Wangari Maathai, winner of the 2004 Nobel Peace Prize and founder of the Green Belt Movement, grew up in the highlands of Kenya, where fig trees cloaked the hills, fish filled the streams, and the people tended their bountiful gardens. But over many years, as more and more land was cleared, Kenya was transformed. When Wangari returned home from college in America, she found the village gardens dry, the people malnourished, and the trees gone. How could she alone bring back the trees and restore the gardens and the people?

Bill McKibben, author of The End of Nature, says: “Wangari Maathai’s epic story has never been told better—everyone who reads this book will want to plant a tree!”

With glowing watercolor illustrations and lyrical prose, Claire Nivola tells the remarkable story of one woman’s effort to change the fate of her land by teaching many to care for it. An author’s note provides further information about Wangari Maathai and the Green Belt Movement. In keeping with the theme of the story, the book is printed on recycled paper.

My Personal Review:

This beautiful story of the Green Belt Movement in Kenya launched by Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai details how she grew up appreciating nature and its bounty, attended college in America and studied biology, and then returned to her homeland only to find that new farming practices threatened the health and well-being of her fellow citizens. Although, the people were understandably inclined to blame the government for their deteriorating situation, Wangari encouraged the women to instead plant trees: to gather seeds, dig for water, and nurture seedlings. All this was heavy work, but the women felt proud. Slowly, all around them, they could begin to see the fruit of the work of their hands. The woods were growing up again. Wangari taught the children how to
make their own nurseries. She gave seedling to inmates of prisons and even to soldiers. Since Wangari began in 1977, over thirty million trees have been planted in Kenya - an impressive feat. Lovely watercolor paintings illustrate this simple inspiring story: village scenes show women and children listening to Wangari explain her proposal, and an awesome double-spread shows a line of people marching in an endless line, carrying seedlings and tools for planting. This wonderful picture book evocatively spreads an important environmental message.

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Planting the Trees of Kenya: The Story of Wangari Maathai (Frances Foster Books) - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!