

A Flag for the Flying Dragon: A Captain No Beard Story

Carole P. Roman

Bonnie Lemaire, Illustrator

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Roman smoothly weaves lessons on responsibility, teamwork, and perseverance into her entertaining tale.

Captain No Beard and his hardworking crew are off on another fun, educational adventure in this next installment of Carole P. Roman's Captain No Beard series, *A Flag for the Flying Dragon*.

Captain No Beard (a.k.a. Alexander), his cousin Hallie, sister Cayla, and three stuffed animals make up a crew, happily tending the "ship" in Alexander's bedroom. The imaginative play has everyone busy at work, each with their own job, each doing their part to keep the Flying Dragon shipshape. Hallie is scrubbing the deck, Cayla is plugging holes with rags, and Mongo the monkey is lookout. The only one without a job is baby Zachary, Hallie's little brother and the newest member of the Flying Dragon crew. "Everybody has to be included. That's our rule," Hallie points out, so finding a way for Zach to contribute takes input from the whole crew and leads to lessons on compromise, teamwork, and sharing.

Captain No Beard, already on a quest for a new flag for their ship, joins his crew as they take turns trying to come up with a way to include little Zachary, who at first disrupts the operation by trying to take over Mongo's lookout duties. Hallie suggests Zach help Cayla stuff holes with rags, but the rags are Cayla's old burp cloths, and she's not quite ready to share her special job. Experimenting with letting him help Matie the goat smash coconuts turns out quite messy and dangerous, and swabbing the deck doesn't work out either. Captain No Beard soon takes the lead and, using one of the old burp cloths, fashions a flag for the ship and gives Zach the responsibility of taking care of it. A new nickname of "Swabbie" completes Zachary's induction to the crew, and the ship sets sail happily once more.

Roman smoothly weaves lessons on responsibility, teamwork, and perseverance into her short tale, perfect for the target age group of preschool/kindergarten. Young readers are gently taught to include everyone when having fun, to be willing to compromise, and to use their imaginations. Bonnie Lemaire's whimsical, colorful illustrations are vibrant and welcoming, with enough detail to keep young readers' eyes and minds busy as they read along or are read to. The prose consists of appropriately short, simple sentences that are easy for younger readers to understand and enjoy.

A Flag for the Flying Dragon is imaginative and entertaining while it simultaneously imparts important lessons on how to play and work together and how to solve problems with patience and ingenuity so that everyone benefits. This installment in the series would make a great addition to any new or soon-to-be reader's bookshelf.

JEANNINE CHARTIER HANSCOM (May 4, 2015)

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