



Becoming American Kids Series, Book 1

Author: Marlene Targ Brill

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Illustrations: 10 b/w line drawings,
4 b/w photos, plus map

Includes: – Glossary
– Further Reading List
– Discussion Questions

Ages: 8–12

Grade level: 3–6

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Picture Girl

by Marlene Targ Brill

*Becoming
American Kids
Series, Book 1*

“I want to stay here.

I want to draw pictures of America forever.”

This moving immigrant story tells how a spunky young artist saved her Jewish family from deportation and certain death in the Ukrainian pogroms of the early 1920s.

An independent, feisty girl, Luba Dichne drew constantly—after school, in storm shelters hiding from murderous Cossacks, and on the *SS Estonia* on her way from Ukraine to America. By the time Luba and her family finally saw the Statue of Liberty, they had suffered violence, injuries, illnesses, and a storm at sea.

Safely on Ellis Island, things turned bleak once again. The immigration quota for Ukrainians had been filled while Luba’s twin siblings were recovering from measles. It looked like the family would have to return to Ukraine, where they were hated for their faith. Then a guard saw Luba’s drawing of President Woodrow Wilson, and everything changed.

Based on the true story of Louise Dunn Yochim, Art Supervisor for Chicago Public Schools

Historical fiction for those who love stories about children whose courage and abilities change their world

Explores themes of immigration, perseverance and family values, religious persecution, life on Ellis Island, using art to overcome adversity

About the Author

Marlene Targ Brill is the author of over seventy award-winning books. She most enjoys writing about children and their accomplishments. Marlene has a bachelor’s degree in special education, a master’s degree in early childhood education, and has worked in the education field as a teacher, consultant, and curriculum specialist. She and her husband reside near Chicago in Wilmette, Illinois.



Advance praise for *Picture Girl*:

“A family flees persecution—Lady Liberty lifts her lamp, but not everyone gets in. It’s a matter of luck, determination...and talent. ...a true page-turner.”

— **Eric A. Kimmel**, award-winning children’s book author

“...beautifully written, poignant and realistic...never dwells on the cruelty [of the pogroms], but on last-minute escapes and hope.”

— **Rabbi Jon Haddon, D.D.**

“Suspenseful... Meticulously researched detail, current themes, empowerment through art.”

— **Mary Elise Monsell**, children’s book author, *Mr. Pin* series