

## **Book Review: Lucky Broken Girl, by Ruth Behar**

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The memoir, Lucky Broken Girl, written by Ruth Behar, is a poignant, middle-grade work that captures the story of young, adolescent 'Ruthie'. A refugee from Communist Cuba, Ruthie immigrated to Queens, New York with her Jewish parents, grandparents, and her little brother (who readers know as Izzie). Only five years old, Ruthie struggles with learning English and adjusting to her new life. The story is set when Ruthie is at the age of nine, which was, unbeknownst to her at the time, a defining point in her life. This is the year when Ruthie would get into a tragic car accident, resulting in her being in a body cast for a year (due to a completely fractured leg). As Ruthie overcomes this major challenge, she discovers numerous things about herself and rebounds as a stronger person.

Something remarkable about this memoir was that it was told in the perspective of a girl. Instead of being elegant, the language was more free-flowing, which symbolizes the way a child speaks. For instance, she referred to the ESL class she was initially placed in as the 'dumb class'. The plot revolved around Ruthie's struggle in a body cast, and how she learned to walk again. In her writing, Ruthie was able to capture how even though this was an emotional and physical struggle, there were still sparks of light — sparks of positivity — scattered throughout. In detail, she describes the touching experiences she shared with her Mexican neighbor, Chicho. Further, Ruth tends to focus on the little things that put a smile on her face, namely tasting cream puffs for the first time. This novel stresses the importance of family, friendship, and — most of all — hope. Readers will be captivated by the determined, talented, and carefree girl that guides us through her story. Having the potential to make readers laugh and cry, Lucky Broken Girl is a book that deserves to be read by all.