



Granny's Kitchen: A Jamaican Story of Food and Family

Written by Sadé Smith

Illustrated by Ken Daley

Feiwei & Friends, 2022, 32 pp (unpaged)

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Shelly-Ann lives with her grandmother on the sunny beautiful island of Jamaica. Her grandmother is a wonderful cook of foods based on Jamaican traditions—dumplings, ackee, saltfish, and plantains. When Shelly-Ann decides to try her hand at making these foods, nothing turns out right.

Even though her grandmother reassures her, Shelley-Ann gives up. One day when her grandmother is too tired to cook, Shelley-Ann gives cooking another try and provides her grandmother with a perfect Jamaican breakfast.

This warm, inviting story is illustrated with vibrant, sun-soaked artwork that fits the Jamaican setting. The digital illustrations capture the bright greens and blues of the Jamaican countryside and the pinks of Granny's kitchen. They also depict the close relationship between Shelly-Ann and her grandmother and their facial expressions of discouragement and happiness. The book ends with recipes for the Jamaican dishes that Shelly-Ann learns to cook, encouraging readers to also give the recipes a try. The story of a determined girl and her love for her grandmother and Jamaican food is full of warmth and connection.

Books to pair with this picturebook include books set in Jamaica, such as *Marley and the Family Band* by Cedella Marley (2022), *A Likkle Miss Lou: How Jamaican Poet Louise Bennett Coverly Found Her Voice* by Nadia Hohn (2019), and *J is for Jamaica* by Benjamin Zephaniah (2009). Books about cooking and food with family members would also make great pairings, such as *Plátanos are Love* by Alyssa Reynoso-Morris (2023), *Abuelita and I Make Flan* by Adriana Hernandez Bergstrom (2022), and *Black-Eyed Peas and Hoghead Cheese* by Glenda Armand (2022).

Sadé Smith (<https://sadetsmith.com/>) is from Toronto, Ontario and is of Jamaican heritage. Her books often involve food and recipes with colorful illustrations to capture the vibrancy and beauty of the Caribbean islands. *Granny's Kitchen* is her debut picturebook. Her second book is *Julie and the Mango Tree*, illustrated by Sayada Ramdial (2023). Sadé is also a design technologist who practices the skilled trades of carpentry, flooring, and home renovations. She holds degrees in interior design, architectural technology, creative book publishing, and business marketing. She loves the beach and enjoys adventuring with her two boys and their dog Ziggy. She is passionate about literature and writing books with diverse representation for young readers.

Ken Daley was born in Cambridge, Ontario to parents who emigrated from Dominica, West Indies. He has exhibited his artwork in Canada, the U.S. and the Caribbean with his work featured in children's books, print publications, and on television. He draws inspiration from his African-Caribbean roots, his life experiences, and his encounters with people and cultures. He explores art

through different styles and materials, including oil, acrylic, ceramic tiles, wood, nails and found materials. His work is an explosion of color and emotion. He had illustrated picturebooks related to *the Caribbean*, including *Auntie Luce's Paintings* by Francie Latour (2018), *A Feast for Joseph* by Terry Farish (2021), *Joseph's Big Ride* by Terry Farish (2016), and *The Legend of the Spirit Serpent* by Adaiah Sanford (2022).

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