

The Day That A Ran Away

B.C.R. Fegan

Lenny Wen, Illustrator

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Cute, funny, and educational to boot, The Day That A Ran Away is a colorful picture book that delights.

Precocious red-haired Jet has found a great excuse—or so he thinks—for not writing his alphabet in class: all the letters have run away! With careful wit and clever details, *The Day That A Ran Away* by B. C. R. Fegan and Lenny Wen teaches the alphabet with a good dose of humor.

The story is quick to launch into Jet's explanation to his teacher as to why he hasn't written the alphabet in his notebook. There is little context regarding who he is, what grade he's in, and what the class is learning. It becomes clear that Jet was meant to be following along as the class traced their letters, but he was instead daydreaming or otherwise not paying attention.

Each page of the book focuses on one letter, progressing alphabetically page by page. The personified letters appear to be quirky monsters, whose garb, surroundings, and reasons for running away revolve around which letter they are and where Jet is in his journey across various settings. Subtle details in the illustrations add spunk and cleverness to each page: F, for instance, has gotten lost in a forest, has a flower tucked behind one ear, and is being watched from a distance by a fox; N has gone out to eat some nachos, with a napkin gracing his lap and a newspaper open on the table.

The scenery, too, progresses in a way that ties the pages together. Beginning at home, Jet traverses a forest, rows down a river, runs down a cobblestone path through town, and wanders the hallways of his school over the course of the book, attempting to follow each letter during their escape. Jet is obviously a smart and imaginative child, albeit a distracted one. He is unduly punished by his teacher at the end of the book for his lack of attention, made to write the whole alphabet twenty times over.

All of the illustrations are skillfully crafted, with bold uses of color, shading to provide depth, and realistic facial expressions and detailed settings.

The rhyme scheme is playful and fun: "wasn't here" rhymes with "disappear," and "stepped off the page" with "went into a rage." The language is accessible to children of all ages, and even parents will enjoy reading this goofy tale with their young ones.

Cute, funny, and educational to boot, *The Day That A Ran Away* is a colorful picture book that delights with smart turns of phrase and an original twist on a common children's book concept.

AIMÉE JODOIN (September 10, 2018)

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