



# Uncle Monarch and the Day of the Dead

By Judy Goldman

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A family celebrates Día de Muertos, a holiday for remembering those who have passed. When the monarch butterflies return to her Mexican countryside, Lupita knows that Día de Muertos, "the Day of the Dead," is near. She and her favorite uncle watch the butterflies flutter in the trees. When a butterfly lands on Lupita's hand, her uncle reminds her that she should never hurt a monarch because they are believed to be the souls of the departed. Lupita and her family get ready for the holiday. When the first of November arrives, the family will go to the cemetery to honor the memories of their loved ones. But this year is different—Lupita's uncle cannot join them. Now, Lupita learns the true meaning of the celebration.

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Kindergarten-Grade 4—This lovely picture book effectively blends a poignant story about losing a beloved relative with a lucid description of *Día de Muertos*, a Mexican celebration observed during the first two days of November in which families honor and remember deceased loved ones. As Lupita and her Tío Urbano welcome the return of the monarchs in the fall, he reminds her that she should be careful not to hurt the butterflies because they represent the souls of dead relatives but also emphasizes that she should not be afraid of them. This year, Tío Urbano is an invalid who can only sit and watch while the rest of the family prepares for *Día de Muertos*: building an arch of flowers, setting up an altar with photos of deceased relatives, preparing foods. When her uncle dies a few days before the holiday, Lupita is devastated but finds comfort in this special celebration. Lovely, bright-hued colored-pencil illustrations depict fluttering butterflies in pastoral landscapes, a marketplace filled with colorful wares, a poignant scene with Lupita by the bedside of her comatose uncle, and families gathered together in a cheerfully decorated graveyard. Spanish words are integrated into the text and a glossary (inexplicably, only one word includes a pronunciation guide) is provided along with a brief explanation of the holiday.—*Kirsten Cutler, Sonoma County Library, CA*  
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## Review

"Multicultural customs and monarch butterflies are favorite subjects in classrooms, and this offering nicely combines the two. (glossary, note)" --*Kirkus Reviews*

"A quality story. . . . What a great story to use in a science study of life cycles: in this case, butterflies, where they end their journey and what happens when they get there." --*Library Media Connection*

## About the Author

**Judy Goldman** was born and lives in Mexico City. Brought up bilingual, she has published eighteen books in Spanish. Her folktales have appeared in *Spider* and *Highlights for Children* magazines, and she has written academic and newspaper articles about children's literature. She is the regional adviser of the SCBWI in Mexico.

**Rene King Moreno** was born in North Carolina and grew up in Indiana. She graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design. She is the illustrator of *Under the Lemon Moon* by Edith Hope Fine and *Fiesta!* and *Siesta*, both by Ginger Foglesong Guy. She lives in Chicago, Illinois.

## Users Review

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#### Leticia Simmons:

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