

# Mukani Discovers Her Strength: A magical journey through Brazilian's heart

*Inspired by the Huni Kuin myths, the book Mukani Discovers Her Strength places the reader into the magical universe of Mukani.*

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Inspired by the Huni Kuin myths, the book Mukani Discovers Her Strength places the reader into the magical universe of Mukani, a little indigenous girl endowed with very special superpowers.

The book was released in the United States on March 5th at an official event by the NGO Vital Voices Miami in partnership with Together 4Earth and will be released in Brazil in trilingual format on April 19, 2022, in partnership with the publisher Inverso.

The Vital Voices Democracy Initiative was established in 1997 by First Lady of the United States Hillary Rodham Clinton and U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, following the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women to promote the advancement of women as a U.S. foreign policy goal. In the last 24 years, the NGO built a network of 20,000 change-makers across 186 countries.



Cover art Mukani



RENATA TOLLI

Vital Voices invests in women leaders who are solving the world's greatest challenges such as gender-based violence, the climate crisis, economic inequities and more.

Mukani is a nine-year-old indigenous girl who, even at a young age, shows bravery and a lot of mystery, wrapped in magic.

Originally from the Huni Kuin ethnic group, the "yuxiã" girl has the power to communicate with animals, plants and the enchanted Yuxibu spirits, being the only person able to help the people of her village against Mr. Txakabu's deforestation plan, the Lord of Evil.

This is the fictional story of the book *Mukani Discovers Her Strength*, created and written by Renata Tolli, a social entrepreneur and teacher formed by the extinct CEFAM project, which has just been released digitally worldwide and in physical format in Brazil, the United States, and some countries from Europe. The book is supported by FEPHAC (Federation of the Huni Kuin people of Acre).

Born in Osasco, São Paulo, Renata has lived outside Brazil for 22 years. Mother of four and currently residing in Tel Aviv, Israel's second-largest city, the Brazilian writer began to be curious about indigenous peoples after taking an ancestry test.

"I did the ancestral DNA test and noticed that I am 25% of Guarani origin. And this whole thing of being outside Brazil made me appreciate my roots more", says Renata.

That's how the desire to tell Mukani's story arose. For this, Renata had the help and experience of anthropologist Virginia Gandres, who has been working in the field of anthropology for over 30 years and is committed to the indigenous cause. The distinguished professor and doctor Joaquim Maná Huni Kuĩ, one of the only indigenous people in Brazil with a Ph.D. in linguistics, participate as a counselor. The illustrations were made by the artists Vinícius Galhardo, responsible for the cover and illustrations, and Acelino Huni Kuĩ, for the Hãtxa Kuin illustrations.

"My idea was to transform mythology, from the one told more than six thousand years ago in the forests, into an adventure for children to be interested in this theme.

But I wanted to tell it in a non-anthropological way", explains Renata about her objective, and reveals where the inspiration came from: "We don't have a Marvel superhero, for example, who is indigenous and represents Latin America. So, the desire to put an indigenous girl in this role was born in me".

The book *Mukani Discovers Her Strength* is presented in three languages: Portuguese, English and Hãtxa Kuin, a traditional indigenous language of the Huni Kuin people. "The idea for a part of the book to be translated into Hãtxa Kuin came from Dr. Joaquim Maná Huni Kuĩ, because this is the work he has been doing in Acre: teaching medicine in the Hãtxa Kuin language.

I loved the idea, and that was our deal", the author explains.

For Renata, a storyteller with more than 30 short stories written, Mukani is a symbol of courage, strength, love, and friendship. "The great lesson left by Mukani Discovers Her Strength is respect for others, living beings, and elders, as well as the meaning of friendship. In other words, Mukani represents the simplest possible values in life, which are the ones we need most", she emphasizes; and concludes: "I wanted to do something magical for kids to look at and think, 'Just like Mukani, we have so many powers in our hands.

In addition, to encourage them to read and live this cultural rescue, in which they can proudly say: 'I am not European, I am from here, I am part of the native peoples of the Americas. And these people deserve respect, for being warriors who have resisted until now."

So don't let the grass grow under your feet and enter the enchanted world Yuxibu Huni Kuin by Mukani Discovers Her Strength and learn about the contagious story of the little girl Mukani who, with her power of transformation - internal and external - will make the world aware of the importance of preserving tropical forests, indigenous peoples, and traditional cultures. By the end of the book, each reader will think: "There is so much of Mukani inside each one of us".

About the people Huni Kuin

Guardians of one of the most biodiverse territories on the planet, in the heart of the Amazon Rainforest, the Huni Kuin people inhabit regions of Brazil and Peru, and for them, there are no borders. The Huni Kuin population today is over 16,000 indigenous people (2019 Census), divided into 12 Indigenous Lands and 117 villages on the Tarauacá, Jordão, and Breu rivers, in the Tarauacá county, and in Santa Rosa and Feijó, both in Brazil.

The Huni Kuin people are also spread across seven communities in Peru.

According to Renata Tolli, a percentage of the incoming from Mukani Discovers Her Strength will be donated to FEPHAC, so that the Federation can continue its education programs, strengthening the Hãtxa Kuin language of indigenous peoples.

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