

Childrens Book Review

Little Beauty

With a Kate Greenaway Medal nomination for Silly Billy, Anthony Browne's multiple awards and reputation for humorous yet sensitive picture books has made him one of the most popular children's writer/illustrators in Britain today.

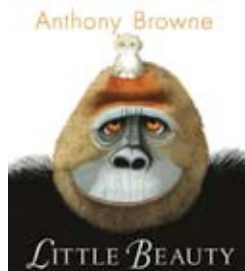
In his latest project he returns to his primary passion for gorillas, introducing the lonely, singing eponymous Gorilla who asks for a friend.

Entrusted with the company of a very small cat called Beauty, Gorilla is given a chance to show his caring side. Then one day, after a screening of King Kong, Gorilla gets upset and breaks the television. The keepers think this means he may be violent and decide to remove Beauty. Rather than lose her friend

and make him sad again, Beauty lies and takes the rap for her friend.

While such friendship is touching, perhaps the example of lying to those in authority to avoid repercussions is not one we would like to be suggesting to our children.

A disappointing end to an imaginative and socially useful book. A singing gorilla, a Beauty and the Beast friendship and the consequences of stereotype are the stuff of children's workers' dreams.



Anthony Browne
Little Beauty
(Walker Books,
Hbk, 2008)
Rrp. £10.99

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