

Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofoosu Yeboah

Laurie Ann Thompson

Nikhil Bhagwat, 14

Star Teen Book Reviewer of Be The Star You Are! Charity

www.bethestaryouare.org

The book "Emmanuel's Dream: The True Story of Emmanuel Ofoosu Yeboah" gives a true story about how a boy named Emmanuel Ofoosu Yeboah was able to ride a bike around the country of Ghana in 2001 despite only being born with one leg. Emmanuel was born in Ghana without a healthy right leg. Many people thought that because he did not have a healthy right leg, Emmanuel had a curse. Due to Emmanuel's disability, his father decided to leave him and his mother, who was named Comfort. As Emmanuel grew older, he learned many things that other normal children could do, such as crawl, hop, and climb trees. When Emmanuel had to go to school, his mother would help him by carrying him to school. However, one day, Emmanuel's mother was unable to carry him to school, so Emmanuel had no choice but to hop to school from that day onward. At school, Emmanuel didn't have any friends due to his disability, but he eventually made new friends after saving his money from his job of shining shoes to buy a soccer ball. He was able to play soccer with his friends with the help of crutches that he had received from his grandmother. After a while, Emmanuel's friends decided to start riding bikes. Emmanuel thought that this would be difficult due to him only having one leg, but he decided to give it a try. After getting a bike, Emmanuel started to practice riding a bike. At first, it was hard for him, but with the help of his friends, he was able to ride a bike very easily, just like his friends.

Unfortunately, when Emmanuel was 13, his mother became very sick, preventing her from earning money. Because everyone else in his family was not old enough to start working, Emmanuel had to earn money to help his mother. He decided to do this by leaving home and taking a train to the nearby city of Accra. At Accra, Emmanuel tried his best to get a job, but no one was willing to hire him. However, Emmanuel continued to try his best to look for a job. Finally, a food stand owner decided to hire him. His job was to serve drinks to customers. He also decided to shine shoes for people at the same time. With both of these jobs, Emmanuel earned some money and decided to send the money back home to help his mother. After two years of working at Accra, Emmanuel decided to return home to see his mother. However, as time passed by, Emmanuel's mother became more ill. She died on Christmas Eve, and before she died, she told Emmanuel to never give up and be kind. She also told him to keep taking care of his family. Emmanuel decided to remember these words. He decided to honor her by proving to the world that he could still do great things even with a disability. Emmanuel's plan was to bike around the country of Ghana. He was able to get a bike, a helmet, and more by writing to the Challenged Athletes Foundation in the United States. He also decided to train for his plan by getting support from his friends, neighbors, and even the king of his area. After this, he decided to start his journey to ride around the country of Ghana. He decided to wear the colors of the flag of Ghana. The shirt had the words "The Pozo", which meant "the disabled person". The journey took over 10 days to complete, as he rode through many cities, rivers, forests, and more. Along the way, many people such as normal people, people who had to deal with physical disabilities,

and even government officials gave him support and cheered him on. After 10 days and riding almost 400 miles, Emmanuel had successfully rode a bike around Ghana and had told everyone that even though he was affected by a physical disability, he could do anything a normal person could do.

There were a lot of things that I liked about this book. One thing that I liked was how inspirational the book was. The fact that Emmanuel was able to ride around the country of Ghana despite only having one normal leg showed that he is differently abled, not disabled. Another thing that I enjoyed was how the events that occurred in the book also occurred in real life. However, I didn't like that the book was very short (only 40 pages), as this book was very interesting to read. I would recommend this book to all ages because it is very inspirational and teaches the message that even though someone may be different or disabled, he or she can do anything if they work for it. I would definitely recommend this book to someone else.

Recommended Titles:

Six Dots: A Story of Young Louis Braille by Jen Bryant

Ada's Violin: The Story of the Recycled Orchestra of Paraguay by Susan Hood

The Water Princess by Susan Verde