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CLARION REVIEW ★★★☆☆

Gant the Ant

Brad Closson
David Gaddy, illustrator
CreateSpace (July 2010)
Unknown $10.50 (38pp)
978-1-4536-8242-5

Martin, the Minstrel Ant, travels the world to share his music with other ants. On the day that he goes to the mound at the end of the wheat field, the worker ants have gathered and are very excited. One small ant makes a special request: to hear the minstrel sing about Gant the Ant, “The Great One,” who risked his life to save his wife. As the story goes, Gant offered to be dinner for Peter the Anteater if Peter would rescue Gant’s wife, who had been caught in a flood and was stranded on a branch in the middle of a stream. Peter agrees to help but secretly plans to eat both Gant and his wife. Gant expects the betrayal and plots to outwit the dishonest anteater. Gant ultimately saves both himself and his wife, becoming a hero to ants everywhere.

In *Gant the Ant*, Brad Closson presents an uncomplicated story about good winning out over bad. Gant wants to save his wife and he uses his wit and determination to accomplish this goal. The text of the book mostly consists of simple rhymes, as in a minstrel song. The author writes:

> *“In the days of old, when the nights were cold*
> *and hills and mounds were few,*
> *There lived an ant, whose name as GANT,*
> *“The Great One” we all new.*

There is not a great deal in this book to challenge a young reader, although many children may learn what a minstrel is. The illustrations are appealingly simple and colorful, with a good sense of movement, though not particularly exciting. Several coloring pages, included at the end of the story, are an unusual, welcome addition to the book.

Ultimately, both the story and the pictures are enjoyable. The author is to be commended for attempting to teach a lesson about the value of quick thinking and tenacity. The illustrator is to be commended for attempting to engage children with a coloring activity.

CATHERINE THURESON (December 3, 2010)

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