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In The Rainfield



Synopsis

Angry Wind, boastful Fire, and mild Rain hold a contest to determine who is the greatest. In a satisfying ending, real power is found not in anger or violence, but in calm and gentle behavior.

Book Information

Age Range: 4 and up

Lexile Measure: 380L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Scholastic; Second Printing edition (February 2000)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 11.2 x 8.8 x 0.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 3 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,648,509 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #67 in [Books > Children's Books > Fairy Tales, Folk Tales & Myths > African](#) #1962 in [Books > Children's Books > Biographies > Multicultural](#)

Customer Reviews

Grifalconi's (The Village of Round and Square Houses) surreal collages explode across the pages of this eye-popping book, layering photographs and cut-paper images against a whirling, swirling backdrop worthy of the credit sequence to a James Bond film. The result is highly kinetic, a mesmerizing foil to a Nigerian folktale about an argument between Wind, Fire and Rain. The three elements--characterized as two men and a woman--squabble over who is greatest and finally hold a contest to determine the mightiest of all. Wind howls, Fire rages, but Rain wins, vanquishing her rivals with a downpour that demonstrates her credo, "The greatest must be the gentlest." Olaleye's (Bitter Bananas) prose is sleek and limber, and peppered with African words and phrases ("Village children huffed and puffed, *kia kia, kata-kiti*, running from the wind"). The language gains extra texture from judicious use of alliteration ("Fire fumed with great fury"). The energy of the folktale is whipped up in Grifalconi's collages, where marbled-paper backdrops (enlarged to set off their exotically curving patterns) provide a '60s-ish psychedelic effect. Between the tempestuous story line and the electrifying art, this is one wild ride from beginning to end. Ages 4-9. (Feb.) Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Kindergarten-Grade 2-In this compelling Nigerian tale, Wind, Fire, and Rain do battle to determine "who is the greatest" in a world so powerfully rendered that readers cannot help but be drawn into the cosmic competition. With a perfect blending of vivid language and stunning illustrations, Olaleye and Grifalconi have created an exquisite book in which the shrieking Wind sends its hapless victims flying into the treetops, while proud Fire burns so fiercely that the heat practically singes readers' hands. But it is the cooling Rain that reigns supreme, dousing Fire and shaming the Wind into declaring "The gentlest is the greatest!" The tale is rich with sound and imagery, yet it soars when complemented by the visually arresting mixed-media collages that combine photographs with marbled and textured papers. A glowing effort. Teri Markson, Stephen S. Wise Temple Elementary School, Los Angeles Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Lovely story and illustrations. Children really enjoy it.

I wasn't sure what my two would think of "In the Rainfield". The artwork is pretty abstract and the story... well, you never know what a 4 year-old boy and 6 year-old girl will like. BUT they really, really took a liking to this fable about who is greatest: Rain, Wind, or Fire. [My son will even leave off playing with Thomas the Tank Engine to come and hear it read--lol.] And they thought the images derived from a multi-media collage were great. Five Stars. [A-]. Good Read-aloud. The story is engaging as are most classic old tales be they from ancient Greece or Africa. If your child/ren like Aesop or similar fables consider adding "In the Rainfield" to your shelves.

"Who is the greatest?" is a wonderfully crafted tale of the battle of nature's elements. The story illustrates the true beauty of such powerful elements of nature; fire, wind and rain. The author, perhaps unknowingly, provides a wonderful affirmation, that in nature, as in life, the race isn't always won by the strongest or swiftest; that one can be gentle, yet strong. The illustrations are superb. Representing the elements as people is a brilliant touch...visual personification, if you will. The marbled blending of colors is a perfect way to represent nature, with all of the elements existing in harmony. "Who is The Greatest?" is a beautiful addition to any public library or personal collection and a must have for all who work with children. Share the wonder of nature with the children in your lives. This book is the perfect place to start.

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