

Looking for Splasher: The Little Tasmanian Devil

Nancy Walker

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Nancy Walker's *Looking for Splasher: The Little Tasmanian Devil* is a fun little romp of a picture book in which a lost young Devil is found by his animal friends.

In the story, four Devil siblings are playing hide-and-seek when one of them goes missing. They run and tell their mother, who in turn enlists the help of a bird named Kookie Kookaburra. After he gathers a search crew of animal friends, Splasher is found napping under tree branches, unaware he caused a panic.

Looking for Splasher stands out among picture books for its choice of animals that will likely be unfamiliar to children in North America: wombats, Tasmanian devils, corbie grubs, and wallabies. Walker has fun with the characters, naming each one thoughtfully: Pinky Potoroo, Edna Echidna, and Digger Bandicoot, for example. Yet between the search party of ten named animals, the rescue bird, other animals, and the Devil family, there are an overwhelming eighteen characters to keep track of in this short book.

The pictures are happy, full-color drawings that depict expressive animals. There is a missed opportunity, however, in that the climactic scene in which Splasher is found is not illustrated.

Kids' attention will be held captive by this adventure story as the animals look for Splasher. They will also learn some new vocabulary through Walker's word choices. Most importantly, *Looking for Splasher* includes helpful guidance about what to do if a friend goes missing. First the other Devils tell their mother. Then the search crew focuses on Splasher's distinctive white eye patch, his proclivity for splashing in puddles, and the last place the siblings saw him. Using these important clues, Splasher is found quickly, and the friends and family are happily reunited.

AMANDA MCCORQUODALE (April 24, 2017)

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