ForeWord Reviews

PICTURE BOOKS

Carrot in My Pocket
Kitson Flynn
Moon Mountain Publishing
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“I had a carrot in my pocket. Oh no! Now it’s gone. / I had a carrot in my pocket. Who ate it? C’mon!” This book takes readers on a journey with a young boy as he retraces his steps on the farm, recalling where he has been and tries to solve this mystery. The author’s strong rhythms and patterned text and the illustrator’s skillful paper sculptures introduce children to the daily workings of the farm—plants and trees, and all the animals. Each double-page spread portrays a separate aspect of farm life. Ortakales, who teaches at the Art Institute of Boston, where she received a degree in illustration, creates a three-dimensional world of a playing cat, nickering pony, bickering blue jays, sneezing colt, smiling pigs, weaving spiders, and diving horseflies. Her award-winning paper sculpture illustrations have appeared in magazines; this is her second children’s book.

The young boy guides the reader through his many chores, like oiling the tack, raking the straw, filling the hayrack, scooping the oats, feeding the goats, bridling the mare, harnessing and shoeing the horses, and sweeping the barn. Children will enjoy re-reading the story to pore over the intricate details of the exceptional art and to discuss the riches and labors of rural life.

It’s also amusing to follow the mouse from the title page as an additional mouse joins her on each page. Note how the face or tail of the culprit who “stole” the carrot from the boy’s pocket playfully peeks from the tractor, the hollyhocks, the pumpkin patch, and the edges of the pages to tantalize young readers.

Flynn is a marketing writer for an international business consulting firm, and a lifelong equestrian. She has previously published articles in horse magazines. This is her first book, and the fabulous cut-paper illustrations, a bevy of beasts, visual clues, and repetitive verse make it a perfect pre-school and kindergarten read-aloud.

Peggy Beck