

Kitten and the Night Watchman

John Sullivan , Tae-eun Yoo (Illustrations)

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**SELECTED AS A BEST BOOK OF 2018 BY *THE BOSTON GLOBE*, *KIRKUS REVIEWS*,
PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, AND *BOOKPAGE***

“Every life and job is unique; this book’s take on the job of a watchman is empathetic, poetic, and a joy to look at, cute kitty and all.” —*Kirkus Reviews* (starred review)

“This quiet, understated book contains a wealth of emotions young children can work through and relate to—from worry to relief to the comfort of belonging.” —*The Horn Book* (starred review)

“[Illustrator] Yoo sets a lovely mood, taking readers from sunset to dawn through washes of orange, pink, and blue, the watchman’s compassionate demeanor assuring them that all’s well.” —*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“Yoo’s textured, serene artwork in beautiful saturated tones perfectly complements Sullivan’s lines and conveys a beauty in the night and the construction site that readers might otherwise miss.” —*Booklist* (starred review)

“This soft, gentle story is a perfect bedtime story for lovers of trucks and construction equipment, cats, and nighttime wanders.” —*BCCB* (starred review)

A stray kitten changes the way the watchman sees nighttime in this tender book based on a true story, illustrated by *Strictly No Elephants* artist Taeun Yoo.

The night watchman hugs his wife and kids and drives to work.

All night he is alone.

Every hour he makes his rounds.

He sees the stars twinkling. He hears the sounds of the night:

ki-DEE ki-DEE ki-DEE

shhhhhheeeeeEEEEERRRROOOOooooommmmmmm

Woof! Woof! Woof!

Meeeeeeow.

When he is joined by a stray kitten, the night suddenly seems different. Has the kitten found a new home?

Kitten and the Night Watchman is inspired by the true story of author John Sullivan meeting a stray cat while working as a night watchman. The cat, Beebe, was John’s companion for seventeen years.

Kitten and the Night Watchman Details

Date : Published September 25th 2018 by Simon Schuster/Paula Wiseman Books


ISBN : 9781481461917

Author : John Sullivan , Taeun Yoo (Illustrations)

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From Reader Review **Kitten and the Night Watchman** for online ebook

Liz says

Story about a night watchman and the sights and sounds he encounters every night, including a new friend. I like that there is a picture book about a different job.

Julie says

A pleasing look at the duties of a night watchman, who leaves his family every night and makes his hourly rounds throughout the night, with the company of a little kitten. Will give children an idea of what a city is like at night - the sights, the moonlit night, and especially the sounds, both expected and sudden. Lovely pictures of the horizon at dawn, and a sweet ending, as the night watchman decides that the kitten might just be perfect for his children waiting at home. The author works for the city of Chicago as a night watchman and was inspired to write this story by his own cat. The illustrator is a two-time winner of the New York Times Best Illustrated Children's Book Award.

Hannah Jane says

Even though it doesn't rhyme, this book reads like a poem - "A crane looks like a huge mosquito. A beetle bumps against the yard light." The story is really sweet too. This is exactly how I hope to find a kitten some day. But I'm not sure my husband will be as receptive as the night watchman's family.

Jason says

Sweet and beautifully colored take on an occupation that doesn't get much attention. The kitten is a nice touch.

Tasha says

The night watchman heads out to his night of work. He works on a construction site, making sure that the doors are locked and the rooms are empty. He shines his flashlight near the broken trucks and startles a killdeer. He drinks his coffee under the shining stars and moon, thinking of his children at home asleep. Then a small kitten appears and joins the watchman for the rest of his rounds. They spot a jet in the sky, share dinner, and look at bugs. But then the kitten disappears and the watchman is left with only the sounds of the night around him. When the kitten returns, the watchman makes a decision to bring it home with him.

Beautifully told in a gentle and simple way, this picture book takes a poetic look at a job and a setting that is not usually given that treatment. The counterpoint of a construction site and the beauty that night lends it is

very effective. As the quiet of the night progresses, it reveals so much that is hidden during the day. Birds, insects, and the kitten itself emerge from the darkness to be noticed and are made remarkable.

The artwork is filled with darkness and blues. Yet it is also lit by stars and the moon, and it is filled with beams from flashlights and lamps. These yellow streams of light lend brightness and illuminate the budding relationship of the watchman and the kitten with warmth.

Uniquely mixing construction, night and beauty, this picture book is something special. Appropriate for ages 2-4.

KC says

Cute story of a night watchman who discovers a kitten while on the job. Love seeing all the diversity in books today.

Beth Kakuma-Depew says

Yes, if you like cat stories - this is 100% adorable on that level. And the usual construction vehicles make cameos, so that's very fun. But I loved how the darkness is magical and not frightening. The gentle rhythms of the text make it a great bedtime book. And kudos for showcasing a working class job!

Laura says

Beautiful story, based on the authors real life. The illustrations lend to rich conversation. Especially loved the shadows!

Missy says

Oh, you people who think you've outgrown picture books. You really don't know what you're missing. So often the simplest story and drawings are jam-packed with interesting concepts and emotions and just plain cleverness. *Kitten and the Night Watchman* is the latest example of a treasure trove within 40 8" x 8" pages. The story is simple: a dad leaves for his job as a night watchman at a construction site. He makes his rounds. Meets a kitten. Goes home. But there's so much more...

The story is told with rich language and imaginative imagery. "An excavator bows like a strange giraffe. A backhoe rises like a giant insect." The illustrations are chunky and cartoonish, but with a subtlety of shades and hues and some sophisticated elements. (Look carefully at the shadows made by the excavator and backhoe).

What really makes this book stand out is what it offers beyond the plot, words, and illustrations: representations that can be hard to find in children's picture books. The family's skin color is varying shades of brown. Night-shift and/or "working class" jobs are not so commonly found, and especially not in words

that reflect the value of and joy that can be found in such jobs. The night watchman shows emotion and concern not always connected with men: he worries about the kitten; he gently catches a moth and releases it outside; he thinks of his children while working. None of these representations are the point of the story; they are simply part of the world the author has created.

Kitten and the Night Watchman would be a perfect bedtime book with its quiet, comforting message and lovely imagery.

There is one more element of the book that I found interesting. Why *Kitten and the Night Watchman* rather than *The Night Watchman and Kitten*? The story focuses on the experiences of the night watchman. Why does the kitten take first place in the title?

Peacegal says

What a wonderful, sweet story. In this wonderfully atmospheric tale, a night watchman makes his rounds at a construction site, each evening joined by a friendly stray kitten.

One day, the kitten does not show up, and the watchman worries, becoming aware of all of the dangers that lurk around the jobsite. When the kitten finally appears, the watchman makes up his mind to adopt her and take her home to live with his family. There's a sweet image at the end showing his delighted children, and the kitten sitting happily in the living room.

The only complaint I had was a reference to trucks "lined up like circus elephants." I, and many other humane-minded people, are looking forward to the day that image ceases to be a cultural reference.

Rebecca Gomez says

I like the quiet, nighttime feel of this book. I think kids may be fascinated by the idea of people out working at night while they are asleep. And who doesn't love the idea of a furry friend finding a home? Sweet book.

Becky says

First sentence: The night watchman hugs his wife and children...and drives to work. Every hour he makes his rounds, alone.

Premise/plot: A night watchman isn't alone one night--he discovers a kitten. This kitten is super-friendly and seems just as eager to make a new friend as he is. Will this be the start of a beautiful friendship? Has the kitten found a fur-ever home?

My thoughts: I liked this one. It was predictable in a good way. The illustrations are absolutely lovely. The text is simple.

Text: 3 out of 5

Illustrations: 4 out of 5

Total: 7 out of 10

Tegan says

Really cute story! I like how it not only tells the story of rescuing a stray kitten (both my cats were strays), but also the story of a family. This allows children to learn about different jobs, different feelings, etc. I really enjoyed how the shadows of the machinery showed what animals they looked like.

Shiloah says

My sweet autistic daughter Madi (age 15) chose this one. She loves cats and she was excited to read this one with the family.

Rebecca says

Here is a beautiful, quiet, atmospheric story about a night watchman's shift at a construction site, and his discovery of a kitten. I loved how gentle this was, and how it showed a job that many don't see or might think of as unimportant. Illustrated by Taeun Yoo using digital and hand-printed textures.
