

Dreams to Dance in Moonlight: Ways of Seeing, Feeling & Imagining

Peter C. Stone

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There is magic in the music of the birds, wild dreams to be dreamed, and much, much more to be seen around us than we think. Peter C. Stone's *Dreams to Dance in Moonlight*, with its evocative prose and engaging original art, calls children and their parents and teachers to encounter the world with body, mind, and spirit and let their imaginations soar.

While written for children, Stone's book will appeal to adults as well, especially those who feel they've lost their innate sense of wonder and awe at the beauty and majesty of the world. Through the use of repetitive questions, Stone provokes an exploration of the thoughts and feelings that arise when encountering nature in all its mystery and glory. To deepen the adventure of exploring the inner world, Stone has placed hidden symbols in his paintings and has included a section, "Notes on the Paintings," at the end of the book that not only explains them, but opens the way for personal interpretations of their meanings.

The book is graced by attractive, mysterious front cover art, and the back cover matter is ample, well laid out, and informative. The interior design, featuring a short page of text side by side with a full-page painting, makes reading to a child easy. Italics are overused, however, and leaving more strategically placed white space in the layout of the text would invite pauses for reflection.

Stone's paintings are colorful, simple, and tactile—though smooth on the page, their strong brush strokes and splatters almost beg to be touched. Although some of the concepts presented seem advanced for a child (how many children would know about shape-shifting, for example?) they do open the door to questions that may lead to rich, creative discussions about spiritual matters, the interconnectedness of humans with the other creatures that share this planet, the importance of our feelings, and why each of us is worthy of honor and respect.

In a world filled with distraction and noise, Stone's book is a welcome call to come home to ourselves and to our place in nature. For those who fear setting aside their electronic devices long enough to find their own path through the forest—or to read to a child—Stone offers comfort: "And if you suppose you are lost, don't fear. / Stand still, take a breath. You are in a place called ... Here!"

KRISTINE MORRIS (June 15, 2015)

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