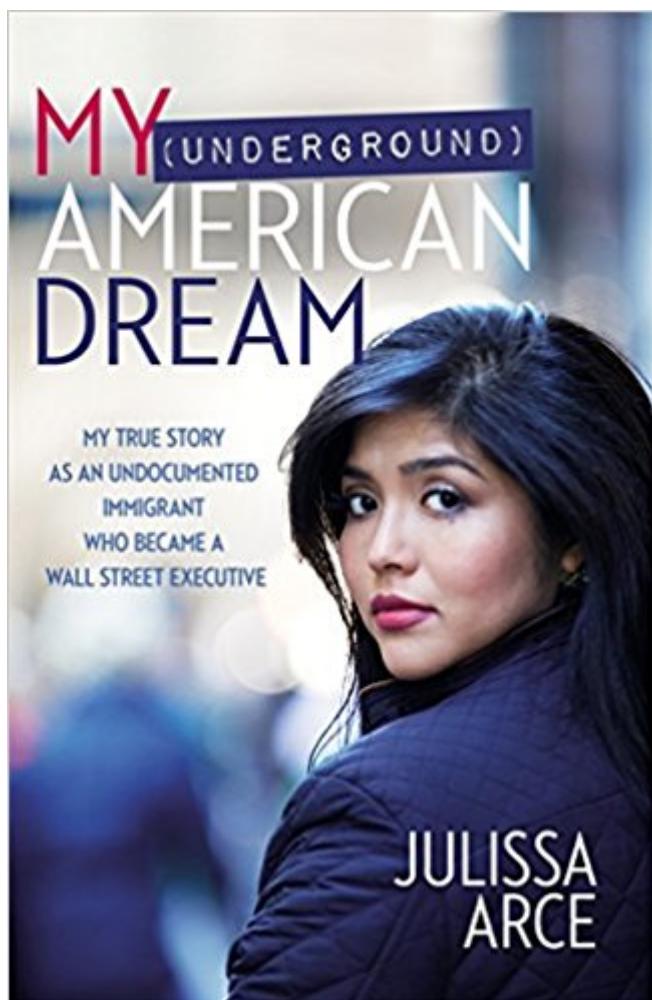


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My (Underground) American Dream: My True Story As An Undocumented Immigrant Who Became A Wall Street Executive



Synopsis

What does an undocumented immigrant look like? What kind of family must she come from? How could she get into this country? What is the true price she must pay to remain in the United States? JULISSA ARCE knows firsthand that the most common, preconceived answers to those questions are sometimes far too simple-and often just plain wrong. On the surface, Arce's story reads like a how-to manual for achieving the American dream: growing up in an apartment on the outskirts of San Antonio, she worked tirelessly, achieved academic excellence, and landed a coveted job on Wall Street, complete with a six-figure salary. The level of professional and financial success that she achieved was the very definition of the American dream. But in this brave new memoir, Arce digs deep to reveal the physical, financial, and emotional costs of the stunning secret that she, like many other high-achieving, successful individuals in the United States, had been forced to keep not only from her bosses, but even from her closest friends. From the time she was brought to this country by her hardworking parents as a child, Arce-the scholarship winner, the honors college graduate, the young woman who climbed the ladder to become a vice president at Goldman Sachs-had secretly lived as an undocumented immigrant. In this surprising, at times heart-wrenching, but always inspirational personal story of struggle, grief, and ultimate redemption, Arce takes readers deep into the little-understood world of a generation of undocumented immigrants in the United States today- people who live next door, sit in your classrooms, work in the same office, and may very well be your boss. By opening up about the story of her successes, her heartbreaks, and her long-fought journey to emerge from the shadows and become an American citizen, Arce shows us the true cost of achieving the American dream-from the perspective of a woman who had to scale unseen and unimaginable walls to get there.

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Customer Reviews

A great, bright explosion of a book. A 21st-century David Copperfield with its utterly lovable, wildly imperfect heroine; a plot packed with incident; a few villains and many, many heroes. There are as many miracles as disasters, and no place to catch your breath. The reader will cheer and then be sad-and will learn much about the lives of young immigrants in America. —Donald E. Graham, Former Chairman and Publisher of The Washington Post

Arce takes us on a breathtaking climb to the highest pinnacles of Wall Street while holding fast to a deep secret. The path to her success at Goldman Sachs is certainly inspiring. But it is the telling of her story with humor, grace and insight that is the real achievement. —Lisa Endlich, author of New York Times bestseller Goldman Sachs: The Culture of Success

JULISSA ARCE is a writer, speaker, and social-justice advocate. She is the cofounder and chairman of the Ascend Educational Fund, a college scholarship and mentorship program that assists immigrant students, regardless of their immigration status, ethnicity, or national origin. Julissa is also a board member for the National Immigration Law Center and for College Spring. Prior to becoming an advocate, she built a successful career on Wall Street, working at Goldman Sachs and Merrill Lynch.

Inspiring book - will not be able to put this down! You learn so much about the odyssey to becoming an American citizen. The danger, the hardships, the grit it takes to succeed in this country. Amazing story everyone should read! Gave this as a book present to a friend staunchly against undocumented immigrants and immigration reform to tell the "other story" not portrayed in our media!

This is one of the best books I've ever read. The author is so authentic and describes events and ideas and her personality with such candor. I'm not sure I'd be willing to tell those types of stories personally. I learned so much about how the "underground" life of an immigrant from Mexico can be and is, and even learned some fun facts like which foods Americans think of as Mexican are actually Americanized. I absolutely love this book and believe that every person should read it to

understand this amazing perspective.

This was a great, great book!

This book is so raw and real. I absolutely love this book. Julissa's story is empowering, I love that she is giving back to others.

This is an inspiring story of determination, resilience, and hope. From the first chapter, her story resonated directly to the experience of many immigrants in this country.

Loved this book, it was truly inspiration and heartwarming! As an entrepreneur, I often get caught up my problems and how much better things could be. Reading this made me realize how much others have truly survived!

I went into this book with very high expectations after reading the back cover blurb. I was hoping this book would shed some new light on the plight of immigrants in the United States and it did. This book met every expectation I had and many more. Arce's writing was so open and honest and flowed well as she told about her entire life from childhood to adulthood and from undocumented to US Citizen. Arce's story isn't as poverty stricken as many stories you will find about undocumented immigrants that come to the United States but financial status isn't really what it is all about and this book proves that. I really appreciated Arce's insight into why her family did things the way they did and why they chose to move her to the United States when she was 11. I was so glad she shared from her heart what it was like to come to the United States as a child and have to start school not really knowing hardly any English. I loved when she talked about learning English in school. I wish more people viewed speaking a language other than English as a blessing not a fault. Another part of this book that was especially well done was the constant inclusion of the Mexican culture in Arce's life along with her assimilation into the life in San Antonio. I loved the stories of her favorite moments as a youth in San Antonio. It was especially neat to read about her upbringing and know that it wasn't all perfect but she still had many good childhood memories. I also loved that many of her struggles in school were similar to mine and I'm sure many other people's of wanting to be included and liked. Her family wasn't perfect but they worked hard to support each other. I think I can learn a lot from how the Hispanic culture bands together to support family no matter what it takes. I also loved how supportive and protective she was of her little brother and how he often returned the

favors. Being bilingual myself I have always loved the Hispanic culture. Family is so different in Latin America. So close and so important. So many aspects of Arce's story are things that I took for granted. Reading about her plight to simply get into a college reminds me that I never should have taken my opportunity for an education for granted. She did an excellent job sharing the fears she lived with day in and day out in this book without making it a pity party but instead an opportunity to educate readers about what immigrants go through to simply get into a school and get a job. There were also so many reminders in this book about what is important in life. Arce took care to present herself well in her career but did not waste money on overly frivolous things. I really liked that about her. I loved how she was always supporting charities and her church, sending money to her family, and also starting scholarship funds for undocumented immigrants so they too could go to school. I appreciate the fact that she needed her 6-figure Wall Street job to do these things but I loved that she didn't flaunt her success. I hope that reading this book will help people in the United States learn more about the plight of immigrants and also bring awareness to the need for immigration reform and also scholarships and grants for undocumented immigrants trying to attend college. I was so thankful that Arce tackled these difficult topics in her book and I hope it helps people view immigrants differently in the aspects of education, jobs, welfare, and taxes because of the truths she exposes in this book. I received an electronic advanced copy of this book from the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for my honest review which I have provided here.

#Awesome, I was able to relate to her story, the experiences, so similar to my family members, it made me cry and made me laugh. No one knows how it feels to be treated as though you have no identity better than Julissa!

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