



Fox

By Margaret Wild

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Fox By Margaret Wild Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Wild (Nighty Night) departs from her playful characters of recent books for this haunting look at friendship and cruelty, geared to older readers. After Dog saves Magpie from a fire and nurses her burnt wing, the two forge a powerful bond. The one-eyed dog and the flightless bird travel together across a charred, leafless landscape, with Magpie feeling the wind in her feathers as she rides on Dog's back. "Fly, Dog, fly! I will be your missing eye, and you will be my wings." The mood changes quickly, however, when Fox enters his sleek, orange body curled around one side of a spread and sets Magpie on edge ("His smell seems to fill the cave a smell of rage and envy and loneliness"). The tension Wild invokes in juxtaposing their disparate emotions creates a disquieting feeling that Brooks (Rosie and Tortoise) mirrors in his artwork, especially in close-ups of the characters' eyes. His hand-lettered text (resembling a child's shaky penmanship) appears in oddly positioned blocks, with some flipped vertically against the page edges and gutter. The stark illustrations, in mixed media and collage, expose the characters' raw emotions with brusque hash marks in thick applications of mostly dark paint. Only when Fox cons Magpie into switching her allegiance and traveling with him do readers discover the depth of Fox's alienation. The tale ends on a tenuously hopeful note, and the images from this unsettling, provocative story will resonate long after the book has been closed. Ages 6-up.

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From School Library Journal

Gr 3 Up-The simplicity of presentation belies the sophistication of this allegorical tale that demonstrates the tremendous power of caring and friendship. Dog, blinded in one eye, finds Magpie, whose wing has been burned in a forest fire. He carries her to his cave, but she is distraught and bitter because she can no longer fly. Dog is a true and patient friend and an optimist, and his encouragement lifts the bird's spirits. ("I will be your missing eye, and you will be my wings," Magpie declares.) Enter dashing, flattering Fox, full of "rage and envy and loneliness," who attempts to destroy the friendship by luring Magpie away. In this short tale, Wild conveys some of the stages of human grief-anger, depression, and withdrawal and, finally, acceptance. Brooks's dramatic illustrations perfectly suit the text. Thick, textured paint in shades of brown, peachy beige, and bluish gray, detailed in black line and frequent scratchboardlike technique, sets off the rich, fiery tone of Fox's fur and allows readers to sense the excitement and danger that his presence engenders in Magpie. The text is hand lettered in large, childish print, sometimes on pasted paper scraps. Use the book with younger children to prompt discussions of both friendship and loss; use it with older students as a fine example of allegory and outstanding artistic presentation.

Susan Scheps, Shaker Heights Public Library, OH

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From [Booklist](#)

Ages 6-8. Bleak and unsettling, this highly unusual Australian import will challenge children with its unconventional layout and boldly presented themes of loneliness, jealousy, brutality, and compassion. In the aftermath of a bush fire, Dog, who has lost an eye, and Magpie, with a burned wing, form a deep friendship. Magpie climbs onto Dog's back: "Fly, Dog, Fly! Their bond is threatened when a fox lures Magpie away and then deserts her. The conclusion, though too abrupt, holds a glimmer of hope for the old friends. The

gripping, lyrical text is printed in a lurching, childlike scrawl that may stop some adult readers as well as children who are following along. But the font echoes the edginess of the primal, thickly textured paintings, in ash-and-dust tones, shot through with the flamelike orange of Fox's coat. Children will probably need an adult's help in grappling with the story's cruelty and loose ends, but this haunting, beautifully illustrated book will be a good starting point for a discussion on ethical issues. *Gillian Engberg*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Paul Henson:

In this 21st centuries, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive right now, people have do something to make these people survives, being in the middle of the actual crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that sometimes many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. That's why, by reading a guide your ability to survive enhance then having chance to remain than other is high. For you personally who want to start reading a new book, we give you this Fox book as basic and daily reading reserve. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

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Janet Thaxton:

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Thelma Davis:

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