Isatou Ceesay: A Beacon of Environmental Change in The Gambia



One Plastic Bag: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of the Gambia (Millbrook Picture Books)

by Miranda Paul

★★★★★ 4.9 out of 5
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Amidst the bustling streets of Serrekunda, the largest city in The Gambia, a remarkable story of environmental transformation is unfolding. It's a story led by Isatou Ceesay, an unassuming yet determined woman who has inspired a movement that is changing the face of her community.

As a young girl, Isatou witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of plastic pollution on her beloved country. Plastic bags, bottles, and other waste littered the streets, beaches, and waterways, posing a threat to wildlife, human health, and the overall well-being of the environment. Determined to make a difference, Isatou embarked on a mission to tackle this pressing issue.

The Birth of The Recycling Women

In 1998, Isatou founded The Recycling Women of The Gambia, a grassroots organization that empowers women to become agents of

change in their communities. Starting with a group of just 10 women, Isatou's initiative has grown into a formidable force, involving over 500 women today.

The Recycling Women collect plastic waste from households, schools, and businesses throughout Serrekunda. They also conduct educational campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of recycling and proper waste disposal. Through their unwavering efforts, they have diverted countless tons of plastic from landfills and waterways, transforming their community into a cleaner, healthier place.

Overcoming Challenges with Resilience

Isatou's journey has not been without its challenges. In a society where women often face limitations, she had to overcome skepticism and resistance to establish The Recycling Women. However, her unwavering determination and the support of her community propelled her forward.

One of the biggest obstacles Isatou faced was the lack of infrastructure for recycling in The Gambia. Undeterred, she and her team found creative solutions. They partnered with local businesses to set up recycling bins and developed innovative techniques to process plastic waste manually.

International Recognition and Impact

Isatou's extraordinary work has garnered international recognition. In 2018, she was awarded the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize, one of the world's most esteemed environmental awards. Her story has inspired countless individuals and organizations around the globe to take action against plastic pollution.

The Recycling Women have not only transformed Serrekunda but have also played a pivotal role in raising awareness about plastic pollution in The Gambia and beyond. They have influenced policy changes, encouraged sustainable practices, and empowered women to become leaders in environmental protection.

The Inspiring Book: Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of The Gambia

The extraordinary journey of Isatou Ceesay and The Recycling Women is beautifully captured in the book 'Isatou Ceesay and the Recycling Women of The Gambia' from Millbrook Picture Books. Written by Susan Hughes and illustrated by Sally Wern Comport, this captivating book brings Isatou's story to life for young readers.

Through vibrant illustrations and engaging text, the book follows Isatou's journey from her childhood in The Gambia to her rise as a global environmental activist. It highlights the importance of environmental stewardship, the power of community action, and the indomitable spirit of women who are making a difference in the world.

: A Legacy of Empowerment and Change

Isatou Ceesay's story is a testament to the transformative power of one person's determination. Her unwavering commitment to environmental protection and her ability to mobilize women have created a ripple effect that is changing the Gambia and inspiring the world.

Through The Recycling Women, Isatou has empowered women, improved the environment, and created a sustainable future for her community. Her legacy as a pioneer of environmental change will continue to inspire generations to come.



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