



Carmine: A Little More Red

Melissa Sweet

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And, as Carmine takes off on her bicycle with Rufus, that is just what she intends to do. But Carmine is a dreamy painter, always in search of capturing just the right hue in her drawings, and this drawing—the one she begins in a lovely forest clearing just off the path to Granny's—must be her best yet.

Here is a new, lively retelling of a timeless tale with enough twists and turns to keep readers guessing until the very end.

Carmine: A Little More Red Details

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Author : Melissa Sweet

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From Reader Review Carmine: A Little More Red for online ebook

Bernice says

Carmine, a girl that loves red, is filled with imagination and demonstrates this through her beautiful portraits she paints for her grandmother. On one particular trip to her grandmother's house, against her mother's advice to ride straight through the forest without stopping, Carmine stops to paint the beautiful landscape around her. A wolf that has been heard and sighted in the area sees Carmine and her dog. We are whisked by her adventure to see what happens between Carmine and the wolf.

As I read this book, I was impressed by the vocabulary used throughout the story. Written as an alphabet book, you would think that the language would be less advanced than it really is. The words capture every part of the story! She even writes a Haiku during her trip to Granny's house! She uses words like "lurking", "exquisite", "mimic", and "surreal". The illustrations are also vivid and colorful! I thought this book would be perfect for young readers that are familiar with Little Red Riding Hood. I love the way it presents itself as a alphabet book, but is at a 3rd grade reading level when alphabet books aren't as common. The story is somewhat whimsical and you can feel the exploratory personality of little Carmine.

Paul Hankins says

Before taking the Robert F. Sibert Award for Balloons over Broadway: The True Story of the Puppeteer of Macy's Parade, Melissa Sweet created this little alphabet book, her debut picture book.

A delightful retelling of Little Red Riding Hood, Carmine is a little girl invited to her grandmother's house for some alphabet soup. On the way, she encounters a wolf. And a number of sight words that will be fun for younger readers while at the same time helping to develop a rich vocabulary.

Sprinkled into the story and the illustrations, readers will find three blind mice, Little Boy Blue, and some pigs looking to by some siding for a three house they have just built.

The style beloved in Balloons Over Broadway is seen here within this earlier work. Panels carrying the story are embedded within the larger image on the page, and little asides from Sweet add to the charm of this book.

Miriam says

Granny isn't sick -- she's just making a nice pot of alphabet soup. What could be more natural than to ring a favorite grandchild and invite her over? Our artistically-inclined, red-loving protagonist hops on her bike, taking her painting supplies and faithful dog, and off into the woods she goes. "Don't dilly-dally," her mother reminds her, but she can't resist pausing to sketch a scenic spot. And then, a little farther off, she spies some poppies crying out to be painted... While she is dawdling and doodling, the wolf spots her and rushes ahead to... (view spoiler) Wolf and girl never interact, which is a bit odd, but she's such a dim bulb I can't blame him for not wanting to chat her up.

In terms of the art, I didn't care for the general style but did like the inclusion of details, especially the references to other fairy tales. My favorite bit was how the woodsman was absent that day, showing the three little pigs how to build a treehouse.

What I really didn't get was why Sweet choose to make the book alphabet-themed but then failed to select words that weren't relevant to, well, anything, really. They're not red-themed (as the title, decorative endpapers, and first page led me to expect), not fairy-tale themed, and not even always the key words in the passages. And points off for misuse of the term "surreal". But the blurb says this is her first book, and it had potential, so I'd be willing to check out her next effort.

Nicole says

This was a cute twist on an alphabet book and the story of little red riding hood. I am a huge Melissa sweet fan and this one did not disappoint.

Cindy Mitchell *Kiss the Book* says

Sweet, Melissa Carmine: A Little More Red. Houghton, 2005. PICTURE BOOK.

This abecedarian (alphabetically arranged) version updates the Red Riding Hood story in an art format that mimics the art journal of a precocious child. Vocabulary words are highlighted, defined, and used in sentences that advance the plot. In a nonviolent twist at the end, Sweet manages to make this a satisfying individual read for any age.

EL - ESSENTIAL. Reviewer: Beverly Stout, Elementary Library Specialist

N_kellie says

This creative take on the classic "Little Red Riding Hood" is set up in an ABC book format. But don't be mistaken, it's no baby book. Melissa Sweet has chosen to highlight some wonderful words as she tells the story of Carmine dilly-dallying on her way to grandma's house. The reader is sure to expand their vocabulary with words like exquisite, indeed, lurking, reckoned, and surreal.

The story opens with Carmine (cleverly named a shade of red) painting a picture in her bedroom, thinking about how Granny taught her to read with alphabet soup, when her mother tells her that granny is on the phone. The next illustration shows Carmine's side of the conversation, as granny invites her over for soup. In a speech bubble, Carmine states, "Uh-huh. I'll be careful" and "Huh-uh. I won't stop along the way." Carmine's mother even shouts to Carmine not to dilly dally, when Carmine rides away on her bicycle. As the reader would probably guess, Carmine does not go straight to Granny's, she decides to stop and rest, but realizes that the light is exquisite that morning and she decides to paint a picture. While Carmine is painting, her dog, Rufus, notices an odd scent in the air, one he is certain is a wolf. Carmine is so involved in the painting she is making for Granny, she misses many signs that she should get on her way. Then, Rufus comes face to face with the wolf and a humorous conversation takes place. Wolf finds out they are on there way to Granny's, and when he makes a surprise visit, Granny shouts "WOLF!" so loudly that Carmine is

able to hear from the top of the hill. After entering the house, and looking at the clues in the kitchen, Carmine decides granny is missing. But wait! She hears a distant yodeling, and discovers Granny in the closet. The story ends happily when Carmine is able to give Granny the painting she painted along the way and promises never to dawdle again.

This happy ending version is a nice twist to an old favorite and even includes some other popular fairytales throughout. The three blind mice, and the three little pigs are cleverly referred to in this already funny book.

Reading the pictures is a must in this version. Some text is included in speech bubbles and parts of the story will be missed if the detailed pictures are not closely examined.

This book could be used in many ways in a 1st-5th grade classroom. The vocabulary lends itself to lessons related to context clues, and the illustrations would be a great match for a strategy lesson on making inferences. It would also be a great mentor text for an ABC book project.

Michele says

One of my new favorite alphabet books that is nestled within a classic-Little Red Riding Hood. Readers get a special treat when they enjoy this Caldecott-worthy picture book: a classic w/a twist that carries with it the genre of being an ABC book that truly has a fun, adventuresome character. My daughter brought this home from library at school & we ordered one for my (ahem, her) personal library right away.

Vivian says

This is certainly not your ordinary alphabet book. First, there are no upper and lower case examples of the letters. Second, it's a story. Third, the vocabulary choices are both unusual and delightful. Fourth, there are cultural nods to well known artists, performers, and even nursery rhyme and fairy tale characters if you look for them within the illustrations. The illustrations themselves are akin to visiting the author/illustrator's studio. Such a delight!

Meredith says

The illustrations in this book are amazing. Great take on a classic fairly tale, and I love the 'alphabet soup' theme. I'm a sucker for any book where a child is encouraged in her artistic pursuits!

Christina says

A contemporary take on "Little a Red Riding Hood." Detailed, colorful illustrations give kids a lot to look at, and each page highlights a new vocabulary word, though the words are pretty random, ranging from green and joke to haiku and nincompoop. Okay, I can see a little kid enjoying that last one. But I'm trying to imagine a parent having to stop and explain surreal to a six-year-old.

...And flipping back through I just realized this is an alphabet book. You'd think the fact that it starts with a story about her grandmother making alphabet soup would have tipped me off, but I was hungry and reading while waiting for my dinner to cook, and all I could think was alphabet soup sounded really good! When was the last time I had some? Could I buy some? Or maybe make it? (There's a recipe at the end, I might try it.)

Jeimy says

Part retelling of Little Red Riding Hood;
part alphabet book,
part vocabulary book,
100% infused with Melissa Sweet's magic.

Lorna says

A fun twist on the Little Red Riding Hood story, with the added addition of an alphabet book. Great vocabulary and interesting format would be great to use with upper elementary students.

Margaret says

There were things I liked about this Little Red Riding Hood story, and things I didn't. I liked the characterization of LRRH, or Carmine. She's an artist. I liked her pet dog Rufus. I liked most of the illustrations. I liked the idea of having keywords for each page, based on the alphabet and the alphabet soup Carmine's grandmother makes. But...the keywords didn't always work. Sometimes the page would give enough context clues so a child could figure out what the word meant, sometimes not. Sometimes the word was barely used. And the wolf looked more like a fox, maybe. Definitely not like a wolf. Oddly, Marian was completely ambivalent to the book. Usually she at least tries to grab it, but she completely ignored it while I read it to her.

Garrett Podell says

Summary: Carmine's granny teaches her how to read by making Alphabet soup and whenever she makes a bowl of soup, Carmine is invited over for lunch; however Granny informs Carmine that she heard a wolf and to look out for danger on the way through the forest to her house, especially because Carmine "dilly-dallies." Despite her granny's warnings, Carmine stopped along her bike ride on the way to Granny's to rest and paint. The wolf spies on Carmine and Rufus, her dog, and heads over to Granny's house. The wolf then pillages Granny's kitchen and steals all the bones Granny uses to make her famous soup, but he does no harm to Granny. Carmine then promises Granny to never dilly-dally again and then she speeds home not stopping once.

Theme: The major theme of the story is listening because had Carmine not stopped to paint when she was told to come straight to Granny's there wouldn't have been a conflict with the wolf since it wouldn't have known where Carmine was going. After the conflict is resolved, Carmine does listen and doesn't stop when

going home, which leads to a stress-free bike ride back.

Star Rating: Three stars.

Personal Response: I liked the book, but I thought it was unrealistic how Granny was simply locked in a closet, unharmed, and the only thing taken was the bones used to make Alphabet Soup. None of the other ingredients were taken back by the wolf for its pups either which didn't make sense to me either.

My Recommendation: I would definitely recommend the book to children in pre-k through first or maybe second grade who are just learning how to read because the book highlights are particular word in the text and uses it in a sentence simple enough to word the meaning of that word can be grasped by a beginning reader.

Julie says

This book takes a clever spin off of the traditional Red Riding Hood story. It's an alphabet book that tells the story of how Carmine gets distracted on the way to her granny's house.
