

Sister Anne's Hands

MARYBETH LORBIECKI ♦ *illustrated by* K. WENDY POPP





The summer I turned seven, flowers had power, peace signs were in, and we watched *The Ed Sullivan Show* every Sunday night. That's the summer word went around that a new teacher had come to town.



One night, after we'd been put to bed, Mom said in a whisper, "She'll be Anna's teacher."

And Dad replied, "I don't know how a woman of her color is going to survive."



Of her color? I wondered. What color could she be? Purple? Green? Orange? That night my dreams were full of teachers as colorful as birds.



Sister Anne's hands are brown and Anna's hands are white.

It's the early 1960s, and Anna has never seen a person with dark skin before. At first she is afraid of her new second-grade teacher. But Anna quickly finds that there's no reason to be scared. Sister Anne is wonderful. She likes jokes and she makes math and reading fun. But then someone sails a paper airplane to her, with a cruel message written on its wings. Sister Anne's wise way of turning a painful incident into a powerful learning experience has a profound impact on Anna and her classmates. This moving, timeless tale is perfectly illustrated with luminous, glowing paintings.

"With humor and understanding, Lorbiecki writes about a young girl's coming to terms with racial differences and about the pain that ignorance can cause."

—*The Horn Book*

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