



The Watertower

By Gary Crew

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The Watertower By Gary Crew Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1331448 in Books
- Brand: Brand: Interlink Pub Group
- Published on: 2014-11-20
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 11.00" h x .11" w x 8.00" l, .33 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 32 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Crew (First Light) weaves a disquieting tale set in an Australian outback town, where a rusted old watertower seems to be inhabited by a malevolent alien presence. One sweltering afternoon, two buddies named Bubba and Steve, climb the tower for a swim. When Bubba's pants are lost, Steve runs back to town to get him another pair, to avert Bubba's mother's wrath. In the meantime, Bubba takes another dunk and emerges a changed boy (readers never find out why); he now possesses the same crazed, fixed expression that the town's grown-ups wear, and his hand is marked with the watertower logo?which also appears on baseball caps and elsewhere around town. Crew lets readers draw their own conclusions about these strange events. Unfortunately, despite Woolman's able renderings in acrylic, chalk and pencil, the design?which shifts between horizontal and vertical orientations?only underscores the feeling of disorientation raised in the text. This one may well leave even savvy older readers in the dark. Ages 7-14.

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From School Library Journal

Grade 3 Up?In this "Twilight Zone"-type picture book for older children, the menace lurks behind the innocuous words, and in what the illustrations don't show. The plot is deceptively flat: two boys go swimming in a decrepit watertower. When Bubba is reluctant to return to his heavy-handed mother after he has lost his shorts (apparently blown off the tower), Spike runs back to sneak another pair out to him. Bubba has been afraid of the water, but when Spike returns, his friend is climbing out of the tank and boasting about his swim, which Spike finds "not like Bubba." That's the story. The pictures, in a highly realistic style, show the shabby outback town dominated by the eye-shaped tank at one end and a huge antenna dish at the other. The cryptic symbol printed on the tank, a segmented incomplete circle, appears repeatedly on various objects: caps, machinery, and, in the final frame, on Bubba's hand. Eyes are important: the townsfolk's eyes turn up to the watertower expectantly, and Bubba's eyes are different after that swim. The page layout, oriented longitudinally, shifts again at the critical pages (through a framing device that is part of the puzzle) so that readers unconsciously rotate the book and end by reading it backwards. What mysterious change has occurred? Many debates and a close examination of the words and pictures will inevitably follow any causal reading of this true picture book?a union in which text and illustrations work inseparably to create a strange but compelling whole.?Patricia Lothrop-Green, St. George's School, Newport, RI

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From Kirkus Reviews

For older readers, a genuinely eerie picture book, which Crew (Bright Star, 1997, etc.) and Woolman have constructed as a kind of puzzle. The haunting watertower sits outside of town like an egg on legs, or like a lurid green broken spaceship. One blisteringly hot summer day, Spike and Bubba decide to go for a swim inside the watertower, where the cool water beckons. Bubba is uneasy; when they emerge, he discovers his pants are gone, and sends Spike home to fetch another pair. What happens then, as the hyperreal illustrations focus on the tower and the town, is unclear, but one of the pair of boys is transformed, and he is not alone in that transformation. The broken circle logo on the watertower appears on many pages, a clue to an alien presence or some more earthly invasion of the quiet little town. It may be hard to coax middle graders back into a picture book, but they will certainly give themselves a shiver or two in these pages. (Picture book. 9-11) -- *Copyright ©1998, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Carson McDonald:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each publication has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that book has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They are really reading whatever they get because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Think about the person who don't like looking at a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book if they found difficult problem or maybe exercise. Well, probably you should have this The Watertower.

Maribel Davenport:

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Alexandra Stafford:

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