



The Little Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings

Carolyn Sherwin Bailey , Jacqueline Rogers (Illustrations)

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When Little Rabbit wishes for long, beautiful red wings, his wish comes true, but life is not at all as he'd expected: his friends, and even his own mother, don't recognize him! He learns the hard way the truth of that old adage "be careful what you wish for", and that the best thing for a little rabbit to be is himself. Our successful paperback edition of this enduring classic has sold over 630,000 copies and now has a brand-new cover.

The Little Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings Details

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Author : Carolyn Sherwin Bailey , Jacqueline Rogers (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review The Little Rabbit Who Wanted Red Wings for online ebook

Julia says

This one was a Children's Classic from when I was young. The pictures were breathtaking and bright while everyone could see the bright yet beautiful red wings that grew from the little bunny even as the chipmunks played with his shirt.

The story covers the ideas that not all changes to our physical appearance can warrant the best and sometimes in the long run they may be our undoing. Now being able to read over it as an adult it does make me wonder how his mother still didn't recognize him even with wings but that is a riddle for another day.

~A Book With Nonhuman Characters~

Caroline Mann says

This book has a terrible message. Don't have your kids read it. :(It disturbed me as a child.

Sally says

I see the reviews are pretty split on this book. There's the "it teaches your child to never be different, boo" camp, and the "be happy with your blessings, yay" camp. I'm on the fence, but my 4 year old loves it, so we'll go with "yay."

Drew Graham says

There was a little rabbit who wanted to fly, but when his wish comes true will it be all he hoped it would be?

It wasn't until I looked this up and saw the other cover art did I realize I totally knew this book as a kid. The edition we have now is fun and decent (I think the one I remember had somewhat cuter illustrations), and the story and message is intact. There are a lot of reviews on here that I think are seriously missing the point of this *fable*, but I'll just say that especially nowadays it's more valuable than ever for kids to know who and what they are, and to be grateful for their own unique selves just as they are and as they were created. Pretending and wishing is perfectly fine and quite important, but understanding who you are is even more so.

Jennifer says

This is one of my favorites from childhood! I still have it, displayed in my "favorite books case".

Julie Decker says

This book was about a rabbit who wished to fly, but when he got his wish for a pair of red wings, everyone he knew (even his parents) shunned him and treated him like a monster. The moral of the story is supposed to be about loving yourself the way you are, but as a tiny child, the presentation upset me greatly. While the illustrations were lovely and the rabbit's celebration of flying shortly after getting the wings was really fun, the payoff just made me feel sort of sad and sick.

Think about it this way. The rabbit wanted to fly, thought about it all the time, and eventually got his dream. And then he enjoyed what the dream had brought. The down side was entirely in how everyone else treated him when he got what he'd dreamed of. His parents literally did not recognize him and screamed in his face and shut the door on him. And the other animals were disgusted and frightened by the unnatural sight of a rabbit with wings. It was only because of the treatment others dumped on him that made the rabbit begin to despise what he initially desired.

Once he shed his wings, he was accepted again with open arms and we're to put the book down knowing you should never change yourself from how you are **BECAUSE IF YOU TRY TO THEN EVERYONE WILL HATE YOU FOREVER**. I think a different lesson might have been a better one to teach: That everyone else in this rabbit's life who didn't understand his desires might have been kinder to him about letting him define his own wishes. I think it's pretty dangerous to tell kids that if you love and desire something but everyone else treats you poorly because of it, you should just forget about your dreams and do whatever they want you to do, or else you don't deserve their love.

Overanalysis? Okay, yeah. Welcome to my reviews.

Kendra Ellett says

The book teaches the lesson of appreciating what you have and not letting frivolous things take you away from who you are.

I somewhat like the message that this book conveyed. It's important to teach children that what others have isn't necessarily better than what you have, and the rabbit learned that the hard way when he finally got his red wings and nobody recognized him anymore.

This is a simple story that children would enjoy! However, there are a few things about this story that do not make sense to me. For instance, the rabbit (from the illustrations anyway) looks exactly the same when he gets his red wings, except for the fact that he got red wings, so I was a little confused as to why none of the characters "recognized" him. Another thing I want to be critical about is how the rabbit was very passionate about red wings and wanted nothing more than to get red wings, and when he finally gets them, everyone treats him badly and makes him sleep outside in the cold. The feeling I got from that situation is comparable to the feeling I get when I think of a family member working to get something they really want, and when they finally get it, nobody cares.

Swankivy says

There's a good message here to love yourself the way you are. But overall I thought this book was preachy and kind of poorly conceived. Even as a very young child reading this, I didn't understand why the problems the little rabbit had developed naturally as consequences based on his circumstances. Little Rabbit wanted wings, and being that he lives in a world where animals talk to each other, there's some magic to be had. He makes a magic wish and soon he is the proud owner of a pair of beautiful red wings. The scenes where he's enjoying flying are pretty cute. The reaction his family and friends had to him were ridiculous. His mother threw him out and screamed because she didn't recognize him--which I didn't understand as a kid, because he looked the same except for the wings--and everyone else was so baffled by a rabbit with wings that they were horrible to him and he had to sleep outside. (My little kid brain thought about how wild rabbits do this anyway.) In the morning he wishes more than anything that he DIDN'T have wings anymore so he could return to his family and be loved again, and that horrified me. If people treat you badly because you chased your dreams and got them--or because you transformed yourself in some way that you loved--the moral of the story is to drop your aspirations because people's acceptance is more important? I understand that the story was trying to say you're great the way you are, but the shunning and cruelty by the other characters after he really did enjoy having wings at first just made me uncomfortable. Maybe the other characters should have learned a lesson about loving people no matter what they look like, huh?

Miriam says

Repressive cautionary tale about the repercussions of being different.

A little rabbit child wants to have red wings. Wise Old Groundhog sends him to the Wishing Pond; after wishing hard all day, he grows wings. He is overjoyed, but when he returns home his mother doesn't recognize him and refuses to let him into the house. All the other animals likewise reject him because they "have never seen a rabbit with red wings" and he is forced to sleep on the hard ground. He is hurt by stones and thorns. The next day, seeing he has learned his lesson, Wise Old Groundhog helps him get rid of the wings. Little Rabbit never tries to be different again!

This is an important lesson, boys and girls: don't want to be or do things that aren't "normal." And if you see anyone with an unusual appearance, ostracize them!

[This probably wasn't in the author's mind, but I couldn't help thinking as I read this how easily the "red wings" could function as a stand-in for homosexuality...:]

Judy says

This has been a favorite of my nieces and nephews, starting back in the early '80s. (Not a favorite of mine, but that doesn't matter.) I know they liked pointing their fingers and moving their hands in circles three times each time the rabbit made a wish.

It also gave me the opportunity to teach the kids the difference between a male and a female mallard. (Miss Puddle Duck looks very much like a male mallard.)

Emily Holter says

This fantasy book tells a great tale of a rabbit wishing to be someone else but himself. This book's theme stands right out to children and they may relate to Little Rabbit's self-esteem. Rabbit goes around telling other animals what he wishes he could change about himself and children feel like that at times as well. It tells the children reading this that they should be very proud of who they are and not wish to be someone else. The tale is believable but only in this fantasy world and context of this story. Children will tend to think about life after reading this book.

As children read through this book, their eyes will be glued to the pages, as for the illustrations stand right out. Little Rabbit lives in a house with his mother, and he has a swing set, kid's clothes, and toys. The pictures are bright and go right along with the text. When it says Little Rabbit is jumping, the picture will show him jumping. When Little Rabbit is sad, you see the tears running down his face quite vividly and the natural hugging embraces he engages with his mother are what any child can relate to.

The most important part about this book is the animal fantasy aspect. Children love to see animals dressed like them and act human like them. This book has memorable animal characters with human characteristics that only intrigue the reader more. This animal fantasy book will have children listening along, not even noticing that they are learning a valuable lesson in life.

There is one other theme that may not sit well with children when reading this book. There is a part in the book where Little Rabbit's wish comes true and he is given wings, making him unrecognizable to his family and friends. His mother doesn't even know who he is with the wings and ultimately abandons him in the night. Younger children especially might ask questions about this when reading because it's an issue and might cause a great deal of fear to them if they think about their own mother or father doing the same to them. I would start using this book in a first grade classroom.

Softymel says

C'est l'histoire plutôt mignonne d'un petit lapin qui a tout pour être heureux, mais qui malgré tout rêve d'autre chose. A chaque fois qu'il voit un autre animal, il rêve de lui ressembler. Il est vrai que ça à l'air sympa de pouvoir nager avec les pieds palmé du canard, ou pouvoir voler avec les ailes d'un oiseau!

Mais un jour l'un de ses vœux se réalise, et commence alors une journée à l'issue de laquelle ce petit lapin se rendra compte de la chance qu'il avait d'être ce qu'il était!

Bref, un joli conte pour les tout petits! En plus les dessins sont jolis.

C. says

Jacqueline Rogers is a vivid illustrator who highlights emotions and personalities with large eyes. The theme is a cautionary standard but **Carolyn Sherwin Bailey** is inventive. I am giving this to my friend's brand new Granddaughter tomorrow! I smile, thinking of her growing up familiar with this simple present.

"Don't wish to be anyone but who you truly are" is an old message, a good one to teach early in life. Reading between the lines of choices and behaviours, alerts us to petty peer pressure and equips us to beat it. My parents prepared me well enough that I didn't fall for it.

The rabbit of this book wants wings. He demonstrates to a silly degree, exaggerated enough to ensure clarity, why we are blessed precisely as we are born. My disapproval is of this story's harsh presentation. Firstly, this rabbit wants everything he sees, like a squirrel's tail. The titular wings are thus not an object of desire; merely a whim for a moment. I know this was to stress that his own attributes are gorgeous but a desire that became his peril, did not appear to be important. He obtained wings but his friend in need refrained from telling him how to easily retract them. I considered that unkind and a simplistic story ending.

The cruel scenario is that Little Rabbit's friends and Mother fail to recognize him with wings! Worse, they close their doors merely for lack of recognition and rendered this youth homeless for a night. That is an impossible reaction but its portrayal saddened me. What I loved is Little Rabbit's bedroom. The fox, frog, squirrel, and chipmunk toys on his dinosaur bedspread are adorable and friendly! All of the tiny critters, like turtles, are smiling and give the feeling that they are absolutely precious.

Cassandra Gelvin says

Don't Read This To My Kids

This book sends the wrong message to impressionable children. I hated it so much that I posted a video review of it on YouTube. You can find it on my channel, "Don't Read This To My Kids". Basically, when the Little Rabbit gets the titular red wings, his mother and all the other animals reject him as a stranger and he is forced to undo his wish in order to fit in again. It teaches kids that being different is bad. My video review goes into more detail. <https://youtu.be/pSOI8ZVli4E>

Becky says

Great read aloud for children of all ages.
