

Luciano and His Shining Star Backpack

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Illustrated by
Patricio Roco



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To Jaime, my dad, a little boy with curly, black hair who plays in the southern forests of Chile.

Alejandra

To my little monkeys, who grow with the generosity that lights up their minds and the love that guides their hearts.

Claudia

To Uriel Parker, who had faith and left behind his backpack full of stars, and for Luz Cabrera, for being the one who passionately makes them shine today.

Alejandra y Claudia

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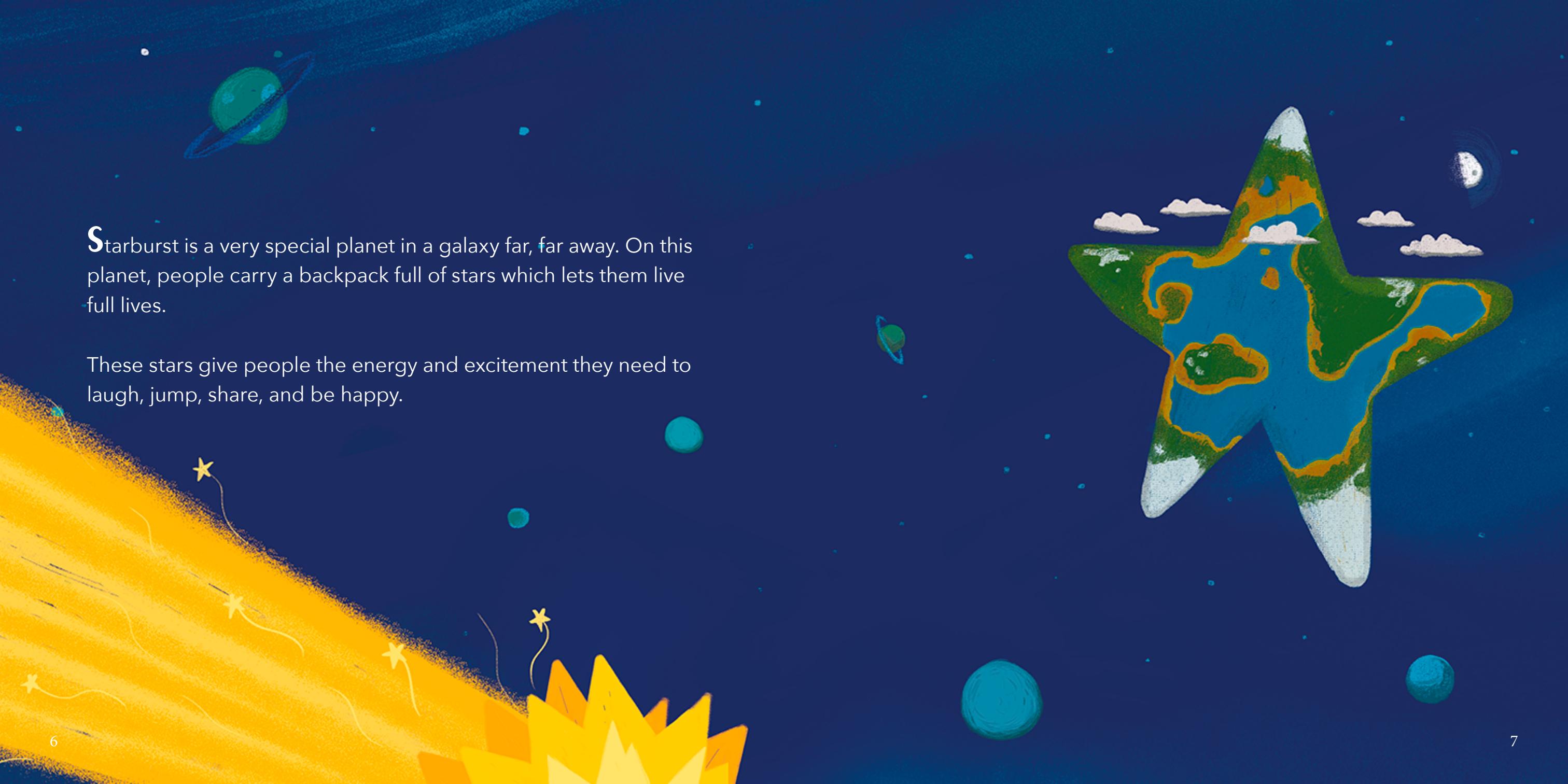
For those who believe in donating organs and its
opportunity to give the gift of life.

For those who have thought about the possibility of being an
organ donor, their families, and their loved ones.



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Patricio Roco





Starburst is a very special planet in a galaxy far, far away. On this planet, people carry a backpack full of stars which lets them live full lives.

These stars give people the energy and excitement they need to laugh, jump, share, and be happy.

Luciano Lightbeacon lives on Starburst in a house in front of a big lake. This is where he spends time with his parents and siblings and where he is always surrounded by friends and neighbors.

Luciano Lightbeacon is a child like any other. He is optimistic, likes to play, learn new things, and be around other children. However, there is something very special about him: the stars that he keeps in his backpack have extra shiny shine.



One day, coming home from school, Luciano found a letter in the mailbox outside of his house. It was an invitation from the planet Love Supreme, and it said:



Dear Luciano,

Planet Love Supreme needs young people that are happy and enjoy life very much, like you. We have watched you, and we believe that you would be an excellent friend and a big help to the children here. We invite you to come and meet us and spend time with our inhabitants. Before coming, you need to know that, upon arrival, you must get rid of your shining star backpack. You will not need it here. All you need is the shine in your eyes.

We will be waiting for you.

Lots of love,

Queen Love Lovella.



Luciano couldn't stop thinking about that invitation. He was very adventurous, and the idea of traveling to other planets fascinated him, however, he had so many questions in his head. Would it be very different living without his star backpack? How would he play with other children? Maybe it would feel lighter, freer, he thought, maybe he could do a lot of new things...



"I've made my decision. I'm going to go to Love Supreme," said Luciano. "And now, I must prepare for the journey."



When Ms. Stella White Luciano's mom found out, she became very sad. He was her youngest son, and he made her happy every day with his jokes and tricks. She knew that she would miss him very much, but she understood what this journey meant to him.



Meanwhile, Luciano kept asking himself what he would do with his backpack, where he would leave it, or who would he give it to. He loved that backpack full of shining stars, so he had to make sure he left it in good hands.

One day before his journey, Luciano said to his mom, "I'll leave my backpack and stars with you so that they light up your days, and you will always remember me. As long as you share them, they will never stop shining, and I will live on through them."

Then, after giving her son a big hug, Stella White took the backpack.



And the day of the big journey arrived.

Full of excitement, Luciano gave his parents and siblings goodbye hugs and kisses, and when the night fell, he got up on the shooting star which would bring him to Love Supreme.





The next day, walking through the park, Stella White ran into Lucy Sparkles, a girl who lived in a nearby neighborhood.

Lucy was happy, with a soft smile and a graceful walk. Although she was always smiling, the stars that she carried in her backpack were very delicate, and, sometimes, they even seemed to be burnt out. They were so delicate that she always had to be alert and careful when playing with the other children.





When she arrived home, Ms. White looked for Luciano's backpack. She had an idea in mind, but first, she needed to check how many stars there were and if they still shined with the same intensity.

When she opened the backpack, she found a great surprise. Luciano had left behind a letter.

These stars will keep on shining, and I will keep on shining through them only if someone else carries this backpack, and it must be someone who is able to feel the happiness that I felt when I used it. There is no greater happiness than sharing.

Luciano Lightbeacon.

Ms. White, who had understood Luciano's message, went back to the park to find Lucy, and when she saw her, she said, "I have brought you a special and one of a kind gift. These are the stars that my son Luciano left behind before going the planet Love Supreme. They are the brightest stars that anyone has ever seen, and they are for you. Only you can enjoy them and take care of them. Put on the backpack, and you will see."

With a little bit of help adjusting the straps to her size, Lucy Sparkles settled the backpack onto her back and, little by little, began to feel the immense energy of this gift.



Luciano, who was happily living on the planet Love Supreme, saw through a magic spyglass how his stars kept shining thanks to the use that Lucy Sparkles gave them.

He and Lucy would be connected forever by the magical shine of those stars.



The End





“One day, you, Lucy, or I will also be invited to the planet Love Supreme, where the inhabitants don’t need a backpack. All they need is the look of love in their eyes.”

About the authors



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Reading mediation guide



To guide adult-mediated reading, different strategies are developed that make it easier for the child to understand a subject as important and sensitive as organ donation while enjoying the literary text and illustrations.

READING PREPARATION

It is important to read the story several times before presenting it to the children to know its various components and be able to handle said components well. This includes both knowing and understanding the characters as well as the meaning and emphasis, which will allow the narrator to carry out an appropriate interpretation using intonation and pauses.

BEFORE READING

In a comfortable, story-telling environment, show the children the front cover using the “text interrogation” strategy (Jolibert, 1992), which can be done by asking the following questions:

What do you think this story will be about?

How do you think these children feel?

What do you think about them?



DURING THE READING

Using an appropriate tone of voice according to what the story indicates, remember the different intonations and pauses to ask questions such as:

What was Luciano’s backpack like? Could we compare Luciano’s backpack with an organ in our body? (page 17)

How did Luciano feel the moment when he got on the star? (page 19)

Why wasn’t Lucy Sparkles able to play with her friends? (page 21)

What did Luciano’s mom do with the backpack he left her? (page 25)

What happened to Lucy Sparkles when she received Luciano’s backpack? (page 27)

AFTER THE READING

Encourage the children to give a summary of what they heard to be sure that they understood the story. Also, you can ask questions regarding their values or criticisms such as:

What do you think about Luciano asking his mom to give away his backpack?

What would you have done if you were Luciano?

What do you think about Luciano’s mom giving his backpack to Lucy Sparkles?

REFERENCES

Plan Nacional de Fomento de la Lectura, 2010. (National Reading Promotion Plan, 2010.)



Luciano and His Shining Star Backpack sets out to help children understand the experience of organ donation through a metaphor that facilitates the integration of this life lesson into the children's world, exploring scenarios and emotions that connect the reader with transcendence and solidarity.

This book is a publication of the Centro de Comunicación de las Ciencias (Science Communication Center) of the Universidad Autónoma de Chile and can be downloaded for free on the website ciencias.uautonoma.cl

