FOREWORD REVIEWS THE INDIE WE LOVE.

Clarion Review

Picture Books

Yawns: The Sleepy Bear
Margaret Kim
Kathy O'Malley, illustrator
CreateSpace
978-1-4392-5729-6
Five Stars (out of Five)

This charming bedtime picture book may be the perfect tool to lull the most reluctant toddlers (and even their parents) into sleep. Margaret Kim's simple tale involves a teddy bear named Yawns, who has an important nightly task: to help his friends go to sleep.

Kim masterfully uses proven storytelling techniques. The text is gently repetitive, which young readers enjoy, and peppered with just enough alliteration to be fun.

The sleepy bear, with his backpack containing his personal teddy, calls on his friends: a playful puppy on the porch, curious cat, mischievous mouse, and so forth. With each encounter, Kim writes, " 'Good night, (insert friend's name),' yawns the sleepy bear with a smile and a good-night kiss. The (friend's name) yawns back, 'Good night, Yawns,' and falls fast asleep."

Not surprisingly, the helpful bear ultimately succumbs to his own magical yawning powers.

Yawns is beautifully illustrated by Kathy O'Malley, who has several other book titles to her artistic credit.

Her watercolors provide the fuzzy texture of a stuffed bear, watery transparency of a fish bowl including the swirling fins of tropical fish, a furry cat and a dog, and the toothy innocence of children. One mysterious little cricket appears in each illustration, giving readers something special to search for as they fight sleep. O'Malley's illustrated yawns are convincing enough to momentarily pause the story, as adult readers are likely to respond in kind.

Yawns will delight its yawning readers. Kim and O'Malley are to be commended for a sweet story and tender illustrations.

Linda Salisbury