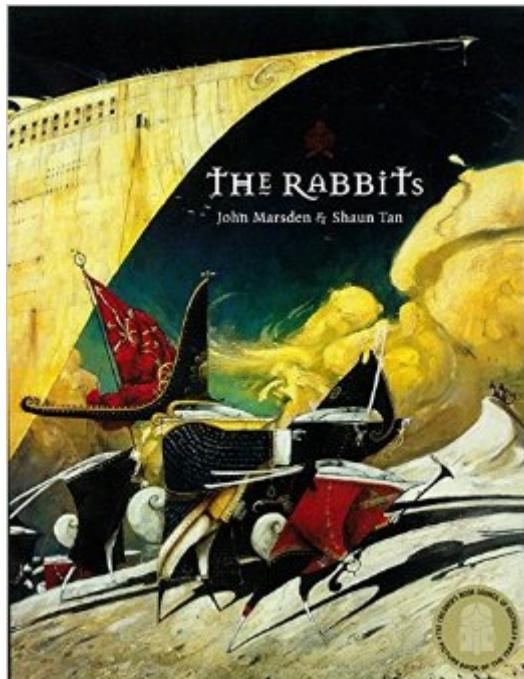


The book was found

The Rabbits



Synopsis

Dramatically moving allegory of colonisation told from the viewpoint of native animals. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

Paperback: 48 pages

Publisher: Lothian Children's Books (September 1, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0734411367

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Product Dimensions: 9.3 x 0.2 x 12.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.5 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (21 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #274,546 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #234 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Multicultural Stories > Native North & South Americans

Customer Reviews

First of all, I'm going to admit right here and now that I was seriously depressed as a child by Dr. Suess's, "The Lorax". A great book with a great story and a great moral and it brought me down low. But that's okay. I got over it. I was doing all right. Then I idly picked up John Marsden's, "The Rabbits" in my local lending library. Suddenly all the feelings I'd ever felt after reading "The Lorax" were back, but stronger. I came to the realization that this book was better than the Seussian creation. It carries a different message, but the idea behind the tale (and the method of teaching it) is the same. Once you've read "The Rabbits", you can't unread it. It sticks in your brain and you start to see its scenes replaying themselves in your mind at the oddest of times. The best word I can conjure up to describe this book is "haunting". It's like nothing you've ever read before. To read this book requires understanding a little about its background. Originally published (as far as I could ascertain by the nationalities of the author and illustrator) in Australia, the book is about the effects of colonization. As you may recall, rabbits were once a foreign species that was introduced to the Australian wildlife with disastrous results. Devouring the native resources and spreading like mad, both they and cane toads are considered dangerous pests. Taking that idea as a starter, we follow the arrival of civilized rabbits on a vaguely Australian-like land. The story is told from the point of view of some brown curly tailed spear carrying native animals. As the book begins the native animals say, "At first we didn't know what to think. They looked a bit like us. There weren't many of

them". Time passes and more and more rabbits come to the land.

I discovered this book years ago tucked away (one copy) on a corner shelf in an independent bookstore that had a wonderful children's book section. I read it, absorbed it, and walked away from it. It stayed with me. The next time I was at that store, I looked for it again, but couldn't find it. I couldn't even remember what the title was (I knew it had something to do with rabbits) or who the author was. To my complete lack of surprise, it wasn't something I found at the big chain bookstores, though I searched regularly. Another reviewer refers to this book as "haunting," and that is exactly right. THE RABBITS haunted me from my first reading. I stumbled upon it again here at thanks to a review written by a complete stranger for another book by a different author, in which he referenced this book by name and author. I ordered it immediately, and am so grateful to have gotten a second chance to add it to my library. Rabbits were introduced to Australia from Europe in the 18th century, and their effect on the ecology of that continent was devastating. Wikipedia claims they are "suspected of being the most significant known factor of species loss" in that country. Their use in this beautiful book as a metaphor for colonial destruction, both careless and deliberate -- of the environment, of native species, of indigenous culture -- is both genius and heartbreak. I don't have children myself and don't know how old a child would have to be to appreciate this book rather than be bored or confused or simply put off by the bleakness of the allegory...

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