

# SUN KISSED

1 x 54 and 1 x 85 **HD**



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## CONTACT

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After losing their son to a rare and fatal genetic disorder that causes skin cancer from any exposure to sunlight, Dorey and Yolanda Nez faced the devastating reality that their daughter, Leandra, was afflicted with the same disorder, xeroderma pigmentosum (XP). Dorey shouldered the enormous burden of caring for his daughter, while Yolanda, in her work as an advocate for Native Americans with disabilities, encountered other Navajos who knew of children with the same disease. Following these leads, the couple made the astonishing discovery that while XP appears at a rate of one in one million in the general U.S. population, on the Navajo reservation, which crosses three states, the rate is one in 30,000. What could account for such a tragic discrepancy? Dorey and Yolanda confront cultural taboos, tribal history, and their own unconventional choices to learn the shocking truth: The consequences of the Navajos' "Long Walk" are far from over.

Filmed over three years, with unprecedented access to the Navajo community, *Sun Kissed* follows Dorey and Yolanda on their brave journey to discover that their children and other Navajo children are still paying the price for the Navajo Long Walk of 1864—the culmination of the American conquest of the tribe in the 1860s, an almost-forgotten chapter in American history. Despite its importance as the defining moment in modern Navajo history and the beginning of their assimilation into American society, discussing the tragedy of the Long Walk remains a taboo topic within the Navajo community.

What Dorey and Yolanda discover challenges the core of their identity and beliefs, and exposes a fresh perspective on the complex, cross-cultural identity of modern day Navajos. Focusing on the continuing implications of American colonialism and the genetic imprints it has left on this community, *Sun Kissed* presents a rare and realistic window into the issues confronting Native Americans today.

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## CREDITS

*Producer, Director:* Maya Stark and Adi Lavy

*Photo:* Courtesy of Adi Lavy



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