

Bag in the Wind

by

Ted Kooser



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Synopsis

In a singular first children's book, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Ted Kooser follows a plastic bag on its capricious journey from a landfill into a series of townspeople's lives. One cold morning in early spring, a bulldozer pushes a pile of garbage around a landfill and uncovers an empty plastic bag — a perfectly good bag, the color of the skin of a yellow onion, with two holes for handles — that someone has thrown away. Just then, a puff of wind lifts the rolling, flapping bag over a chain-link fence and into the lives of several townsfolk — a can-collecting girl, a homeless man, a store owner — not that all of them notice. Renowned poet Ted Kooser fashions an understated yet compassionate world full of happenstance and connection, neglect and care, all perfectly expressed in Barry Root's tender illustrations. True to the book's earth-friendly spirit, it is printed on paper containing 100 percent recycled post-consumer waste and includes an author's note on recycling plastic bags.

Sort review

From School Library Journal Grade 4–6—In his first children's book, the former U.S. Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner tells an environmental story about a plastic grocery bag as it is blown out of a landfill, over a considerable distance, and eventually into the hands of some people who reuse it. Young Margaret picks it up to carry discarded cans she sells for scrap metal. A woman uses it to block a draft under her door. Two street people pick it up but eventually drop it. A man bundles it with other bags and sells them to a woman who runs a secondhand store. The story comes full circle when Margaret buys a baseball glove and ball there and carries her purchases home in the very bag she had initially found. Root's watercolor and gouache paintings, often golden-hued landscape spreads, follow the bag from its bright early-morning wanderings, through the day and shadowy night, and into the daylight once again. Long, compound sentences flow smoothly as they describe the bag's protracted journey, offering poetic images such as "clouds like enormous black leaf bags" that race across the moon. Older children who can listen to the lengthy text will benefit from hearing the beauty of the language and, in addition, will learn about recycling plastic bags from the informative author's note.—Marianne Saccardi, formerly at Norwalk Community College, CT Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist The life of a plastic bag in a landfill is extraordinarily uneventful and long—15,000 years, give or take a few millennia—but in this former U.S. poet laureate's first picture book, a beige grocery bag serves an array of inventive uses in but a tiny sliver of that life span. Set against a barren plains landscape, Kooser's circular story follows a plastic bag, "the color of the skin of a yellow onion," as it travels in a chain of happenstance from landfill, to tree, to stream, and among the various citizens of a nearby town, including a young girl, a homeless man, and a shopkeeper. The muted, dappled colors of Root's gouache and watercolor illustrations are a perfect complement

to Kooser's lengthy, meditative passages, which celebrate not only the virtues of economy and ecology but, moreover, the interconnectedness of all things. An excellent opener for discussions about creative reuse and recycling, the book concludes with an informational author's note. Grades 1-3. --Kristen McKulskiReviewThe exquisitely observed narrative renders the American landscape's dubious symbiosis—nominally natural, persistently industrial—worthy of a child's attention. . . . Root's gouache-and-watercolor pictures, suffused with the pale gold light of early-spring dawns, capture the injured land, its quirky denizens and the bag's familiar—well—bagginess. Wonderful.—Kirkus Reviews (starred review)About the AuthorTed Kooser was the United States Poet Laureate from 2004 to 2006 and won a Pulitzer Prize for his book of poems Delights and Shadows. He is the author of twelve full-length volumes of poetry and several books of nonfiction, and his work has appeared in many periodicals. This is his first children's book. He lives in Garland, Nebraska.Barry Root has illustrated many books for children, including The Cat Who Liked Potato Soup by Terry Farish and The Birthday Tree by Paul Fleischman. He lives in Quarryville, Pennsylvania.Read more

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Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood

What people say about this book

Marsha Truman Cooper, "Bag in the Wind. I am 64 years old. Though "Bag in the Wind" would be clear reading for a child, the words make poetry itself. The story goes from one high point to another interesting high point, a fine plot that carried me merrily along like a...bag in the wind. The book's message is simple, but profound. The illustrations? I enjoy them so much that I can't place the book on my shelf in the conventional manner, but prop the pages open on an easel, changing the display every few days. Young or old, this book will delight you and perhaps, if you're like me, turn you into a kid again."

Hilbre-Island-for-me, "A lovely book with a special message.. This offers a perfect introduction to the importance of caring for the environment and recycling."

Beverley R. Enright, "Clever story with a good moral. Ted Kooser creates a plausible yarn of the journey of a plastic shopping bag to bring the child into the subject of recycling and avoiding plastic. Kooser is better in giving life to things than he is to giving life to people."

Ana Lee Wade, "Bag in the Wind. This is a very cute book about a empty bag being flown around and the travels it takes. My grandson is almost 7 years old and loved this book. It helps the kids to think about recycling. Highly recommend this book. It gives great details in the story."

Skypilot, "Another great Ted Kooser story --. For adults and kids"

Adia, "Four Stars. Class loved this one!"

kid, "This a lovely story for children (big ones too) but This a lovely story for children (big ones too) but I thought it was a book of poetry and was my first attempt at Ted Kooser"

Charles W. Guildner, "Outstanding work by Poet Laureate Ted Kooser. This is a lovely little book, not only for children but for those who enjoy teaching children.Highly recommended, both for it's literary quality but also for the fine illustrations."

The book by Ted Kooser has a rating of 5 out of 4.6. 33 people have provided feedback.

Front Cover First Pages Surprise Me!

Book Information

Language: English

Paperback: 144 pages

Reading age: 5 - 8 years

Grade level: Kindergarten - 3

Item Weight: 14.1 ounces

Dimensions: 10.56 x 0.43 x 7.75 inches

Hardcover: 48 pages

Lexile measure: 850L

Library Binding: 32 pages

File size: 18814 KB

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced typesetting: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Sticky notes: On Kindle Scribe

Print length: 94 pages

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