

Sunny and the Border Patrol Companion Coloring Book: The Eastside Series

Maureen Young

FriesenPress

(44pp)

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Sunny and the Border Patrol Companion Coloring Book is a complementary text whose expressive black-and-white line drawings are opportunities for coloring along to the tale that inspired it.

This coloring-book companion to Maureen Young's novel *Sunny and the Border Patrol Companion Coloring Book* features expressive illustrations and an invitation to join the tale.

The book is filled with black-and-white line drawings and captions that quote from the story that inspired them. Though it does not function as a standalone text, its images make the focal characters' emotions clear nonetheless, helping to convey a sense of each animal's personality and role in the story. Sunny, a hare, is seen holding a strong, upright posture, with a firm facial expression that suggests capability and being up to all challenges. The captions also impart bits of context: names like Marcus One-Ear and Samuel Strongtooth are evocative; humans are called "small-ears," distinguishing them from the hares. Touches of whimsy and humor arise, as do indications of a darker side to the story.

Elsewhere, unfurled scrolls highlight facts about urban wildlife (beavers can hold their breath under water for twenty minutes; prairie falcons are the fastest birds on the planet, able to dive through the air at 200 miles per hour). One scroll includes information on hares, the stars of the book, explaining that they are not rabbits and giving clear instructions on how to differentiate the two. But there are grammatical errors on that scroll and on several of the others in the book that impede their delivery, as do some jumps between topics.

In addition, the coloring sheets' faded outlines come sans clear definitions of the images' boundaries—as with a drawing of a fence that appears unstable because its lines fade out, leaving gaps. Fade-outs also appear in some of the words used in the pictures and identifying captions: the lower part of the stem on the capital *P* in "Patrol" is missing, making the letter look like a capital *D*. Further, some of the images show animals in awkward positions or missing body parts (as with one magpie standing on another's tail feathers, and another that is missing its claws). And while hares are described in the text as having black-tipped ears, the drawings do not support this fact. Further, the spheres in one illustration are ambiguous, as are several of the backgrounds used. A few images, though, are effective—that of two sad, trapped hares; a poignant picture showing only two paws touching; and a drawing of a falcon, which makes strong use of shading, contrast, and varied shapes to indicate feathers (though the posture of the bird is static, despite the caption's description of a scene of dynamic action).

Sunny and the Border Patrol Companion Coloring Book is a complementary text whose expressive black-and-white line drawings are shared as opportunities for coloring along to the tale that inspired it.

KRISTINE MORRIS (July 12, 2023)

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