

New Children's Book Different but the Same Game: Tabletop Fun Inspires Empathy, Inclusion, and Connection in Readers

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, August 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Co-

authors Logan Schultz and Mylene Barizo are proud to announce the upcoming release of Different but the Same Game: Tabletop Fun, the first book in a warmhearted three-book children's series launching on September 1, 2026. Beautifully illustrated by Bethan Thomas and

published by Hunter Street Press, Tabletop Fun is an honest, joyful, and deeply personal story inspired by Logan's adventures with Layni, his powerhouse sister, who was born with Down Syndrome and is also a survivor of childhood leukemia.

“

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Logan Schultz

About the Book

Different but the Same Game: Tabletop Fun is the origin story of the "Different but the Same Game" — a simple, imaginative game created to help children talk openly and comfortably about special needs while discovering the

value and beauty of diversity.

Inspired by real lunch outings and play dates from Logan's own life, the story follows Emme, Ryder, and Auntie Rae as they compare the world around them — from cups and lights to the food on their plates — and discover that while things may look different on the outside, they are very much the same at their core.

Filled with playful imagination, warmth, and meaningful conversation, Tabletop Fun helps children build empathy and understanding in a way that feels completely natural and fun — making it the perfect tool for families, educators, and caregivers navigating conversations about special needs and inclusion.

A Story Rooted in Real Life and Real Love

For Logan Schultz, this book is more than a children's story — it is a tribute to his sister and the

bond they share. "This story came straight from my heart and from my real experiences with my sister," said Logan Schultz. "I wrote it because I believe every child deserves to feel seen, celebrated, and understood — exactly as they are."

Co-author Mylene Barizo added: "We believe the conversations that build empathy and inclusion can start at the very youngest ages, in the most joyful and natural ways. That is exactly what this book is designed to do."

Series Information

Different but the Same Game: Tabletop Fun is Book 1 of a three-book series featuring Emme, Ryder, and Auntie Rae. Books 2 (Curious Cuisines) and 3 (She Is Just Like You..She is Just Like Me) will follow, continuing the journey of discovery, empathy, and connection.

Publication Details

Title: Different but the Same Game: Tabletop Fun

Series: Different but the Same Game, Book 1

Authors: Logan Schultz and Mylene Barizo

Illustrator: Bethan Thomas

Release Date: Early September

Genre: Children's Picture Book

Themes: Inclusion, Diversity, Empathy, Special Needs, Family

About Logan Schultz

Logan was fourteen when he agreed to co-author a children's book celebrating his experience as the sibling to a sister with Down Syndrome. Layni's special needs shaped him in many ways. At an early age, he became aware of how different he and his sister were. Learning to accept and embrace their individual qualities came as he matured, a process that accelerated when he lived through Layni's battle with cancer. A high school student today, Logan excels in academics, competes in piano adjudications, and is a sports enthusiast (go Seahawks!). Logan shares a love of travel and food adventures with his family. His parents' gifts of strong work ethic and love of music are things he will carry into college and beyond.



About Mylene Barizo

Emigrating from Manila to LA as a child, Mylene Barizo never imagined a corporate career. Challenging cultural and family expectations, she rose to VP of HR at Enterprise Holdings and served as the Sr. Executive Director of HR to the CIO at The Boeing Company. Mylene led teams, innovations in HR, and built people strategies with executives. Find her blog, services, and projects focused on diversity and elevating women/BIPOC talent at www.leadershipladder.co. A proud UCLA Bruin, Mylene now calls Seattle home...when she isn't exploring beautiful places on the planet and savoring fabulous food!

About Bethan Thomas

Bethan Thomas is a children's book illustrator with over eight years of experience creating warm, expressive illustrations that bring stories and characters to life. She has worked with authors on a wide range of children's books, helping shape their ideas into engaging visual worlds that connect with young readers.

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