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Kevin Henkes

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It started out as a bad day for little yellow bird, little white dog, little orange fox, and little brown squirrel. Until . . .

A discovery, and love, and luck and persistence, and a different point of view changed all that. What can turn a bad day into a good day? You decide.

A Good Day Details

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Author : Kevin Henkes

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From Reader Review A Good Day for online ebook

Laura says

I love Henkes' chunkier illustrations. The parallel structure of this book is perfect. A bird, a dog, a fox, and a squirrel all have a bad thing and then a good thing happen. A little girl finishes off the story with a delightful surprise. While a bit young for elementary students, it's a great feel-good story for young children.

Cheryl says

Wise and effective. Could be read as a fable for those melodramatic young teens... you know the ones, who claim that their lives aren't worth living if their parents don't let them wear lipstick. Could even, conceivably, help ppl who are getting treatment for bipolar but want one more resource in their toolbox. But still, totally accessible to the very youngest wobblyies.

Again, Henkes amazes me.

Muhuawu wu says

The Library of Congress summary cracks me up: "A bird, a fox, a dog and a squirrel overcome minor setbacks to have a very good day." It's a good thing Kevin Henkes, who has given us the verbose and precocious Lily, knows when to avoid phrases like "overcome minor setbacks."

With gorgeous chunky pictures and giant easy-to-read-from-a-mile-away text, Henkes has empowered young Readers to independently navigate this surprisingly uncheesy story of "things aren't always as bad as they seem." I mention surprisingly uncheesy because I am typically turned off by sweet and tender, especially if it's text a kid can read independently. There's something to be said for original and uncheesy.

Naturally broken into three parts, we first meet four troubled little animals. "It was a bad day ..." the story begins. "But then ..." like Life, sometimes we just need a different perspective and a little patience to let us know that our troubles are soon resolved.

I love that the text gradually becomes more lengthy and the vocab. more challenging. It will reward the diligent Reader, like the troubled little animals, with a happy ending and a good day.

Drew Graham says

Several creatures are having a bad day. Will they be able to turn their day around?

I don't always write a review of a short and simple book like this (the one-off kind we pick up by the dozen at the library, look through once or twice with The Boy and then return), but it left an impression on me. The illustrations are unique and appealing (the difference between the before-and-after eyes is especially effective, and I always love a good UuU expression), and the story is simple, but the message is relatively profound. There's even a nice little twist or two in how everything resolves.

Chelsey says

Worked well as an opener for "feelings" pre-school storytime. Nice and short, to grab their attention.

A.C. Paige says

Want to use this in storytime. Talks about turning a bad day into a good one. ?

Ashleigh says

It started out as a bad day for little yellow bird, little white dog, little orange fox, and little brown squirrel. Until . . .

A discovery, and love, and luck and persistence, and a different point of view changed all that. What can turn a bad day into a good day? You decide.

Beautiful illustrations. A short book that when read a few times would be great as an independent read for Kindergarten children. Good discussion likely to come about good and bad days.

Kathryn says

The story is very simplistic but sweet; about how a bad day can turn into a good day, sometimes through unexpected blessings and sometimes through one's own efforts. I love Henkes' illustrations, though, they are so soft and adorable! :-)

Meredith says

I love this. Such a calm, quiet book. Also went over well in baby storytime.

Susan says

A joyful little story that starts with some animals having very bad days, but which then 'unwinds' itself until everyone, including a little girl end up having a good day. I appreciated that Henkes alternated between male and female characters. I also really appreciated, the bright, expressive illustrations.

Laurie says

Parents need to know that this beautifully illustrated book for tots weaves an uplifting lesson. Nothing objectionable is presented.

Positive messages

Each character makes the best of some disappointment.

Violence & scariness

Not applicable

Language

Not applicable

From commonsensemedia.org

Booklist starred (December 15, 2006 (Vol. 103, No. 8))

Playfully contradicting the title, Henke's latest picture book begins with the words "It was a bad day." Each of the next four spreads explains why: "Little yellow bird lost his favorite tail feather. / Little white dog got her leash all tangled up in the fence. / Little orange fox couldn't find his mother. / And little brown squirrel dropped her nut." Then the tone shifts, and there's a happy reversal for each of the four animals, leading to the book's ending--when a little girl picks up the bird's feather, tucks it behind her ear, and calls to her mother, "What a good day!" From the reversals and the perfectly chosen words to the spirit of hope that bubbles to the surface, this story works well in every way. As precise, unaffected, and easy for a young child to understand as the text, the illustrations feature forms cleanly defined with thick black lines and brightened with watercolors. The final picture brings every story element back home in a visually and emotionally satisfying resolution. A simple picture book, expertly tuned to the emotions and imaginations of children.

Horn Book (March/April, 2007)

After last year's new outing for Lilly (*Lilly's Big Day*, rev. 3/06), with its many small panels and complex layers of emotion, Henkes returns to the style of his Caldecott-winning *Kitten's First Full Moon* (rev. 5/04) for a picture book of graceful simplicity. At the beginning, each of four animals is having a bad day: "Little

yellow bird lost his favorite tail feather. Little white dog got her leash all tangled up in the fence. Little orange fox couldn't find his mother. And little brown squirrel dropped her nut." But then each problem is resolved ("little brown squirrel found the biggest nut ever")-and the little girl who finds yellow bird's lost feather is overjoyed: "What a good day!" With a remarkable economy of words-a little over one hundred in all-Henkes creates a story that preschoolers will find deeply satisfying. And just as the story includes a lot of repetition, the art repeats the same shades of orange, pink, yellow, green, blue, violet, and brown, showing the palette in stripes at the beginning of each section. Children can then look for the colors in each watercolor-and-ink picture, and may even notice sophisticated elements of the art such as the yellow shading on the clouds that echoes little yellow bird's coloring. As always, Henkes's illustrations also speak volumes through simple details, managing to express pure joy in just the arched shape of an eye or the angle of an ear. Set on thick, creamy pages with a neat square shape, *A Good Day* is the rare example of near-perfection in a picture book.

Horn Book starred (September, 2007)

Each of four animals is having a bad day. With a remarkable economy of words, Henkes creates a deeply satisfying story. Set on thick, creamy pages with a neat square shape, the art repeats the same seven shades, and Henkes's illustrations speak volumes through simple details. This is the rare example of near-perfection in a picture book.

Kirkus Reviews starred (February 15, 2007)

What makes a good day good? This deceptively simple work opens with calamity: Little yellow bird has lost his favorite tail feather; little white dog's leash has gotten tangled up in the fence; little orange fox has lost his mother; and little brown squirrel has dropped her nut. "But then . . ." The ellipsis has magic in it, turning all these bad days into good. Each creature's turnaround unfolds in reverse order, small shifts in behavior and attitude making the change. Henkes uses the bold lines and serene compositions that were the hallmark of his Caldecott Medal-winning *Kitten's First Full Moon* (2004), adding sunny watercolors for an appropriately cheery whole. The full-page illustrations, framed in the same brown ink that delineates each animal, appear opposite the minimal text, allowing the child reader to absorb each scene in its entirety with the turn of a page. Rounding out the pleasing circularity of events is a little girl's happy discovery of little yellow bird's feather: "Mama! What a good day!" A glorious celebration of the simple joys of childhood. (Picture book. 2-5)

Publishers Weekly (December 18, 2006)

Henkes's latest combines the thick black line of his Caldecott Medal-winning *Kitten's First Full Moon* with the vivid palette of his mouse books to showcase a soothing story about turning lemons into lemonade. Four animals-a sun-yellow bird, a white terrier, an orange fox and a brown squirrel-face small disappointments that threaten to ruin their moods. The bird loses a prized tail feather, the dog tangles his leash around the fence, the fox has lost sight of his mother, and a meaty acorn plummets out of squirrel's grasp. But before even a hint of gloom can settle over an otherwise sunny day, Henkes briskly reverses gears and reveals these momentary losses-of self, freedom, love and food-as gains. The skillful circularity of this simple tale is

capped by a nameless barefoot girl who finds the bird's "perfect yellow feather" and jauntily tucks it behind one ear. "Mama! What a good day!" she cries, running into the house in a wide angle shot that shows each of the story's other creatures at home in her front yard. A perfectly pleasing parable for the lap-reading crowd, who will find reassurance in the way each animal conquers an obstacle and finds his or her reward. All ages. (Mar.) Copyright 2006 Reed Business Information.

School Library Journal (March 1, 2007)

PreS-Gr 1-Employing the thick lines and uncluttered illustrations reminiscent of his work in *Kitten's First Full Moon* (Greenwillow, 2004), Henkes tells the story of four creatures who start out having a bad day. A bird loses his favorite feather, a dog gets her leash tangled in a fence, a fox loses his mother, and a squirrel drops her nut. But then, the squirrel finds an even bigger nut, the fox is reunited with his mother, the dog frees her leash, and the bird discovers he can fly higher than ever, even without his feather. The animals' triumphant expressions and perky postures, in sharp contrast to their former dejected demeanors, bear witness to the fact that the bad day has turned out to be a good one after all. In a surprising twist, a young girl finds the bird's feather, "tuck[s] it behind her ear," and runs to her mother shouting, "What a good day!" A reprise of all four creatures in the last scene as the excited child seeks out her parent is the perfect conclusion. Full-page, pastel-hued watercolor-and-ink illustrations appear framed opposite each page of large, brief text. This gentle story affords an opportunity to introduce the very young to ways of dealing with life's small disappointments. A fine choice for the lap set.-Marianne Saccardi, formerly at Norwalk Community College, CT Copyright 2007 Reed Business Information.

Jennifer says

Great story....but the book was not in the condition as advertised by the seller

The story is great! Awesome short (and very visual) book for young girls. Very positive message and it illustrates how difficult situations are only temporary. We checked it out from our local library and I bought the board book to have at home. I'm more annoyed (and gave a low review) since the seller listed the book as great condition and it definitely was not. Lots of wear and tear but overall, it's fine. I'm just glad we have a small accessible version for little ones to read.

Caleb Ensminger says

This book is about a few different animals that are having a bad day. A few examples of these bad days are little yellow bird lost his favorite tail feather and a brown squirrel dropped her nut. At the end of the book all of the animals bad days started to change. The little yellow bird flew higher than ever before and the squirrel found and even bigger nut. The animal's days quickly changed from bad to good.

I could use this book in a lesson when I am trying to show kids how to keep things in perspective. I can tell them that just because something bad might happen doesn't make it a bad day because something else can happen and make it a very good day.

Fjóla says

Very cute and inspiring. I particularly liked the way the same set of pastel colors was used in different context.

Boni says

Simple, perfect illustrations. Simple, perfectly-constructed story. An excellent example of what a toddler picture book should be.
