

## The Farting Bunny

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Puffy-clouds Children's (May 2008)

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Unlike the other rabbits in the Puffy-Tails clan Bramble is a yellowish-orange bunny who stammers stutters and farts excessively and noisily. As ravenous wolves surround the Puffy-Tails preparing to attack at sunrise the bunnies must find a way to make it across the valley and get help from the warrior Bright-Eyes rabbit clan. Burrowing under the valley would take too long. Bramble is determined to fly across the valley and makes wings out of bird feathers.

"Bramble strapped the wings on and ran across the courtyard to and fro on his hind legs flapping those wings like a demented chicken" the authors write. Readers will be eager to see if this bunny makes it into the air.

The sixteen large illustrations in sturdy eye-catching colors are generally easy to understand. However in one night scene it is difficult to make out the wolf cubs who are watching something strange in the sky. Another illustration depicts a gray-and-white wolf attempting to grab one of three rabbits that are airborne due to being full of gas. "Floating bunnies were so easy to kill; it was like plucking 'candy' from the air!" the authors write. Some anonymous members of the rabbit community die in this scene in which the threat of danger would have been more appropriate. No deaths occur in the later military conflict between the wolves and the rabbits.

Nicola C. Ho a pediatric geneticist has authored or co-authored a number of genetics articles for medical journals. She has also written and illustrated several other children's books including *The Firefly Story* and *What the Mustard Seed Says to the Mulberry Tree*. Josie C. Ho is a business consultant in Singapore and China. She co-authored *Our Worst Enemy* with Nicola Ho. Jan C. Ho an international banker is based in Singapore and Hong Kong. Co-illustrator Jacqueline C. Ho lectures for the Singapore Ministry of Education and teaches club and school art classes.

The way Bramble uses his gas to save his rabbit community is original and comical even though the plot involving a misfit who excels due to his problematic trait has been overdone. Parents who might consider the topic inappropriate will be alerted by the book's title but kids love reading about body processes that society considers hush-hush. Recent publication of a number of children's books about farting shows that there is a place for books that push these boundaries.

The story begins with a description of the rabbit clans but readers would prefer to meet Bramble first. And while anthropomorphic animals make this book most appropriate for five- to eight-year-olds long sentences and numerous hard words will make it difficult for these children to read it independently. A glossary defines many difficult terms. Older kids may eagerly read this book to a younger sibling and they will laugh at the way Bramble flies across the valley.

NORMA D. KELLAM (August 5, 2009)

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