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A wise tale of a little princess who wanted the moon and got it.

Many Moons Details

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Author : James Thurber , Louis Slobodkin (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review Many Moons for online ebook

Cheryl says

I really want to collect the juveniles of James Thurber. I read his adult books when I was a child (along with Robert Benchley, Emily Kimbrough, and Cornelia Otis Skinner) but only discovered this, The 13 Clocks, The Great Quillow, and The Wonderful O after I became a parent.

I did already love the quirky artistic style of Louis Slobodkin from The Middle Moffat and other books by Eleanor Estes. I imagine his work was responsible for helping me think about art as being more than just pretty & realistic pictures, like the horses of Wesley Dennis.

I find it interesting that this book was re-issued with art by Marc Simont, even though it was the original art that won the Caldecott. Simont's work is wonderful, too, though... I suppose I'd need both copies of this (and of 13Cs) to have a complete collection....

Anyway, to the story itself. I've probably read it 4-5 times so far over the years. Not too long, but substantial enough to be savored. Wordplay, heart, wisdom, cleverness, and joy. And juicy vocabulary words. The first page has the obligatory 'once upon a time' introduction, but then there's a page break. Read the second page as if it's the first. Isn't that a great first sentence? The specific detail, and then the word "surfeit." What child isn't going to be intrigued by that word?

Highly recommended to everyone. :)

John of Canada says

James Thurber can do no wrong.

Calista says

What do a Lord Chamberlain, a Wizard, and a Mathematician have in common? They all keep lists of what they have done for you, they all think about the world as a reality and they all are not helpful dealing with a princess.

It is only the court Jester who is wise enough to figure out that what really matters in the problem is what the princess thinks, not necessarily the reality of the situation. The jester simply asks the princess and fixes the problem.

This really is a whip-smart book. There is some hidden wisdom in this. I love the princesses answer to how she can wear the moon and it be in the sky. I never heard of this and it is a great book.

The artwork is like a dream, fuzzy and hinting at something. It is pretty brilliant. Sadly, my niece is growing up and she would not read this book because she thinks it for babies, so I was able to get her to read it to my nephew. They both ended up liking the story.

L. says

w?a?nie takie ksi??ki nale?y czyta? dzieciom, ?eby by?y m?dre. i dobre.

Karen says

The first time I encountered *Many Moons* by James Thurber, it was read to me. I was in third grade. If the illustrations were shown, I didn't see them. And they weren't necessary for me to enjoy the book -- I could picture it perfectly in my head. The story stayed with me for many years. If I ever knew, I soon forgot the name of the author. I've since forgotten the name of my third-grade teacher. But I've never forgotten how much I loved this book.

Years later, in my early twenties, I began reading Dorothy Parker. Which led to reading Robert Benchley. Which led to reading James Thurber. Thurber quickly became one of my favorite authors. But still I did not realize he wrote *Many Moons*. Not until about ten years later, when I was browsing in a bookstore, and I stumbled upon *Many Moons*. The version I found then was illustrated by Louis Slobodkin, which was good, but a bit manic and not quite as I remembered the book. Still, I bought the book. And read the book. And enjoyed the book.

A few years after that I was working as a children's librarian. In our department, we had been turning classical literature into puppet shows with quite a bit of success. I decided that *Many Moons* would be a great choice, so I pulled the book off of the shelf to type up a screenplay. The book on our shelf wasn't the Slobodkin version, though, it was the Marc Simont version, and the illustrations almost perfectly matched the illustrations I had carried in my head for thirty years. I was delighted. And the puppet show, by the way, was delightful.

Marc Simont passed away recently. He was 97, so his passing was sad but not surprising. Although he has illustrated many books, including other stories for Thurber, whenever I see any reference to him, I always think of this book, his *Many Moons*.

Book Concierge says

Illustrated by Marc Simont

The Princess Lenore isn't feeling well, and she asks for just one thing – the moon. She is certain this is the only thing that will make her well again. Her father, the King, summons his most trusted advisors, and tasks them with securing the moon for the Princess. But to a man, they declare this impossible. Until the Jester arrives and looks at the problem from a different angle.

I love Thurber's story-telling. I've previously read another of his fables for children, and I'm equally delighted with this one. Marc Simont's illustrations are whimsical and perfectly fit Thurber's text. I found myself poring over them, trying to find all the references in the text ... "blood from a turnip," "a rabbit out of

a hat, and a hat out of a rabbit” et al. The fact that the Princess holds the key to the great puzzle no adult can solve will especially delight children, but adults can learn an important lesson as well.

The book was originally published with illustrations by Louis Slobodkin; it remains in print along with this newer version which I read. I’ll have to try to find that original edition to see Slobodkin’s Caldecott-Award-winning work.

David says

Many Moons by James Thurber, illustrated by Louis Slobodkin is a fairy tale about Princess Lenore, who asks for the moon when she is sick. The King summons all his wise men but none of them know how to get the moon. The Court Jester turns out to be the one to solve the problem.

This charming, whimsical story has plenty of sly humor and a few challenging words (surfeit, physician etc.). Thurber writes about wisdom and the differing perceptions of children and adults. The concept of things being "in the eye of the beholder" is well portrayed by Thurber in this book that is a bit longer than many picture books.

I like the original illustrations by Louis Slobodkin which match the story well. The artwork is mainly in red, blue, black, white, gold and green.

The long lists of his advisors' accomplishments becomes pretty funny and has some funny, interesting items. Their ideas for keeping the Princess from seeing the moon are amusing and silly. The simple logic of the jester is wise indeed, as is Princess Lenore.

For ages K to 3rd, princesses, fantasy, fairy tale, space science, point of view, and James Thurber and Louis Slobodkin.

Julia says

This was a book that my sister picked up for my niece from the library and it seemed like it was going to be a good book. Unfortunately upon opening the pages I noticed that there was more writing to a page than she is comfortable with thus making the story longer and the font is small, which led to my correct guess that she would get bored with the book before we got to far into it.

Furthermore there wasn't much room to like the characters for they were rather flat and bland with only the court jester having any true brains along with spoiled Princess Lenore. Otherwise I would have banned the rest from the court, especially those who held a record as to what they could and had done while at the same time denying the services expected of them.

The illustrations also weren't much to go along with but were of a much rather simpler frame. Although they were decent enough to decorate the story they didn't add nor take away from it.

And the writing..... Although it could be fun and interesting what child is going to know what surfeit is, let

alone spell it?

All in all it was a decent book and maybe one for slightly older children who can read it on their own. For younger children who need an adult to continue reading to them this isn't friendly towards them unless you can make up your own story to go along with it even though the rest of the lessons learned can be applied to life.

Nevada Libert says

this was a good story of a little princess wanted the moon and got it, this book also has lots of wisdom in it.

Allison says

My mother must have read this to me so many times as a child-- I didn't think I recognized it from the title or cover, but as soon as I opened the book and saw the delicate, softly colored sketches, I couldn't help but breathe a nostalgic sigh. The illustrations in this book are a pure delight. I love the way the artist has the images winding around the text on some pages, unfurling from the scroll depicted on the opposite page. I love the expressive faces and body language of the characters, and the roundness (suggesting the moon) in so many of the illustrations.

Miriam says

Ivory, apes, and peacocks, rubies, opals, and emeralds, black orchids, pink elephants, and blue poodles, gold bugs, scarabs, and flies in amber, hummingbirds' tongues, angels' feathers, and unicorns' horns, giants, midgets, and mermaids, frankincense, ambergris, and myrrh, troubadours, minstrels, and dancing women.

Rachel says

This book won the 1944 Caldecott, but this must've been another year where there wasn't much competition. I liked the book, though the story drones on for a bit. The book tells the story of a princess who falls ill and wants the moon, but all of her father's advisors say that the moon is impossible to get, until he asks the Court Jester, who takes a more logical-to-a-child approach to the situation. She gets her moon and gets well again. The next night, when the moon reappears, the king is frantically worried and consults all of his advisors again, who don't provide a good solution. The Court Jester just goes up and asks the princess what she thinks of the new moon and she says that of course there is a new moon, because when you take something away like teeth or flowers, there are always something of the same sort to replace it. This book, like "Frederick" by Leo Lionni, can be taught in the classroom as part of a philosophical discussion:
<http://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy....> Recommended for ages 6-9, 3 stars.

Alexis Caudill says

1. Book summary, in your own words (3 pts)

Many Moons is a Caldecott Medal book. It is a book about a princess who asked her father to get the moon for her. The king then sets out to do just that calling all his counselors. They all seem to think it is impossible, though. Will the princess ever get the moon?

2. Grade level, interest level, lexile (1 pt)

This would be a great book for K-2nd grade. It is a cute short story, very easy to read.

3. Appropriate classroom use (subject area) (1 pt)

I would use this book for the reading portion of class.

4. Individual students who might benefit from reading (1 pt)

Students who love books about princesses and doing the impossible would like this book.

5. Small group use (literature circles) (1 pt)

I would not use this book in small groups. I would probably want it to be a book read alone by the student.

6. Whole class use (read aloud) (1 pt)

I would read this book aloud to the students. I think it was interesting enough that all of the students would be interested in it. We could then discuss the perceptions each counselor has of the moon compared to the princess herself.

7. Related books in genre/subject or content area (1 pt)

The Wonderful O by James Thurber

The 13 Clocks by James Thurber

8. Multimedia connections (audio books, movie) available (1 pt)

There was an ebook for this book.

Angie Schaefer Ellefson says

A little princess falls ill, and the only way she will get better is if she gets the moon. The king consults his wise men- the Lord High Chamberlain, the Royal Wizard, and the Royal Mathematician. In the end, it is the Court Jester who discovers the solution by consulting the princess. This story reminds all readers that answers are sometimes found in what seem the least likely places; and the wisdom of children should never be discounted.

Kirah Marshall says

1. Lenore is a princess who has fallen ill, and the only way to heal her is if she has the moon. The king loves his daughter very much as is prepared to do whatever to make her well again. He calls up his counsel one by one which consists of the Chamberlain, the Royal Wizard, and the Mathematician. The king asks each one to get him the moon, and each replies that the moon is too big and too far away to get for the princess. This upsets the so very much. Then the jester comes in and asks why he is upset, and the king explains to his the problem. The jester has an idea to ask the princess how big she thinks the moon is and what it is made of. She answers that the moon is made of gold and is the size of her nails. The jester then has the blacksmith make her a golden, nail-sized moon that she can wear as a necklace. Then Lenore is well again. The king is elated his daughter is well again, but is struck with terror when he realizes Lenore will become ill again when she realizes the moon isn't really on her necklace, and that it is still in the sky. He calls up the counsel again, and each wise man offers a solution to keep Lenore from seeing the moon. The king hates each idea

and realizes there is nothing he can do to keep her from seeing the moon in the sky. By this point, it is night again, and the moon is shining. The jester comes in and sees that the king is sad again and asks him what is wrong. The king explains, and the jester decides to ask Lenore why she thinks the moon is back up in the sky. She replies that she believes it is because the moon is like her teeth, when she loses one a new one comes and replaces it. So in the end, the moon necklace works and Lenore does not become ill again.

2. I would say this book is appropriate for 1-3rd. It has lengthy pages so, it would have to be read by an independent reader. It's lexile is too high for a beginning reader. It is interesting and fun.

3. You could use this book as an example of fairy-tale if you are discussing different genres. You could possibly incorporate it into a fun lesson plan too.

4. I think little girls would like this book more than little boys would just because it is about a princess. However, I think that some boys would like it since it has a king, a jester, a wizard, etc.

5. You could incorporate this book into a literature circle, especially if the lesson of the week was over genres.

6. You could read this book aloud. It's a cute and fun book, but the boys in the room might be disconnected with it.

7. Similar books could be *The Princess and the Pea*, *Rapunzel*, etc.

8. This book doesn't have any other media connections.

Debra says

Priceless! Am really enjoying the Caldecott winners!

Lauren Bennett says

The story *Many Moons*, by James Thurber, is an adorable story of a sick, little princess who wants the moon to help her feel better and all the trouble her father the king goes through to get her the moon. This story was awarded the Caldecott award in 1944. The illustrations in this story are beautifully done and I would recommend this book especially to kids who love pictures and drawing.

I really enjoyed the illustrations in this story. With such a cute story, you definitely need some cute illustrations to go along with it and I think Mr. Thurber did an excellent job. The illustrations look like they are painted right on the pages with watercolors. They use many bright colors and create an image for each page that seems to move and pop off the page. Each picture shows a great summary of what is happening in the story on every page. I highly recommend this book for any kids who might be aspiring artists to try to create masterpieces of their own in Thurber's style.

Amy Beth says

This is a book for children, but Amazon and their sneaky ways brought it to my attention because of my love for James Thurber. I remember this story from when I was a kid. I loved it then, too. I'm happy to add this copy to my Thurber collection.

I will say that I do not have children, nor am I a librarian or someone who regularly reads children's literature so if you are looking for advice on if this is appropriate for your child, I don't know. This was written in 1943

and I think it's a charming story. I've seen some reviews saying that children won't know the word "surfeit" and they are complaining about it (the parents, not the children). That one word. I'd venture to guess some parents might not know what the word surfeit means either. But guess what, that's how we learn. Look it up! Explain what the word means to your child.

Also, this book even briefly mentions a philosopher's stone and an invisibility cloak! In 1943! :)

What do I know? If I had a child, I would read this with them. I also know that I still love James Thurber.

Jackie "the Librarian" says

I love this story about a princess with a tummyache, who asks for the moon, and the jester who figures out how the king can get it for her. Way too wordy for a library storytime, this is a great lap book for parents to share with their own princesses. I prefer the illustrations by Marc Simont, even though they aren't the ones that won the Caldecott.

Susan says

I enjoyed this one more than I thought I would. The little girl and the jester were both wise in their own ways. I appreciated the way that the jester accepted the girl and her ideas on her own terms. I also enjoyed the clever use of words in the story.
