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Picture Books

Where You Came From
Sara O'Leary
Julie Morstad, illustrator
Simply Read Books
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Little Henry is always full of questions, but one in particular—“Where did I come from?”—he ponders again and again. Evoking folklore, fairy tales, Bible stories, and pure silliness, his parents offer various explanations for his arrival. Perhaps the young boy was grown in his mother’s garden, carved out of wood in his father’s workshop, floating down the river in a basket, or even plucked from the sale bin at the supermarket. Depicted simply sleeping in a bed together with baby Henry floating above them, the parents remember that they both dreamt of their son, adding “And then you came true.”

The infant Henry is shown riding the tail of a falling star, being carried by dozens of Lilliputian-sized fairies, and nestled in a mailbox with “special delivery” stamps. These full-page illustrations with ample white space, crosshatched line illustrations, and delicate, minimal watercolors elicit both a soothing mood and retro feel. The book’s style and appearance are similar to its earlier companion title, *When You Were Small*. A teacher of children’s writing at Concordia University at Montreal, Canadian author Sara O’Leary is also a playwright, fiction writer, and literary columnist. Julie Morstad works as an illustrator for both children’s and adult books, as well as in animation and design.

This gentle picture book may be used to satisfy the curiosity of very young children who have begun to ask the age-old question or as a discussion starter for children who are ready for a more complete answer. *Where You Came From* would also make a handsome gift for new parents awaiting their own dream to come true.

Angela Leeper