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Nanny Fox

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Reviewer:

[Jana Novotny Hunter](#) [2]

Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Arnold the fox is so captivated by the charm of chickens, and their fluffy chicks, that he begins to feel alienated from his chicken poaching family. The family, seeing a rebel in their midst, do their best to convince Arnold that friendship with chickens is out of the question.

??Eating chickens is what foxes do best! Pa Fox said.

?And catching them is fun!? said Ma Fox.?

But to Arnold the very idea is unthinkable. So, unlike foxes in most stories, Arnold leaves home to offer himself as a nanny to the baby chicks. And all goes swimmingly well until the night Arnold's siblings come creeping through the shadows?

In dramatic scenes of flying fur and feathers we see the dilemma of someone faced with family loyalty and honour.

What will Arnold do?

The right thing of course - and it's very humorously portrayed:

??The frightened chicks clambered out of the henhouse. Mrs. Buff Orpington opened a beady eye and saw Arnold bending over her.

?Did you just try to eat me?? she croaked.

Arnold shook his head.?

Georgie Adams knows her Buff Orpingtons, and her experience as an editor is demonstrated in her emotive language and wit. With an underlying vegetarian leitmotiv she shows us how a gentle nature can belie the steely strength it takes to step out on your own. For someone who turned her back on the staunch philosophies of her parents, this story had great resonance.

There is a depth to Selina Young's pictures, which is powerfully created by her rich colours and lively line. Her skill is demonstrated on every level, from her zany characters (whose multitudinous expressions are executed by the merest

line) to her knowledge of light source and shadows, supported by compositions which are energetic and fun. There's a love of the countryside and nature too here, which is perfectly matched by the ethos of the story. No wonder this classic book has been reissued. Moreover, what a terrible loss to the children's book world was Selina Young's untimely death in 2007.

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