



Horrible Bear!

Ame Dyckman , Zachariah OHora (Illustrations)

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The New York Times-bestselling duo behind *Wolfie the Bunny* presents a hilarious new book about accidents, outbursts, manners...and the power of saying "I'm sorry."

Bear didn't *mean* to break a little girl's kite, but she's upset anyway--upset enough to shout "HORRIBLE BEAR!" Bear is indignant. He doesn't think he's horrible! Then Bear gets a *truly* Horrible Bear idea. What will he do next? As Bear prepares to live up to his formerly undeserved reputation, the girl makes a mistake of her own, and realizes that maybe--just maybe--Bear isn't as horrible as she had thought.

Horrible Bear! Details

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Author : Ame Dyckman , Zachariah OHora (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review Horrible Bear! for online ebook

Erin says

Loved it! As a kid with a short temper, this book would've been perfect for me.

L.H. Johnson says

There's a lot to love about this vibrant and carefully pitched picture book. Horrible Bear! is the story of a girl who is out flying her kite one day. The string snaps and the kite falls into the cave of a very big and very sleepy bear. He's asleep and, awfully, manages to roll over on top of her kite and crunch it. The little girl loses her temper and yells: "HORRIBLE BEAR!" She stomps home in that delightful full-body stomp of anger that small people do, and the bear is left to come to terms with what's just happened. Naturally, he's a bit upset as well and decides he's going to be a HORRIBLE BEAR! Just as he's leaving the cave and coming down the mountain to roar at the girl, the girl manages to break her beloved toy. Upon realising how horrible she's been, she apologises to the bear who promptly helps her put her toy back together. Adorable, no? It's a very charming and lovable story full with some pertinent and gently told messages.

When it comes to picture books, everything matters. Everything. There were two words that glared a little for me from the text because they didn't feel quite as universal as I'd have liked. I know, I know, I can hear you commenting on how picky that is and it is a picky comment. But it's a comment that comes from the nature of picture books and my love for them and my *want* for them to reach out to a whole world of readers and to do that with a whole fistful of meaning and weight in each and every word. There's nowhere to hide in a picture book and it's right to acknowledge the slight down notes in an otherwise wonderful book because everyone gets better, always, and Dyckman and OHara are rather wonderful already. The dynamic art of HORRIBLE BEAR! is testament to that, as is that subtly written note of regret on the part of the girl. It's easy to judge in books like this, to get all high-handed and moralistic, but Dyckman reins it back. Her language is precise, kind and subtle. It's a great line to walk and one that speaks of a great understanding of children and of *learning*.

Where HORRIBLE BEAR! absolutely shines is in its use of detail. This isn't a story that forgets what's happened to concentrate on the next page. It begins on the title page, where underneath the dedications from author and illustrator, a small girl with vibrant red hair sees the string on her kite snap. And then we're in, pounding through a story where the bear sleeps with a little tiny teddy bear of his own, and when the girl gets back into her bedroom, we can see the bear coming out of his cave up the mountain through the window in her room. It's so utterly lovely and *smart* that I can get picky with this book. I can get picky because it's so vividly on point at certain moments that I want all of it to be up there, reaching the great heights of storytelling that it has the potential to do. This is vivid, exuberant, eccentric, and *kind* work. HORRIBLE BEAR! is rather wonderful. Just don't forget that exclamation mark!

My thanks to Andersen for a review copy.

Kathy Temean says

So much fun!

Beverly says

There is a good lesson here, that not everything is done on purpose with malicious intent, but that some things are just accidents. Also, a good lesson in turning anger into kindness. The cute acrylic cartoons are simple but very effective at conveying the emotions and enhancing the story line.

Susan Schuler says

Super funny!

Casandria says

So good! A life-lesson book with a sense of humor.

Anne says

Cute story with cartoonish pictures and a moral. Might be useful to teach conflict resolution.

Paul Orsino says

Nothing horrible about this book! Ame and Zachariah are a fantastic picture book team.

Jeannie Wilkinson says

This picture book is a collaboration between author Dyckman and illustrator OHora. On the cover there is a decidedly angry-looking little girl pointing accusingly at what looks like a definitely un-horrible bear. Her speech bubble declaration makes up the title which is rendered in red, hand-lettered capitals. This juxtaposition makes the reader immediately wonder what this un-horrible looking bear could have done. The main characters are simply but boldly drawn with solid colors and thick lines in acrylic on paper, giving them a child-friendly quality. It is the use of line that gives them their distinctive features – for bear, it is his fuzzy fur, for the girl, it is her wildly rambunctious red hair. This style is used throughout the book and is the signature style of the award-winning illustrator (who has authored picture books as well). On the back cover the bear is doing something un-horrible as well.

The initial set of endpapers treats us to just the top of the girl's red curls. The endpapers that close the book show just the fuzzy top and ears of bear's head creating a book-end effect. The story itself begins on the

dedication and title pages – we see the girl flying a kite near the entrance to a cave when the string snaps. As the story progresses, the illustrations support and expand the text. After the bear accidentally breaks the kite, the girl calls him horrible and then stomps home in a rage. All she can think about is the horrible bear. Meanwhile, the bear becomes angry because he is not horrible – that little girl is horrible! So he stomps after her. There are virtually no backgrounds in the picture, reflecting the single-mindedness of an angry child, only consumed with the immediate concern – the horrible bear that broke her kite. The text would be incomplete without the art. OHora conveys the feeling and intent of the story. For example, when bear has a “Horrible Bear idea” OHora’s use of line depicts the meanness in bear’s idea. His eyebrows are pointed in a thick V on his forehead and his eyes have angry circles underneath, whereas when he has a “Sweet Bear idea” his eyes are wide and his eyebrows soft and arched. Also, the text is limited to half-finished ideas and short sentences. For example, when the girl accidentally breaks her toy bunny, you need the illustration to know what happened.

Despite the seeming simplicity, the book has plenty to look at. There are funny details. The girl has another book by the illustrator on her shelf. The bear has books on his shelf with bear-ish titles such as “1000 Ways to Cook Porridge”. Due to the symbiotic relationship between text and illustrations, this is a book well-suited to discussion. It can be easily shared with a classroom of children as well as used one-on-one. Teachers will delight in using it to help children learn to infer and parents will delight in using it in discussing the power of asking and giving forgiveness. This is a great addition to a picture book collection and a great read aloud.

Elizabeth Moreau Nicolai says

Read for manners storytime. Very good story, but in a large group you need to point out a few details (the kite being broken, the bunny ear coming off, etc) to make it work. That is easily done and this book resonated well with kids. Bright clear illustrations great for large groups.

Scott Robins says

I loved this. Charming, funny and a great message about controlling anger - especially when sometimes stuff just happens and it's not intentional. Definitely has a place in today hypersensitive world. Plus the artwork here is astounding.

Jenny says

A bear accidentally breaks a girl's kite. She becomes unreasonably angry and begins proclaiming him a "horrible bear" as she stomps away. Her overreaction and anger make the bear feel angry so he begins to think she is a horrible girl and plans to treat her exactly as she has treated him. Fortunately, both realize that they are overreacting and they make amends and forgive each other. A good lesson in reconciliation, forgiveness, and not overreacting (a lesson that so many people seem to need today!)

While the illustrations aren't really my cup of tea, they definitely add to the tension and emotion of the story. (And I do think that goat is charming!! Poor goat...he seems to get the brunt of their anger. At least they do make amends with him as well.)

Jon(athan) Nakapalau says

Sometimes our reaction to a mistake can lead to horrible points of view - great lesson for children and adults alike.

Maria says

What happens when you have a bad day? One small incident, even by accident can trigger the rest of the day to a bad day. When Bear accidentally breaks girl's kite, she is on a rampage to seek revenge, as is Bear, I mean he's being called a "Horrible Bear" so he will show her what a "horrible bear" is really like. Will they both seek their revenge? or will they discover that accidents happen and it's ok to say "I'm sorry"?

SheriC (PM) says

I don't know if my library copy was missing some pages or if the author is trying to introduce preschoolers to non-linear storytelling, but I found this disjointed and hard to follow. Plus, I didn't like the blobby scribbly illustrations.

Hardcover, borrowed from my public library
