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Otis



Synopsis

The New York Times bestseller and official 2013 Jumpstart Read for the Record selection! New York Times bestselling author/artist Loren Long creates an unforgettable children's classic. Otis is a special tractor. He loves his farmer and he loves to work. And he loves the little calf in the next stall, whom he purrs to sleep with his soft motor. In fact, the two become great friends: they play in the fields, leap hay bales, and play ring-around-the-rosy by Mud Pond. But when Otis is replaced with the big yellow tractor, he is cast away behind the barn, unused, unnoticed . . . until the little calf gets stuck in Mud Pond. Then there is only one tractor "and it's not big or yellow" who can come to the rescue. It is little old Otis who saves his friend. It is Otis who saves the day. In a wonderful new palette, and in the tradition of classics like Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel and The Story of Ferdinand, Loren Long has crafted an unforgettable new story "and character" celebrating the power of friendship and perseverance. Â Â Â

Book Information

Lexile Measure: AD840L (What's this?)

Series: Otis (Book 1)

Hardcover: 40 pages

Publisher: Philomel Books; First Edition edition (September 22, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0399252487

ISBN-13: 978-0399252488

Product Dimensions: 11.2 x 0.4 x 10.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (108 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #18,455 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #28 in Â Books > Children's Books >

Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > Farm Life #600 in Â Books > Children's Books >

Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Friendship

Age Range: 3 - 5 years

Grade Level: Preschool - Kindergarten

Customer Reviews

"There once was a friendly little tractor. His name was Otis, and every day Otis and his farmer worked together taking care of the farm they called home. Otis liked to work. Recalling his own childhood love for some classic picture books, Loren Long pays homage to the work of Robert

Lawson and Virginia Lee Burton in OTIS. OTIS is the story of a boisterous and dependable little red tractor who (as was Mary Anne the steam shovel), is facing being replaced, and the young calf (visually reminiscent of the young Ferdinand) who comes to live at the farm and is comforted at night by the "soft putt puff puttedy chuff" that emanates from Otis's stall. Young readers will readily recognize a whole series of positive emotions depicted on the face of Otis as he works, plays, sleeps, teaches the calf to do a "hand"stand, and sits contemplatively under the tree on the hill (total shades of Ferdinand) alongside his young friend. Then there are the equally-clear expressions of negative feelings that well up when the new-and-improved giant tractor suddenly invades Otis's farm. Otis is unmercifully banished from his stall and consigned to a patch of weeds behind the barn. But when the calf accidentally gets herself stuck in Mud Pond (with an attendant cast of characters reminiscent of the crowd that observes Mary Anne digging the cellar for the new town hall), there is only one person...err...faithful friend and personified machine...who knows how to help the calf get herself unstuck. As with the cover art, Loren Long's illustrations throughout the first part of OTIS are soothing, being dominated by gentle browns, creams, and the deep cherry red of the little tractor. In sharp contrast, the new tractor is a glaring and intrusive shade of yellow with sharp lines and a visage that gives off no hint of humanity inside. Fortunately, the calf's rescue causes Otis to once again be recognized as being of value. He is assigned a series of satisfying tasks around the farm and, having thus regained a good measure of contentment through being productive, "at the end of the day, Otis would just sit with his friend under the apple tree and watch the farm below." What makes OTIS extra-special is that on top of there being such a great interplay of text and illustration, on top of Loren Long's great use of figurative language and visual allusion, and on top of the important intergenerational theme, there is a high level of action and hijinx in the text and illustrations -- call it a "gross motor" book -- that will enthuse the most demanding members of any young audience. I'm just hoping that they are considering printing up some Otis teeshirts for those of us who are totally in love with this crazy little tractor dude and his bovine sidekick.

"Otis" reminds me of a childhood favorite of mine. One of the first books I think I owned that I could read myself. That book was "Little Black a Pony" by Walter Farley (of "Black Stallion" fame). Farley's book told the story of a friendship between a boy and his pony. A close friendship that was interrupted when a big red horse came into the picture. The boy was intrigued by the bigger horse, but as it turns out old friendships are not to be easily forgotten, and Little Black saves the boy's life when Big Red cannot because of his size. In a sense, "Otis" is like this older book, and I couldn't help liking it for that reason, because Otis, the little red tractor, is supplanted by a Big Yellow tractor.

That is, until he proves himself to loyal and true to his friends. Talking Points::: Comparisons aside, Loren Long has produced a charming book with fantastic artwork that is so sweet and funny that my children wanted to read it with me over and over again. As you can see from the cover Loren has done most of the drawings in a monochrome, which is spiced up with splashes of color. That effect simply adds to the charm. "Otis" is sure to please most children: toddler thru 7 or 8 year old.

Accelerated Reading -- generic "2" Pam T ~mom and reviewer at BooksForKids-reviews

This book is beautifully written, illustrated, and published. The cadence of the story when read aloud is fluid and pleasant, and the illustrations greatly enhance the experience. I would highly recommend this selection for parents or teachers of early elementary-aged children searching for a positive story of true, lasting friendship.

Otis was a wide-eyed happy little tractor who loved to help the farmer work the land. After a day of work he was ready to let loose and let his playful side take over. He buzzed up and down hillsides and skirted "Mud Pond down by the corn" rousting the ducks from in between the rows. He jumped over the haystacks and whooops . . . burst through some of them blasting the hay all over the field. Otis would sometimes "chase a rabbit or play ring-around-the-rosy with the ducks." Sometimes it was just nice to nestle up underneath the gnarly old branches of the apple tree and watch the goings on of the farm. At night he would putt putt putt himself into the barn and fall fast asleep in his stall. One night there was a bit of unexpected company. It was a frightened little calf who was determined to bawl the night away. Otis's "soft putt puff puttedy chuff" slowly calmed the calf and she "drifted off to sleep." Zzzzzz! Soon they were fast friends and you didn't see one without the other until one day Otis himself was put out to pasture when he was replaced with a newfangled yellow tractor. They were both lonesome without the other because a yellow tractor split them apart. On one warm day the little calf ambled on down to the Mud Pond to cool off, but when she "waded into the muddy water," she got mired in the muck. No one, including the fire truck nor the yellow tractor could save her. What would become of Otis's best friend? I loved the story of Otis and the little calf, a story of an unlikely friendship if there ever once was, except perhaps that one of Bella and Tarra. We all have unlikely friendships or things that we value and children can easily relate to this fact. Some things are tangible like the attachment to a toy, but extra special are the friendships they make. The old-fashioned looking artwork is marvelous and contributes a great deal to the appeal of the story. Otis is one story that is almost guaranteed to become a classic. Just get used to the fact that you'll be reading this one to your youngster over and over again!

We purchased this book when my son was one years old and have purchased an additional book to provide as a gift. The story line and illustrations are engaging. I like how unlike a lot of the other books we have, this one is larger. We have purchased others in the Otis series.

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