



I?m Just No Good at Rhyming and Other Nonsense Verse for Mischievous Kids and Immature Grown Ups

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News & Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

This is a wonderful playful collection of poetry with appeal for children and grown-ups. As the title suggests there is word play and nonsense, with islands where everyone is called Toby, a strange beast called a one eyed orr, a baby dragon who wants his knight on toast without the crust (armour) and what happens when a centipede tries to get his shoes on the right feet. There is plenty of humour with jokes and riddles (some deliberately *very* unfair) and puzzles, including a poem to read backwards and a duel between the letters d and b. The title belies the range within however, there is so much more than nonsense here. This is also a collection which is full of love and hope, warmly perceptive about being a child and growing up and being a parent observing this happening.

There are poems that speak about familiar themes such as how annoying it can be to share a biscuit with a sibling and poems about the struggles of being a parent, such as *The Sweetest Lullaby* about the getting a child to sleep. There is commentary and wisdom from the writer on the ups and downs of life and how these help to shape you in *The Little Hurts* and *The Valleys Shape the Mountains*. *You?ll never Feel as Tall as When you?re Ten* speaks poignantly of childhood confidence and how easily this can be lost. There is recognition that no matter what excitement the world offers, the most special thing of all is a cuddle between parent and child. The book itself speaks to the reader in *Let?s Meet Here in 25 Years ?* a wonderful poem about memories of childhood, growing up and confidence in the adult the young reader will one day become.

There are poems of all shapes and sizes, poems for readers to finish and dialogues which invite sharing and performing. Some poems are linked or reprised at different points in the book. There are puzzles to spot and solve, including a mysterious page numbering system.

There are many wonderful illustrations from award winning illustrator Lane Smith. Ongoing banter between writer and illustrator add to the humour. The book design is excellent too, from the hard cover under the fly leaf which has different images including a character asking where his jacket has gone. This is a gem of a debut collection from American writer Chris Harris and in case you are wondering, contrary to the book?s title, he is very good at rhyming!

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