

Toute cette intrigue a pour théâtre l'immeuble où habite Gloria. Toutefois l'immeuble est bien plus qu'un simple décor. "L'immeuble" est l'un des principaux personnages du roman. Personnage qui a plus de consistance, finalement, que bien d'autres personnages qui ne font que passer et que l'auteur effleure à peine. Gloria dira de l'immeuble qu'il est une "mosaïque multicolore où chaque élément contribue à l'ensemble".

On ne s'ennuie pas, en effet, dans l'immeuble de Gloria! C'est là, je crois, une des qualités du roman: l'auteur a su mettre une bonne dose d'humour dans cette histoire qui, sans cela, aurait risqué d'être un peu lourde. L'humour, c'est Florence, "l'agente de police", qui lit des romans d'amour, oublie ses papiers mouchoirs dans les vêtements qu'elle met à laver et rêve d'une idylle avec tous les locataires de l'immeuble. C'est aussi Donald, l'inventeur, qui travaille à mettre au point "une nouvelle teinture capable de modifier plusieurs couleurs à la fois". L'odeur nauséabonde de sa mixture réussira à faire sortir les frères Brun de leur maison, révélant le pot aux roses.

Au fil de son enquête, Gloria verra sa vie chambardée: le remariage prochain de sa tante, le déménagement. Ces inconvénients, elle les affronte avec la détermination qui la caractérise. "Toi et moi, il va falloir s'entendre...", dit-elle à sa nouvelle chambre. C'est à suivre, puisqu'on annonce un troisième tome: *Le retour d'Eliane*.

Pierrette Dubé est diplômée en Etudes françaises de l'Université de Montréal. Mère de trois enfants, elle s'intéresse de près à la littérature enfantine. A gagné, récemment, les premier et deuxième prix décernés par la revue *Lurelu (contes pour enfants)*.

NEW IMAGES FOR OLD FAVOURITES

The owl and the pussycat, Edward Lear. Illus. Erica Rutherford. Tundra Books, 1986. 24 pp. \$12.95 cloth. ISBN 088776-181-X; **Wynken, Blynken and Nod**, Eugene Field. Illus. Ron Berg. North Winds Press, 1985. 32 pp. \$21.95 cloth. ISBN 0590-71588-7; **The cremation of Sam McGee**, Robert W. Service. Kids Can Press, 1986. Unpag. \$14.95 cloth. ISBN 0-919964-92-3.

Illustrations in children's books enhance, support and interpret the text: "children do not see illustrations in books as a gallery of isolated pictures

but as a *story* communicated through an integration of words and pictures and, in turn, integrated within a real world of sights and sounds and people." Harmony between text and picture must be sequentially sustained both thematically and visually. All three of these books — Edwards Lear's *The owl and the pussycat* illustrated by Erica Rutherford, Eugene Field's *Wynken, Blynken and Nod* illustrated by Ron Berg, and Robert Service's *The cremation of Sam McGee* illustrated by Ted Harrison — attempt to marry favourite old verse with new pictures. In each, text and illustration are separated, each is given an alternate full page, and the lines of verse text are kept to a spatial minimum while the pictures, for the most part, take up more of their pages. Given that, with this format, there is a danger of illustration *visually* dominating text, success depends on the size, type, and placement of the illustration. *Thematic* harmony depends on the content lines of verse set against it. (Of course, quality of illustration and reproduction counts, but this is tricky, for we assess quality from an adult perspective and we must remember that "some illustrators may fare badly if the art of their work were compared to that of artists of their day, yet they may be superior illustrators.")

The owl and the pussycat, from Tundra, manages the marriage of text and illustration with only partial success. The illustrations by Erica Rutherford, a combination of silkscreen and acrylic paint, are set within two-coloured borders. The excellently reproduced, bold, rich colours bear out the illustrator's belief in colour as "the primary reason for a painting to exist." But power, glory, boldness, and strength of colour are hardly appropriate to evoke the wistfulness and drollery of Lear. There is no shading or sense of depth, but rather large expanses of colour outlined by contrasting bands. This varies in effectiveness, but overall, the smooth and simple combinations of line, shape and colour produce somewhat static, schematic set-pieces. One wants the characters of the owl and the pussycat, expressed so vividly through Lear's lines of verse, to be rendered in all their pride and poignancy. Instead we get large, simple, realistic owl and pussycat shapes staring at us from the page or staring into the distance. When they "dance by the light of the moon" they are not "hand in hand", and the moon is just a large perfect circle between their heads. There is little thematic continuity between word and picture here, and the *feel* of Lear is missing. Visually the bold illustrations are matched by the large, thick, black, bold type, anywhere from one to seven lines on each page.

Ron Berg's illustrations for Eugene Field's *Wynken, Blynken and Nod* are less decorative and narrative than are Rutherford's. The soft colours and strokes of his pastel pencils are appropriate to this imaginative, lulling child's poem. The illustrations support the dream-like magic of drifting off into the misty sea of child-sleep. These illustrations prove that "looking at the book can become a game in itself": the more the child's eye travels

over the pictures, the more he or she will discover small details that sustain the motifs of the poem. The stars, fish, and moon of the night-ride fantasy are present in several forms in the girl's room. There are fish motifs on her bed and sheets, on the picture frame on her wall, and then simply in the air/water as clouds and stars and shapes as she drifts into the night. Stars on her wallpaper become the stars of the night sky. The clock on her wall is a smiling moon. Everyone enjoys such visual tricks which subtly portend magic creeping in. But there is a self-consciousness to the illustrating that makes it all a bit too cosy and domestic. The father — clearly the illustrator himself — reading his daughter to sleep provides the visual framework for the poem's setting. The moon that welcomes the child into the night sky is clearly the face of the father, the "fishermen three" are the daughter and her two stuffed animals. The magic of the night fantasy is secondary to the idea of a child being put to bed with a story. *Wynken, Blynken and Nod* is not an easy poem to illustrate because it is a game with a twist. But surely children are meant to be surprised when they discover at the end that "Wynken and Blynken are two little eyes,/And Nod is a little head,/And the wooden shoe that sailed the skies/Is a wee one's trundle bed." The surprise element of the story has not been attended to closely enough. The format of this book is pleasing and appropriate, with large, delicate type and nicely separated verses.

Robert Service's *The cremation of Sam McGee*, illustrated by artist Ted Harrison, is a total success. Here text and illustration are beautifully integrated both thematically and visually: Harrison's vision and experience as an artist prove highly appropriate to Service's verse. Not only do his figures vibrate with life, (McGee's corpse does too, but then it is supposed to), but the Arctic landscape and sky live and breathe as only a world which is at once a holder of "secret tales", a "land of gold", and a "land of death" can. Harrison, who has lived in the Yukon for several years, sees it as "a dreamworld, often verging on the surrealistic" and that is surely Service's Yukon too. The acrylic paintings, mostly reproduced full-page with a double fine black border, use the full spectrum of rich colour. Harrison's style, which is similar to Rutherford's, is much more effective and appropriate here. Patterns and forms of earth and sky, through which the loyal narrator of the poem sleds his cold friend McGee, are outlined with coloured lines. Though Pierre Berton, in his forward to the book, claims that "it is as if [Harrison] is determined to banish cold with these hot paintings", the haunting blues and purples are ever-present as the grim backdrop from which the warm gold and red details stand out. A skull and some ravens dominate the foreground of the death-like blue landscape which corresponds to the lines beginning "There wasn't a breath in that land of death." The italics typeface reinforces the idea of a narrated tale. Notes (provided by the illustrator) to each picture elucidate details of life

in the Yukon that inform both picture and verse. This is a book for everyone.

Simultaneous education of both eye and ear are the goals of an illustrated book: the two mediums of verse and picture must increase the punch of the story. We look for convincing new images for old favourite verses; but Lear illustrated Lear better than anyone since, and Berg's images will not replace those I carry in my mind. Service, however, has never looked and sounded so good.

Diane Watson *currently a Ph.D. student and teaching assistant at McMaster University, is also the mother of a ten-year-old child.*

SUS AUX TRAFIQUANTS DE STUPÉFIANTS!

Le secret de Lamorandière, Bertrand Simard. Moncton, Éditions d'Acadie, 1987. 143 pp. 6.95\$ broché. ISBN 2-7600-0124-5.

Dans un court roman d'aventures pour la jeunesse, Bertrand Simard tente une mise en garde contre les stupéfiants. Mais comment présenter le monde du crime à des enfants sans les traumatiser ou les endurcir prématurément?

L'auteur développe sûrement son intrigue et ménage le suspense. Un jeune officier en vacances, Bertrand Simard, et sa femme viennent d'acheter un cottage. Un jour Bertrand surprend dans le bois des hommes en train d'enterrer un corps. Il décide de mener l'enquête. Il embarque dans l'aventure son ami Tom. L'enquête mène les deux hommes au mystérieux château de Lamorandière. Ils pénètrent dans une sorte de forteresse ultramoderne. Tom est tué et Bertrand fait prisonnier.

Bertrand apprend alors que le château est devenu un centre de production d'hallucinogènes chimiques, membre d'une organisation internationale dont le but est de "syndicaliser et de contrôler le monde criminel" Bertrand commence à subir un traitement de dépersonnalisation. Mais l'auteur dénoue la situation par un coup de théâtre.

La leçon est clairement donnée: les gens soumis à la drogue ou aux techniques de messages subliminaux deviennent des robots. Les trafiquants de drogues sont des criminels: ils recrutent de force leurs cobayes parmi d'innocentes victimes; ils n'hésitent pas à éliminer leurs complices maladroits et les témoins gênants; ils inondent de stupéfiants dangereux