

Antoinette Portis

# Wait



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As a boy and his mother move quickly through the city, they're drawn to different things. The boy sees a dog, a butterfly, and a hungry duck while his mother rushes them toward the departing train. It's push and pull, but in the end, they both find something to stop for.

Acclaimed author/illustrator Antoinette Portis' signature style conveys feelings of warmth, curiosity, humor and tenderness in this simple, evocative story.

## A Neal Porter Book

## Wait Details

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Author : Antoinette Portis

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## From Reader Review Wait for online ebook

### **Alyson (Kid Lit Frenzy) says**

In just two words, this perfectly captures the struggle between a busy mom and a curious child.

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### **Danica Midhil says**

I loved this gentle quiet book. Great reminder that children have different priorities than adults. Just different not worse. They are still finding wonder in all the colorful details in their everyday worlds that will eventually become wallpaper when we all grow into adults who need to get places at specific times. Having a young child is an opportunity to see all those bright, shiny details again. This mom takes the time to see the landscape that her son and she travel everyday. Really well done.

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### **KC says**

A wonderful tale of mother and son on the streets of the city trying to catch a train. All the while seeing all that can be seen.

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### **Sandy Brehl says**

On the surface, this is a simple concept book about the ongoing struggle between parent (hurry) and child (wait).

But countless complex visual and design elements make this a book of wisdom and love. The bold-line, deep-hued, left-to-right streaming images of a city provide momentum to the parent/child journey, alternating stark white background with saturated pages filled with details young eyes will adore.

This is a sort of love-letter to picture books as a format, in my opinion.

They can be seen as a quick passage from cover to cover, achieving a simple purpose of entertainment or information.

OR, in the hands of a child with a parent willing to say YES, they offer countless discoveries and hidden magic for those willing to WAIT and appreciate what is right before our eyes.

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### **Adrienne Pettinelli says**

I especially love the cover. And the mother's outfit. And the texture and color. And the message, even. This is one I keep picking up to look at again.

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### **Anna Fillmore says**

OMG!!! This picture book is set in Chicago! I am so excited. This never happens. Chicago is not named, but the skyline is recognizable, and I believe it is the Chicago el stop on the brown line. Satisfying rhythm to the back and forth tension between a mother-trying to catch the train- and son - wanting to look at so many interesting things. Brilliant.

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### **Edward Sullivan says**

The conflicting agendas of a mother and a preschooler are beautifully portrayed in this simple but rich visual narrative.

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### **Hannah says**

In this beautifully spare book, a mother and her child hurriedly walk through the city. The boy tries to stop to feed ducks, hold a butterfly, and taste the rain. In this push and pull, the only words they say are "Hurry" and "Wait." At the end, the mother and child find something that is definitely worth a WAIT. I recommend pairing this one with SIDEWALK FLOWERS and LAST STOP ON MARKET STREET.

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### **Jillian Heise says**

Some of the most impactful picture books are the ones without many words. Portis uses three words in such a simple way combined with charming illustrations to give a powerful reminder of the need to slow down and appreciate what is around us. For parents and children alike, it is one to share. Reminding the reader of the childlike wonder with which we can see the world. Will pair perfectly with Sidewalk Flowers and Something Extraordinary.

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### **Barbara says**

Pencil, charcoal, and ink illustrations with added digital color show the very different approaches to life of a toddler and his mother. As is typical with many adults, the mother is keenly aware of time and schedules, and keeps pushing her son to hurry. I imagine that she's taken this route one too many times, and like many of us, barely even notices what is around her. Meanwhile, her son is fascinated by everything they pass--the animals, the construction site, and the rain that is falling--and wants to wait and savor those moments. The final illustration shows the two finally in agreement as they stop to look at a rainbow in the sky. This picture book provides a gentle reminder to slow down once in awhile and pay attention to your surroundings since there might be plenty of things you haven't noticed and you might miss something extraordinary because of all that rushing around.

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### **Sandra says**

Mom is in a hurry. She holds the boy's hand . There are so many beautiful things to look at in the way, the boy keeps asking for stop at everything that catches his attention. But mom really can't stop.

Prettily illustrated and almost wordless, sweet is the best word to define this book. I could see my kids smiling at each page, looking for what was the intriguing thing the boy put his eyes on this time! I could see them relating with this curious little character. They faces saying "I'd have stopped to look too!"

Mom is probably late at this point. But some things are worth the waiting...

Age range suggested: 2 to 5 years old. (I caught my teenagers taking a look, though)

Check out more children's book reviews in my [Reviews in Chalk Blog!](#)

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### **Mindy Jones says**

Simple and so sweet.

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### **Cheryl says**

Damn these people who feel compelled to control every aspect of their lives, including exactly how many children to have and when, and also feel compelled to book themselves into being busy-busy-busy. Have we still not learned to stop and smell the roses, and to enjoy our time with our child by walking at his pace, noticing the things he notices? Why are books like this still seen as valuable?! \*I\* certainly don't think so, as I live simply and thankfully every day... and so I did not enjoy this book. Too bad, because Portis can do better. Even this concept could have been done so much better, and then maybe have been worth reading.

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### **Danielle says**

So well done. I found myself hurrying on the hurry pages and waiting on the wait pages, then going back to see the clues I hurried past.

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### **Carmen says**

This book has text consisting of only three words: 'wait', 'hurry', and 'yes'. The 'plot' is that a mother is leading her little boy by the hand through the city. Even at the end, it is unclear what their end goal or destination was. School? Home? I guess it doesn't matter. It's all about the journey. We don't get to see the starting or ending point.

Each page features either the mom pulling the boy along by the hand, saying urgently “Hurry!” or the boy attempting to stop and appreciate some everyday beauty by saying “Wait!” to his mom, who never listens, never stops, never allows him to bask in the wonder of the world around him – until the very end when she finally slows down enough so they can enjoy gazing at a double rainbow.

The boy sees a dachshund, he wants to pet it, but his mom pulls him away, looking at her watch. A construction worker waves at the boy, who says, “Wait,” but he is still being pulled along by his mom. [http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-0DI80\\_xjF5k...](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-0DI80_xjF5k...)

Then, he sees an old man feeding the ducks. He wants to feed the ducks, too, but his mom says, “Hurry!” They pass by a man in an ice cream truck. The boy obviously wants a rainbow Popsicle, but there's no time. The boy stops, open-mouthed in wonder, in front of a fish tank in the pet store window. But there's no time to enjoy looking at fish! Hurry! Then he wants to touch a butterfly he sees in some flowers. But his mom keeps walking! It starts raining, and the boy opens his mouth to catch the falling drops. His mom shoves him into a raincoat and keeps walking. “Hurry!” She drags him up the stairs to the train, but he wants to people watch. It's only when they are just about to board the train when she listens to her son. He tugs on her coat and says “Wait.” She turns around and they both enjoy staring at the double rainbow which has appeared. She finally says something other than “Hurry.” She says, “Yes. Wait.” THE END.

Not sure what this book is about. Are we supposed to be upset with the mom for being in a rush? Are we supposed to feel sorry for her not appreciating the beauty of life all around her? I don't. Sometimes you have to get to somewhere at a certain time (catching a train) and doing it with a child who wants to stop and gape at everything can be trying.

Are we supposed to feel sorry for the little boy, not getting to enjoy everything on his walk? He doesn't seem upset and he remains cheerful throughout the book.

The illustrations are simple and cutesy, but nice. I like the little subtle touches Portis puts in here. For example, when the boy is looking in the fishtank, we are seeing him through the other side of the glass, and a fish is swimming by just perfectly so that the fish's eye is taking the place of the boy's left eye. It's cool. Another special touch occurs when the boy is being dragged along and notices a bush covered in red flowers. We see him reaching out to touch a red flower. But when we turn the page, SUPRISE!, the red flower he was trying to touch was a butterfly. He noticed a pattern we didn't – if you turn the page back, each flower has five petals, and the one he was trying to touch has four. This is just another example of how aware the boy is of the world around him. One of the ladies passing by when his mom is leading him up the stairs to the train has an umbrella covered in red butterflies, adding joy and wonder because of what the boy has just seen four pages ago.

The dedication reads, “For my mom, who waited.” I think this is touching.

I gave this book to my (adult, female) friend and she did not like the book. She said the mom should take more time, leaving earlier to catch the train so she and the boy could absorb the world. She also hated how the mom was dismissing everything her son was trying to tell her – it was as if what he noticed and what he saw and what he wanted were not important to her. Also, my friend was angriest at the fact that it took a double rainbow for the mom to stop and look at something with her son. “Ducks and butterflies are magical, too. This woman is a [not very nice person]. She doesn't value his insights.” Well, I thought that was a bit extreme, but I thought she made some good points. I think it's important to take notice of the world around you and nurture a sense of wonder and curiosity in your child, and I think that's what my friend was saying.

Tl;dr – Even though there's not much 'to' this book - the text consists of literally three words, repeated over and over and over again – the children actually enjoyed it and praised it. I was surprised – it was too simple for my tastes, but who am I to argue with results? Still unclear about what this book's plot is, or message is, if there even is one. Stop to smell the roses? I don't know. I agree with my friend that it's important to stop and notice the little things, and it's important to engage with your child, but I also understand that the mom was rushing to catch the train.

Ages 0-4.

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