days. And they collected signatures on a petition, which they sent to the governor.

In 2019, six years after the two little girls started their campaign to clean up the island, Bali officially banned single-use plastic—from Styrofoam boxes and drinking straws to that greatest offender, plastic bags. Today, their movement has teams in more than twenty-five locations world-wide and is growing. Maybe there's one near you.

But if you dream of making positive change in the world, don't let anyone discourage you by saying you're too young. “We're not telling you it's going to be easy,” Isabel said. “We're telling you it's going to be worth it.”

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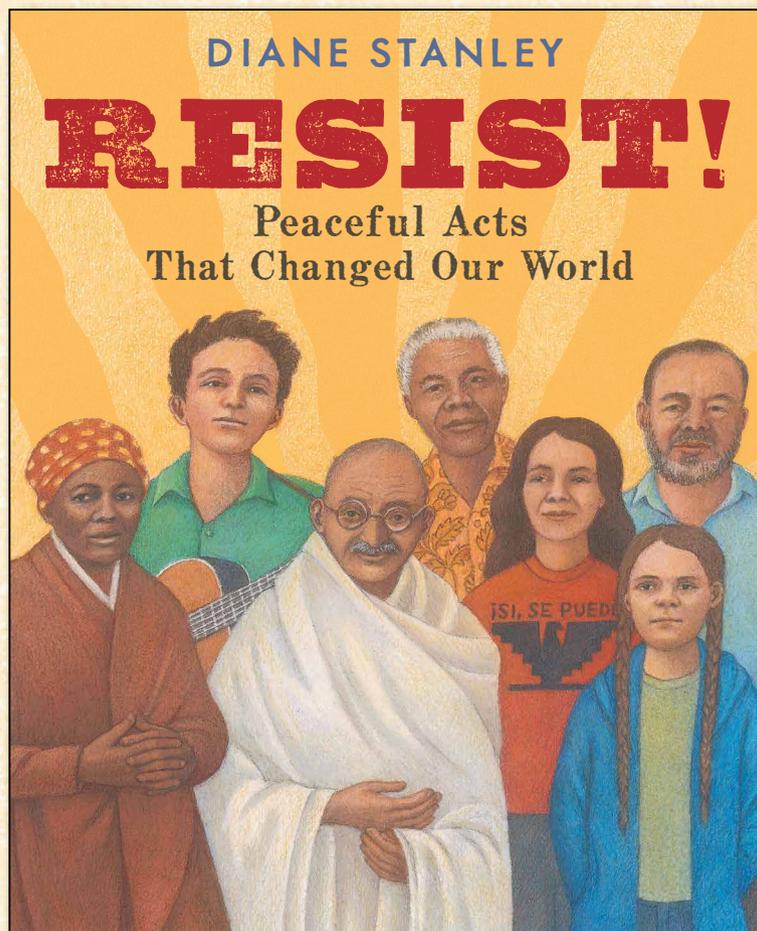
Greta's Fridays for Future webpage: <https://www.fridaysforfuture.org/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ns54HAZgHvY>

Follow Greta on Twitter and Instagram at @GretaThunberg.

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