



Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish

Pablo Cartaya

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish

Pablo Cartaya

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish Pablo Cartaya

Marcus Vega is six feet tall, 180 pounds, and the owner of a premature mustache. When you look like this and you're only in the eighth grade, you're both a threat and a target. Marcus knows what classmates and teachers see when they look at him: a monster.

But appearances are deceiving. At home, Marcus is a devoted brother. And he finds ways to earn cash to contribute to his family's rainy day fund. His mom works long hours and his dad walked out ten years ago—someone has to pick up the slack.

After a fight at school leaves him facing suspension, Marcus and his family decide to hit the reset button and regroup for a week in Puerto Rico. Marcus is more interested in finding his father, though, who is somewhere on the island. Through a series of misadventures that take Marcus all over Puerto Rico in search of the elusive Mr. Vega, Marcus meets a colorful cast of characters who show him the many faces of fatherhood. And he even learns a bit of Spanish along the way.

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish is a novel about discovering home and identity in uncharted landscapes.

Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Pablo Cartaya

Format :

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Realistic Fiction, Cultural, Family

 [Download Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish Pablo Cartaya

From Reader Review Marcus Vega Doesn't Speak Spanish for online ebook

Flynn says

this book is so good.

Carli says

My black and white Kindle's cover for this wasn't going to cut it. How great are these colors?

-

????????/5. I loved The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora, so I was excited to see another one by Pablo Cartaya. It didn't disappoint!

-

Marcus Vega is an unusually tall - well, overall large - eighth grader who makes extra cash by walking younger kids to and from school. He and his brother are being raised by their single mother, and Marcus sneaks his extra money into their emergency cash jar without his mother knowing. When Marcus is faced with a possible suspension from school, his mother packs up the boys to visit their extended family in Puerto Rico for the first time in Marcus's life. There he tracks down his father and finds out just how strong he is without him. HIGHLY recommend for all middle school readers.

Yapha says

Marcus is the biggest kid in eighth grade, and as such is often perceived as bully. In reality though, he is protecting younger kids from Stephen Hobart, the extremely privileged, actual school bully. Marcus collects a small fee from students for a variety of services he provides and helps to make the school a better place. When Stephen calls Charlie (Marcus's younger brother with Down's Syndrome) the R word, Marcus hauls off and punches him. This off course, earns Marcus a suspension. In a chain of events that is too complicated to go into here, Marcus, Charlie, and their mom set off on a five day trip to Puerto Rico to reconnect with family. Marcus has his hopes set on finding his father, who he has not seen or heard from in 10 years. Of course nothing goes as planned, but Marcus does learn a lot about the island of his birth and what it truly means to take care of your family. A gorgeous homage to pre-hurricane Puerto Rico as well as an exciting journey of self-discovery. Highly recommended for grades 4 & up.

ARC provided by publisher.

Janna says

Very well written - reads somewhat like a love-story to Puerto Rico and rightfully so. The author beautifully captures the things that make La Isla del Encanta so special! I was married to a PR man and have visited the island many times and reading Marcus' story reminded me of being a gringa seeing and experiencing the island for the first time. A great story of family and choosing our family.

I won this book in a giveaway and was given an advanced copy. All thoughts and opinions are 100% my own.

Mariana Calderon says

Most people look at Marcus Vega and see a bully - that's what happens when you're six feet and 180 pounds. It doesn't matter that he's just in the 8th grade, takes care of his little brother who has Down Syndrome, and offers to walk younger kids home for some extra cash for his mom's emergency cookie jar.

So when a school fight results in Marcus' mother deciding it's time for a change of pace and taking them to Puerto Rico to stay with relatives, Marcus can't help but think that if he can just find his estranged father on the island, everything back home in Springfield will get better.

This story charmed the heck out of me. The seemingly never-ending materialization of previously unknown Tíos, Tías, and primos especially had me, a Latina who's had that exact journey to the motherland, grinning the whole way. Kidlit needs more voices like Marcus' -- brown, in-between, figuring it out, growing into it, & owning it.

Shaye Miller says

Gotta love Marcus Vega—smart kid. ? Final review to come on Monday!!

Becky Ginther says

Marcus is big for his age, and as a result he finds a lot of assumptions being made about him - mainly, that he's a bully. He's not, but when he ends up punching the "actual" school bully for calling his brother, who's autistic, the R word, it doesn't make his reputation look any better for the adults involved. Since his mother has been struggling as a single parent she decides to take her kids on a trip for the first in their life to Puerto Rico... and Marcus makes it his mission to find his dad while he's there.

I felt like the characters in this book were well done - Marcus felt real. He's thoughtful and mature, but also in some ways immature which is very fitting of an 8th grader. It's also weaves in the Spanish language in a way that makes it easy to understand what's going on even if you don't speak Spanish. The story was interesting and it was a pretty easy read.

Unfortunately I felt like there was a bit of a weakness in this book, and that occurs with the ending. Marcus is very preoccupied throughout the novel with finding his father. He not only wants that father figure in his life, he also believes that when they find his dad he'll be willing to contribute financially and life won't be so hard for them and mom won't have to work a million hours. (By the way, this confused me a little as well - is he not paying child support?). When they get to Puerto Rico and inevitably track down Dad, (view spoiler)

Overall it was an enjoyable book with a good message that I think is interesting enough kids will enjoy and get through it quickly!

Cassie Thomas says

Marcus's dad left him and his family when Marcus was a little boy. Marcus has a lot of personal issues himself that he is dealing with, but the emptiness of not knowing his father eats at him. After an incident at school, his mom decided it was time for a trip to Puerto Rico to regroup and visit family. Marcus sees it as his opportunity to find his father. As Marcus goes through the 4 day trip, he learns a lot from family members of his fathers as to who his father was/is as a person, but still holds on to that hope that so many kids I know do. Kids have to see reality to believe it, he didn't want to just take everyones word. I think as a teacher this is something we have to understand that students may be going through. They may not truly understand the bad that is coming from a family member they have an emotional attachment to, until they see the bad for themselves. I enjoyed the reality of Marcus's adventure to find his dad. I myself had to find this out about someone in my family, no matter how much I was told, I still had to discover on my own.

Carrie says

Marcus Vega is really big. In fact, he is the biggest person at his middle school. For that reason, other kids are afraid of him. Marcus uses his size to his advantage to make money at school, doing things like walking bullied kids home from school, keeping kids' cell phones so they don't get confiscated, and charging a bully tax, in order to contribute to his family income. When a school bully calls Marcus' brother, Charlie, a retard, however, Marcus punches him and opens up a can of worms for his mom, brother, and himself. To get some perspective, the family decides to visit Puerto Rico over the holiday break. Marcus believes this is the perfect opportunity for him to find his father, who left the family over ten years ago, and convince him that he needs to help them to make their situation better. The trip to Puerto Rico, however, opens Marcus' eyes to the fact that family is not always what you expect it to be.

Amy says

I loved this book. It was a great story of family, friends, and learning to live with yourself, despite what others might see when they look at you.

Marcus Vega doesn't fit in with the rest of the 8th graders at his middle school. He is bigger, stronger, and more intimidating. He uses this to his advantage and walks kids to and from school, for a profit, enforces a garbage tax, for a profit, and also houses cell phones during the day, for a profit. One of the kids he is trying to keep the others away from finally crosses the line and makes a rude comment about Charlie, Marcus' younger brother with Down Syndrome. Marcus punches him, and things go downhill from there. He is suspended and his mother decides that they need to take a family vacation to recharge and reconnect. They head to Puerto Rico, the place Marcus was born and the place his father fled to 10 years ago when he walked away from his wife and kids. Now Marcus thinks he will finally have a chance to ask his father why he would leave, and if he is finally ready to come back. Once in PR, Marcus discovers a whole family he never knew about and wonders why his father won't respond to his emails. On a five day adventure, Marcus finds out who the real hero of his story will be.

Highly recommend. So good.

Ms. Yingling says

ARC provided by Follett

Marcus is a big kid, and uses this to his advantage in his suburban Philadelphia neighborhood by earning a little money offering "protection" from kids like Stephen Hobert. He has a group who walk back and forth to school with him for the bargain price of \$10 a week. He also provides the service of keeping kids out of lunch detention by picking up trash they leave behind-- of course, this also has a price. His "office" is in the library, which gives him a place to hang out while he waits to pick up his younger brother Charlie from school. Charlie, who has Down's Syndrome, has recently been mainstreamed into Charlie's school. Their mother works at the airport and has a very demanding job, although the family struggles financially since the father decided to return to Puerto Rico. After an altercation with Stephen, precipitated by Stephen making fun of Charlie, Marcus gets in big trouble for bullying and for his businesses! The principal suggests that everyone cool down over break, and that both boys might be better off in a special school. Marcus' mother decides to finally visit Puerto Rico and stay for a bit with the father's Uncle Ermenio, who was always fond of the family. Marcus has always wondered about his father, but his mother is disinclined to discuss him. She does offer Marcus his e mail address, and Marcus sends a message, hoping to connect with him. The family spends time with the uncle and also travels around a bit, eventually hunting down the father, who is running a rather swanky hotel. Marcus learns a lot about family, his cultural heritage, and his father on the trip, and it helps him make a little more sense of his life back home.

Strengths: Marcus is a well meaning but misguided kid, and he clearly cares about his mother and brother. His interest in finding his father is also very realistic. The travels around Puerto Rico and all of the details about food, life, and landscape are fantastic! This will speak to a lot of students who have parents who might speak another language and have cultural connections that the students don't fully understand. The relationship with Charlie is nicely depicted-- his challenges affect Marcus a little, but do not preclude him from having other interests. Great cover as well.

Weaknesses: Unless Pennsylvania laws are very different from Ohio ones, I find it hard to believe that the school wouldn't have let Charlie in. It was also a bit strange that the school librarian was at school until 5:00. Again, things may be different, but the school situations seemed a bit off compared to my own situation. Also, there was too little about one of Marcus' "clients", Danny, and I wanted to know a lot more about their friendship.

What I really think: Definitely purchasing, and giving the ARC to an 8th grade student who loved Hautmann's Slider. I think he will really enjoy this one as well.

Kristi Housman Confessions of a YA Reader says

4 1/2 stars.

RTC for blog tour.

Thank you to Penguin/Viking for sending me a physical copy for review.

Abby Johnson says

Marcus is big for his age and he's taken on a lot of responsibility for an 8th grader. He helps his single mom

make ends meet by carrying on various businesses at school. For \$5 a week he'll walk you to school (\$10/week round trip) and make sure the biggest school bullies don't mess with you. And there's his littering tax and his cell phone babysitting services... When Marcus gets in a fight with the biggest bully at school, a boy who calls Marcus's little brother the R word, he gets found out and his mom decides that they all need a break. They'll be going to Puerto Rico, Marcus's birthplace and his dad's home, for spring break. Marcus is ecstatic at the chance to find his dad and demand that he take some responsibility and shoulder some of the bills. But all does not go as planned and things in PR turn out way different than Marcus expected.

I liked this contemporary story with a protagonist who's easy to root for. Marcus protects everybody - his little brother with Down Syndrome, his single mom, the kids at school - and he's never really seemed to need anyone to protect him. But he'll find out in Puerto Rico that everyone needs someone to lean on sometimes and that he's got more going for him than he ever knew. This is a nice travel book with the sights, sounds, and tastes of Puerto Rico. It wasn't really what I was expecting from the title - I expected more of a culture clash, not-fitting-in type of book and I don't think this was that. I didn't like it as well as Cartaya's previous novel, but this was still pretty good.

JoEllen says

After reading and loving Epic Fail of Arturo I was excited to see another MG title from this author. I loved Marcus and his relationship with his brother. Marcus' struggle with identity is something many MG students can relate to. The search for Marcus' dad will stir real emotions for readers. The fact that they travel back to PR and the message to always move forward is an important one. Huge opportunities to investigate and get students involved in recovery efforts to help make a difference.

Raul M says

Something about this novel had me intensely enjoying the opportunity to escape into the tale, even more so compared to the author's prior release. I initially had my doubts, but only because some memories that I'd prefer leaving in the past resurfaced, as I was reading of how 14-year-old Marcus stood up to bullying in school only to end up antagonized as a result. I'll admit, to be reminded that adults can enable middle-school tormentors was no joy.

Yet these circumstances led to a sort of family intervention that, interestingly, allowed Marcus to reconnect with Puerto Rico (where he was born). He'd lived so long in the U S. mainland; now a door opened for him to meet relatives that had long remained distant. Concurrently, he was drawn to the possibility of tracking down (on the island) his father, who had long before walked out on his mom -- this was the novel's effective lure of suspense for me.

As a Mexican-American, I could somewhat relate to Marcus's ties with, and loss of, his cultural background. However, this tale became my education on Puerto Rico's beauty and peculiarities. (I couldn't help think of a recent hurricane's effects on life there.) Marcus's struggles with his conspicuous height brought to mind what a younger relative of mine likely experienced. I appreciated how Down's Syndrome was included as a story element.
