



Evie and the Man Who Helped God; Always and Forever

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Both of these books have death as a theme, and both emphasise the importance of the passing seasons in providing comfort and consolation. In **Evie and the Man Who Helped God**, the death of gardener George only comes at the end. Before that, we see Evie helping George on Mondays, his day to work. Through the seasons and years, George explains to Evie about plants and animals, and together they share the beauty and the fittingness of God's creation. When George doesn't appear one day, Evie asks, 'Who will help God on Mondays?' Mum replies, 'George has gone to help him all the time.' Evie takes on George's work, understanding that solace is found in continuity. Solace will be found, too, in the beauty of Foreman's illustrations. Tiny pictures of newts and frogs, mayflies and marsh marigolds, snowdrops and autumn leaves, swallows and a friendly robin dot the text pages, and the soft-focus full page pictures show clearly the close relationship between the little girl and the old man. A beautiful, sustaining picture book.

Always and Forever has death as the dominant theme. Four animals live happily together. Otter is the cook, Mole mends things, Hare keeps the garden and Fox is the father-figure, who loves and encourages them all. When Fox becomes ill and dies, it is 'autumn, and his family buries him under a willow tree, his favourite place. Then 'a wintry sadness' falls over the family, and they find it hard to talk about Fox. After the snow comes and goes, and spring is on the way, Squirrel comes to visit. She begins remembering Fox in funny ways, and soon the family is joining in. Their solution to their sadness is to use their talents to make a special place under the willow tree for them all to enjoy. Gliori's illustrations are magic. Full of light and shimmering with colour, they portray all the beauty of Durant's script.

Running Order:

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