



> When we first meet Drita she's just ready to leave her country of Kosovo and come to the United States. What is she feeling? How does the author let us know that?

>When we first meet Maxie she's at home having breakfast with her father and Grandmother. What do we learn about Maxie from this scene?

>Both scenes involve the two girls and their grandmothers. Describe Maxie's grandma. In what way is she different from Drita's 'gajshe'. In what way are they the same?

>The scene in which the girls are in the library looking at the globe Drita thinks
"At first I thought Maxie and I are too different to be friends, but now I know in many ways we are the same. The biggest way is that Maxie likes things to be funny just like me".

In what other ways are the girls the same?

>Maxie's grandma tells her she needs to talk to someone, she needs to 'let someone in'. Why do you think Maxie hasn't told anyone about her mother's accident?

>When Maxie and her father are talking about her fight with Brandee they talk about different things she could have done instead of punching Brandee in the stomach. She could have stood, watched and done nothing. Would that have helped the situation? She could have run and gotten a grownup. Would that have helped? What does her father tell her she has to do?

>Both girls have mothers who are a big part of the story. Even though Maxie's has died how does she affect Maxie's day to day life? What about Drita's mother?

>On the day Maxie and her grandmother visit Drita, Drita's family receives good news about a cousin who has been missing. How does Drita's mother react to the news?

>Having a friend visiting for the first time in the middle of this family crisis could be difficult. What do you think Drita's feeling? What about Maxie?

>What does it show us when Maxie's grandmother rolls up her sleeves and says "What can we do to help?"

>How did Maxie's project help her to understand Drita? Do you think that's what the Principal had in mind when he assigned it to Maxie?

>Explain the title of the story, "DRITA My Homegirl".

Synopsis

A poignant story about the difficulties of leaving everything behind and the friendships that help you get through it.

Fleeing war-torn Kosovo, ten-year-old Drita and her family move to America with the dream of living a typical American life. But with this hope comes the struggle to adapt and fit in. How can Drita find her place at school and in her new neighborhood when she doesn't speak any English? Meanwhile, Maxie and her group of fourth-grade friends are popular in their class, and make an effort to ignore Drita. So when their teacher puts Maxie and Drita together for a class project, things get off to a rocky start. But sometimes, when you least expect it, friendship can bloom and overcome even a vast cultural divide.

Publishers Weekly

Lombard's debut novel unfolds through the first-person narratives of two fourth-grade classmates with very different backgrounds. Drita has just arrived in New York City from a devastated Kosovo and is worried about her depressed mother, who spends days alone in her room. She misses her best friend from home and longs to make a new friend. But Drita knows little English, and the girls at school make no effort to get to know her—including outspoken, impulsive Maxie, an African-American whose brassy demeanor cloaks a deep sadness. Maxie keeps secret the fact that her mother died three years earlier in a car accident, a loss from which she is still reeling. In a poignant encounter, Maxie's wise grandmother, acknowledging that her granddaughter's acting-out is related to her grief, advises the girl, "You got to start to let her go" and to "Let someone in." Maxie reaches out to Drita, and the two grow closer as Maxie researches Kosovo for her school project.