

duire des effets contraires et leur alternance régulière dans l'album porte tout autant atteinte à la cohérence du message iconique qu'à l'unité et à l'intelligibilité de l'ensemble texte-image.

Et que dire du fait que la véritable illustration du texte, c'est-à-dire l'image polychrome en double page, n'est jamais accolée au texte, et que l'illustration en camaïeu qui fait face à ce dernier n'entretient souvent que des rapports très lointains avec lui (voir pp. 12 et 16, par exemple)? Quelle est donc la fonction des images en camaïeu dans l'économie générale de l'album? Ne créent-elles pas une atmosphère d'irréalité trompeuse peu compatible avec le pseudo-réalisme du récit et le prosaïsme du dénouement?

Si cet album laisse beaucoup à désirer sur le plan du texte et de la conception, on ne peut que s'émerveiller de l'immense talent de Gilles Tibo illustrateur. Aussi à l'aise dans la poésie onirique que dans le réalisme, l'artiste nous livre des images dont chacune est une oeuvre d'art et un enchantement. Que M. Tibo continue donc à mettre son talent d'illustrateur au service des livres pour la jeunesse pour le plus grand plaisir de tous. Perdre une bataille, ce n'est pas perdre la guerre. . . .

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## BETWEEN THE PULP AND THE SHINE

*The lie*, Marion Mineau. Illus. Phil McLeod. Black Moss Press, 1984. 24 pp. \$5.95 paper. ISBN 0-88753-113-3; *Jill and the black cat*, Etho Rothstein. Illus. Maureen Paxton. Black Moss Press, 1984. 32 pp. \$4.95 paper. ISBN 0-88753-112-1.

In this era of the opulent illustration, *The Lie* and *Jill and the big dog* represent a middle ground between the hard-cover extravagances which arrive for Christmas, and the media spin-offs which clutter up our department stores. Children deserve more "modest" picture books. Of course there is a place for the luxurious satiny pages retelling the timeless fairy tales, but these are rather like the dolls one used to get which were too nice to play with. Parents, mindful of sticky fingers and torn pages, resort too often to Walt Disney warm-overs; bowdlerized versions of *Alice* in which the White Rabbit is shown looking like Bugs Bunny. That is why one should welcome *The lie* and *Jill and the big cat*. I can see them both being well-used, with a few jam marks, lying among the Fisher Price jumble in the toy box.

*The lie* in particular has a fresh, unpretentious story line. Rose, charged with

the time-honoured task of going to her aunt's for a loaf of bread, learns what happens to bread when it comes in contact with water in a ditch. It is a little story with a child's vision of the world, companioned by illustrations as frisky as the story. Too often, a sprightly slender story, given to a staff illustrator, gets obliterated by full spread, neon-colour, rock-video-inspired illustrations. Marion Mineau does her own, in a loose Lynn Johnson style which suits Rose and her small catastrophe.

Sometimes, however, the illustration directs the reader how to read the story. This I think is the case with *Jill and the big cat*, by Etho Rothstein, illustrated by Maureen Paxton. The story features a timid little dog, Jill, who learns from the neighborhood cats how to fluff up her fur and look fierce. A cougar strays into Capilano and Jill, with her new-found trick, scares it up a tree. It is a pet story again with time-honoured appeal, dramatized and heightened by illustration which experiments with distortion. This distortion of course communicates the emotion in the story. We know how Jill feels when she sees the cat; similarly we know how the cougar feels when it sees Jill.

My one reservation about this picture book is that the black and white illustrations don't quite meld with the coloured ones; the reader finds it distracting having to switch from one medium to the other. More seriously, the change in medium seems to affect the visual interpretation of Jill. This is a flaw in technique. Still, there is life and originality here, which needs to be developed.

I look forward to seeing more Black Moss Press books for children.

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## A QUESTION OF POWER

*In the City of the King*, William Ptaszek, Douglas & McIntyre, 1984. 144 pp. \$6.95 paper. ISBN 0-88899-027-8.

C.S. Lewis's argument that the best writing for children is produced by those who have something to say holds particularly true for the fantasist. Any true artist creates from an inner compulsion, using his medium to transcend the reality of this world and is to some extent a fantasist. But actual writers of fantasy can easily become so immersed in the technicalities of creating a secondary reality that they ignore the necessity to illuminate the primary world. Many a skilled technician fails artistically because his work lacks the power derived from purpose and meaning.

Canadian writers of fantasy all too often have been unable to move beyond the awesome reality of their country to create strong, deep works of mystery,