



# The Bumpy Little Pumpkin

*Margery Cuyler*

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## **The Bumpy Little Pumpkin** Margery Cuyler

All summer, Little Nell has tended the garden with BIG Mama, BIG Sarah, and BIG Lizzie, and finally the pumpkins are ready for Halloween. Her sisters choose smooth, round pumpkins to carve, but Little Nell likes a bumpy little one best. Sarah and Lizzie jeer, "It's bumpy and little and ugly!" But Little Nell perseveres. With help from her animal friends, she scoops and carves it into a wonderful jack-o'-lantern! This sweet tale shows that jack-o'-lanterns, like people, come in all shapes and sizes, and that BIG ideas and a BIG heart resound in even the smallest of us.

## **The Bumpy Little Pumpkin Details**

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# From Reader Review The Bumpy Little Pumpkin for online ebook

## Lynn Davidson says

Little Nell wanted the bumpy little pumpkin for her jack-o-lantern, but her big sisters told her to find a better one. Little Nell's friends come to her aid. Lovely illustrations.

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## Heidi-Marie says

I have to admit it--I thought the bumpy little pumpkin was cute. The story? It was okay. When the animals came onto the scene I was a bit surprised. But I liked seeing them help her with her pumpkin. I liked the sisters' personalities coming out and the mother accepting them all in many ways. Good for PreK, but not K-4.

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## Heather says

I immediately didn't like the writing, and I had only read the synopsis. The BIG Sarah and BIG lizzie. It was very random how her friends were a reindeer, hare, and bear cub. I don't know why everything had to be big, her big mom, big sisters, big house, big garden. She's little.

The reindeer uses his horns to cut the top off the pumpkin, as if he's sporting knives up there. Bear Cub uses his claws to paw the insides out.

She calls the birds to make a face, and a cardinal, crow, and sparrow come. She draws a face in the dirt to show them what she wants. They peck the face into the pumpkin.

I had expected her to carve the pumpkin herself, so I was disappointed that her animal friends were actually the ones doing everything. All she did was pick the pumpkin out, and design the face. The synopsis saying big ideas come in small packages made me think she had this grand idea with the small pumpkin.

When Sarah asks who helped her carve it, and she answers her friends reindeer, bear cub, and hare, no one says anything as if it's perfectly normal for her to be friends with reindeers and bears, which can be dangerous animals. Readers have to overlook the fact that she's friends with such an unlikely group, not to mention dangerous to boot. The hare I could understand, but that's it.

The girls place their pumpkins outside near the door, and Big Mama lights them. Sarah says hers is cool, Lizzie thinks hers is cooler. Big Mama says they're all wonderful, and Little Nell asks "even mine?" She says "even yours," kisses her, Nell smiles, and that's the end of the book. I couldn't believe it. I hate abrupt endings in books.

This was a miss for me. I kept waiting for the message, that good things come in small packages, to not worry what others think, something, but there ended up being no message. I don't know what message the synopsis is talking about. This wasn't about big ideals in small packages, because she didn't have a big idea. Her mom told them to pick out pumpkins, and that's just the one she wanted. She had her friends carve it. Her sisters didn't even have a change of heart and come around and accept her pumpkin. They still thought

theirs were cool and didn't like hers, so what was the point? Even the mom couldn't scrounge up something more to say about accepting others, not to judge their ideas. She just says jack-o'-lanterns come in all shapes and sizes, and that all their pumpkins are perfect. I expected a much bigger message, and for this to be inspirational.

I wish the animals had names in here, instead of calling them by their species name, like Reindeer, Hare, Bear Cub, Crow, Cardinal, Sparrow.

It was one thing to reference them as big, but to have her call them BIG Mama, BIG Sarah, and BIG Lizzie was ridiculous.

I didn't like the repetition of the word big, or the writing in other places.

'He clawed and pawed and pawed and clawed.'

'Little Nell etched and sketched and sketched and etched.'

'Crow, Cardinal, and Sparrow poked and pecked and pecked and poked.'

The clothing and hairstyles made it look like this book was set in the 80s. Besides the one girl's boots that looked like Uggs. The way the sisters were drawn, with all that makeup and hair, made them look like they were in their 30s, definitely not children. At first I thought they must have been her aunts.

I also didn't like the emphasis on size, how her family was all big, and she was little. I don't know what significance it had in the story, unless she had to be little and also pick out a little pumpkin, and her family had to be big with big pumpkins to show the contrast, and how they were supposed to appreciate her and her pumpkin choice.

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## **Melanie says**

Halloween story we've had to read every night to our daughter since checking it out from the library. Bugs me that Little Nell's friends Reindeer and Bear Cub actually help with the pumpkin but all her friend Hare does is ask the birds to come help. Why don't the birds get the credit and just eliminate the rabbit from the story? All of this being said, this is one of the better Halloween stories I've seen so far. The girl gets to pick out a pumpkin from the pumpkin patch and carves it with friends. The underlying theme that everyone can pick their own pumpkin and they all have value (even the bumpy little ones that my daughter intuitively mentioned the other sisters implied was "ugly").

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## **Shiloah says**

Kind of generic. 2.5 stars

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## **Jennifer Strong says**

Little Nell learns that pumpkins come in all shapes and sizes, and they are each unique and wonderful in their own way.

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I like the overall message of this book. Even though the pumpkin Nell chose was small and bumpy and ugly to her sisters, to her it was perfect! I'm still not one hundred percent sure why Nell needed forest friends to

help her carve the bumpy little pumpkin. It seemed very Disney fairytale-esk and a little random, but whatever. It was cute.

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## **Wade says**

Girlfriend likes to use the word BIG

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## **Andrea says**

I didn't like anything about this book, the writing, the story, the illustrations, the characters, anything. I didn't enjoy it at all. The cover made it look so cute, but once I started reading it was nothing like that.

It looks like it's set in the 80s, with all these crazy hairstyles and clothing that I didn't like. One sister has hair sticking up all over her head, held together with blue scrunchies. Her hair is pink and purple. The other has hair sticking out at the sides and her big bangs and folded back over her head. The character is called Little Nell, her sisters BIG Lizzie and BIG Sarah, and her mom BIG Mama. I found that so irritating to read, that big would be in all capital letters like that and you would attach "big" to a person, which is just stupid and insulting to me. Just because they're older than her and bigger doesn't mean they should be called big. Then it was a BIG house and BIG woods. BIG garden, BIG pumpkin patch. The pumpkins are supposed to grow BIG. Ugh. It got on my nerves.

The plot was that the sisters were supposed to pick out their own pumpkin to carve, and Nell chose a little bumpy one as the title says. Her sisters were scornful of her choice and wanted her to pick something else. Nell cried and all of a sudden these animals popped up out of nowhere. And they can talk. It came out of nowhere for me and was so random. There was a reindeer and a hare and a bear that all supported her choice of a pumpkin. I found myself wondering what climate this girl lived in that these animals were at her house, all 3 species. Aren't rabbits in their burrows at this time of year?? When they offered to help her carve it, I was like what in the world? Having animals know about jack o'lanterns is way too much.

The reindeer used his antlers to cut a lid, the bear scooped out the inside, and the hare just called some birds to make the face. So a crow, cardinal and sparrow did as Nell instructed. The bear "clawed and pawed and pawed and clawed" and Nell "etched and sketched and sketched and etched" and the birds "poked and pecked and pecked and poked" and I find repetitive writing like that to be extremely annoying. It further grates on my nerves.

She took her pumpkin home where her sisters still couldn't understand her choice, but her mom stuck up for Nell. Nell said a reindeer, bear and hare helped her, and didn't give any credit at all to the birds. That is not ok.

They lit them and her mom said all the jack o'lanterns are wonderful. The last page said Happy Halloween and Nell was hugging her little bumpy pumpkin and that was that. I didn't like the story, and there doesn't seem to be much of a point.

Actually, I did like one thing. On the title page the title "The Bumpy Little Pumpkin" was in a bold green with orange outline and that looked really good. And that really is the only thing I liked.

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**Kathryn says**

Basically, a story of not judging by appearances and finding a connection with something, even if other people call it "ugly." Cute enough, but nothing really memorable here. Although, the part where the animals come to help the little girl carve her pumpkin is pretty cool! :-)

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**Molly Cluff (Library!) says**

A little too texty for preschool storytime, but I like how they go through the process of carving a jack-o-lantern on her ugly bumpy pumpkin! Cute

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**kim says**

cute/weird. screams 80's to me, but is 2005. not sure what I think of all her little animal friends

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**Sarah Wiwchar says**

This was actually decent and a good example of how everyone is different.

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**Russell says**

Sometimes, a sequel doesn't tread too far from the original. When Ghostbusters 2 came out, it felt like a retread at the core. Same ominous cloud special effects. Same governmental intervention. Same evil, with hordes of ghosts unleashed upon New York City. And at the time, it felt like a shallow imitation with cheap laughs in the place of originality, pandering with overuse of Slimer and Rick Moranis.

At first, The Bumpy Little Pumpkin felt like we weren't going to venture too far from The Biggest, Best Snowman. And we ultimately didn't. But it worked in its own way. You don't always have to completely shake things up to deliver on a sequel.

Two books in, and I'd still like a word with the architect of the BIG house.

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**Fjóla says**

I really, really did not care for the writing in this book. But some of the illustration spreads were pretty good, so I'm bumping our rating up one star. Also, I'm in principle in favor of the message not to judge based on appearances, and following your heart, but the insistence on "ugly" was a bit of an overkill for us. In fact, I

didn't think the story was conveying only good messages, on the contrary. And, unless the book is intended for emerging readers, the writing is overly infantile and dumbed down.

Everything about Halloween is fascinating of course for our kids, so there will be kids who will be wild about this story. It was a bit unclear to me who the family in the story was expecting to show up trick-or-treating on their doorstep, to their house in the middle of "a BIG woods" (!), but here I'm being nit-picky. And, finally, I always feel a bit weird about real bears befriending little children - hello? - but again, that's just me. So, I haven't come across a book that grated me this much in a while, but I'm sure there will be lots of takes for it anyhow ...

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### **Maria Garcia says**

Little Nell, the youngest of her two other sisters is on the hunt to find the perfect jack-o-lantern to carve for Halloween. While her older sisters find large "pretty" pumpkins, Little Nell has her mind set on a small bumpy pumpkin. Proud, Little Nell takes the pumpkin from the patch and back to her house where her older sisters ridicule her because the pumpkin that she choose is small, bumpy, and ugly. Feeling bad Little Nell goes back to the pumpkin patch alone with her mind still set on carving her pumpkin. Suddenly, her animal friends come to her aid and cheer her up, reassuring her that her pumpkin is unique and is beautiful in its own way. With the help of her many animal friends, Nell is able to carve a jack-o-lantern face out of her pumpkin. Proud as can be Little Nell head back home to show her sisters and mother her masterpiece. Her older sister of course had nothing positive to say about her "ugly" pumpkin, while Nell's mother once again reassures her that her pumpkin is beautiful and that pumpkins come in all shapes and sizes. No pumpkin is perfect, according to Little Nell's mother.

I liked the message that this book has. It teaches the reader, in a subtle way, that everything is beautiful no matter what their shape or size is or what types of imperfections pumpkins might have on them. This can be applied to other people as well. Overall, a good book to use in the classroom to help teach students about bullying and acceptance of others who are different than them. The book is also perfect for Halloween time making it a more versatile book to use in the classroom.

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