



The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, the Bard

Gregory Rogers

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A comic romp through Shakespeare's London featuring an intrepid little boy, a friendly bear, and-in the role of dastardly villain-the Bard himself.

What happens when a boy bursts through the curtain of a deserted theatre and onto the world's most famous stage? He lands on the Bard himself and the chase is on-through the streets of Shakespeare's London. This is a rare and inventive visual feast-a runaway story about a curious boy, a magic cloak, a grumpy bard, a captive bear and a baron bound for the chopping block. It is also a richly illustrated, dramatic and very funny tale of adventure and friendship.

The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, the Bard Details

Date : Published April 17th 2007 by Roaring Brook Press (first published January 1st 2004)

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Author : Gregory Rogers

Format : Paperback 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Sequential Art, Graphic Novels, Adventure, Fantasy, Humor, Science Fiction, Time Travel, Fiction, Animals, Historical, Historical Fiction

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From Reader Review The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, the Bard for online ebook

Claudia says

(SPL) A boy playing among the warehouses of London kicks a soccer ball into an abandoned theater. There he finds an enchanted cape that transports him back in time right onto the stage of one of William Shakespeare's plays!

(Claudia) Colorful cartoon-style story panels follow a self-confident little white boy and his anthropomorphic bear buddy through a fast-paced series of escapades in a historically accurate Elizabethan "theatre district" replete with colorfully-costumed nobles, tooth-challenged commoners, and numerous period details. Gr. 3-6.

(SLJ) This sophisticated romp will attract the eyes of intermediate audiences, and could serve as a good prelude to the study of Shakespeare and his times.

(Hornbook) The well-paced events are entertaining, the setting is atmospheric, and the characters are drawn with humor, affection, and style.

Kathryn says

This is a wordless picture book and the "comic" type format will be familiar to those who enjoy graphic novels. This isn't usually my favorite style of picture book so I'm being a bit generous in giving this four stars--I think it's worthy, but my enjoyment was maybe only three stars. That said, it's a fun introduction to the look and feel of Elizabethan London for youngsters. The concept of the boy time-traveling thanks to a theater curtain is quite fun and a lovely nod to the magic of theater.

A few PG warnings (my friend Chandra noted them so well in her review, I am going to copy!) "Rogers mentions that he has taken great pains to produce an accurate rendition of Elizabethan England so parents should expect some unpleasantness - the most notable of which are the infamous impaled heads on London Bridge. Also, it may be a tad disconcerting to have this be a child's first/only exposure to Shakespeare as he is presented as a rather frightening figure."

Catherine says

Author and Illustrator: Grergency Rogers

Age Recommendation: Recommended 6+ by publisher. But the older and more historical context children have the more they might understand.

Art Style: Sequential not unrealistic but detailed

Topic/ Theme: Friendship

Setting: Elizabethean England

Series: Boy Bear

I really like the ideas behind The Boy, the bear, the Baron, the Bard. For those of us who were raised with or now manga and sequential art, this is a wonderful book to give kids. To introduce them to something different from what they know but something you enjoy. Creating a shared experience particularly if the one introducing the book is an older sibling or another family member.

Given the lack of words, I can certainly see potential as well for storytelling and encouraging younglings to use their language and imagination to tell a parent or older sibling a story with the images as prompts.

The main theme is the friendship between unlikely people a modern boy, a bear and a Baron (who I assume is supposed to be Robert Dudley, Baron of Denbigh and Queen Elizabeth I's longtime favourite, the only man she would have married) as they are pursued by William Shakespeare. But there is a focus on exploring the world of Elizabethan London, with London bought alive. There is an astounding amount of research in the book.

It has a clever time travel mechanic. Emotionally there is a sad emotional undertone to the work, as there is to many time travel works. Both are demonstrated in intelligent ways, ways that a child could understand easily.

To me, this is a 4.5 star book, all that is missing to me is something for the older children, some historical context as to who the players and places were. Queen Elizabeth, William Shakespeare, Robert Dudley, the Tower of London, The Globe Theatre. Rogers says in his authors note that his interest is in sharing historical detail, why not encourage a love of Tudor and Elizabethan England in the next generation not only with fiction but by including some fact for when they are ready?

Dolly says

This is a terrific wordless graphic novel that is full of excitement, adventure and suspense. The historical aspects of the story are wonderful too, with Shakespearean times depicted and a theatrical theme. It's a fun way to explore old London.

The only thing that I found disturbing was the numerous heads on pikes in the middle of the book. While historically accurate and the illustration itself is not overly gory, that is one grotesque historical detail that could have been left out without affecting the story. (I am a poet and I didn't know it.) :)

AD says

I think I've found a new favourite picture book author/illustrator! I've never been a fan of wordless books, because I love words so much, but the wonderful stories by Gregory Rogers are so clever that I've been converted. This is a wonderful story of a little boy who is magically transported into the world of Shakespeare's England. It's fun, adventurous, and full of special friendships. Another great book for reluctant readers to get them hooked on the power of stories.

Miriam says

Cute wordless, comic-strip format picture book about a little boy who is transported back to Shakespearean times while playing soccer in an abandoned theater. I liked how the boy was unfazed by time travel, angry actors, severed heads, and wild animals.

The large number of frames per page may be a bit much for the attention span of smaller children.

Liz says

This wordless comic book style picture book tells the adventures of a boy who kicks his soccer ball through the window of an old theatre. There he is transported through time back to the globe theatre in Elizabethan England. He stumbles on to the stage of none other than the Bard himself, William Shakespeare, who isn't pleased at the interruption. As Shakespeare chases the boy through London the boy meets and frees a bear and a very timid baron. As the posse tries to evade the Bard they meet many interesting people and have quite an adventure! Finally just before the Bard catches our young hero he slips back into the theatre and is whisked back to the present day in the old theatre.

This book is so charming! I love the illustrations and how much is expressed in each picture. There are many wordless books but it always seems as though something is missing, with this book Gregory Rogers hits it out of the park with his detailed pictures that thoroughly convey the story. For readers who don't know about William Shakespeare a bit of background might be helpful to fully enjoy the story but even if you have no idea who is chasing the young boy you can enjoy the story and adventure. It's a great, great book. I would also encourage young readers to make up their own story to go along with the pictures. Have them tell you what they think is happening. *The Boy, the Bear, the Baron and the Bard* is a wonderful picture book that is great for young children and older ones who will appreciate the historical aspect of the story.

Bailey Bach says

This book tells a story all through its illustrations. In this story a young boy accidentally kicks his soccer ball into a theater. He goes to look for it and decides to have some fun. He dresses up and then jumps through the stage curtain and finds himself in Shakespeare's London on top of the Bard during a play. The boy tries to escape the Bard and runs into a bear and a Baron while making his escape through the town and they help each other escape. Will the boy make it back to the theater safely or will the Bard catch him and he'll be trapped in this alternate world. Find out in *The Boy, the Bear, the Baron, and the Bard*.

The illustrations in this book are very comic like. There were many panels on each page. This allows for the reader to follow the story more precisely. Some illustrations were also done in a giant two page spread which were done in immaculate detail. The illustrations were done very cartoon like and were very colorful. Although the story itself is not scary, some of the illustrations can be seen as a bit scary, especially the Baron. The illustrator did an amazing job making the illustrations very detailed so the story could be told very in depth with no words.

lucem says

CIP: A boy finds an enchanted cape in an abandoned theater that transports him back in time onto the stage of one of William Shakespeare's plays! A comic romp through Shakespeare's London featuring an intrepid little boy, a friendly bear, and-in the role of dastardly villain-the Bard himself.

There is a lot going on in this wordless picture book!! It is large size (not quite big book) and illustrations are in comic book/graphic novel style squares. The drawings are very detailed and the book is time consuming like a Where's Waldo or I Spy book. Elementary school children will be enthralled by pictures, but content/storyline maybe require an upper level school kid. I think college age Drama or English majors would enjoy, too. Lots of details about London, Shakespeare, Globe Theatre, Tower of London, etc.

Reviewed in School Library Journal (Spr 2005) and Book Links (Nov 2006).

Elizabeth Smith says

Rogers, Gregory. The Boy, The Bear, The Baron, The Bard. Connecticut: Roaring Brook Press, 2004. Print. Fiction, time travel, Shakespeare, Elizabethan era. In The Boy, The Bear, The Baron, The Bard a little boy gets swept into the Elizabethan era with a time traveling machine. He lands right in the middle of Shakespeare's play, causing a stir and making Shakespeare go mad and chase him all over the city. Along the way he meets different characters and after nearly being caught winds up back in his time. The author/illustrator has brought this book to life for the reader by deciding to have the book be wordless. The reader gets to create the text and use their imagination on a grand scale. I also thought it was amazing how the author incorporated history into the book in a way that young children can observe and learn. If I were to use this book in my classroom I would assign each student a page and have them come up with what they think the characters I thinking and saying in the story. After giving them some time to look at their page and create we will tell the story as a class.

Amanda Walz says

A wordless picture book that is rather sad.

Melanie says

After kicking his soccer ball into an old, abandoned theater building, a young boy heads in after it. After exploring his surroundings he discovers the costumes and props room. He begins to try on clothes and discovers a cape. With cape on he runs through the theater and through the front curtain...and finds himself transported to Elizabethan England.

Immediately he is pursued by William Shakespeare, the man who's play he interrupted. While hiding the boy discovers a bear locked in a cage, in shackles. He frees the bear and the two embark on a sight-seeing tour of London. They manage to see quite a bit before having to return to running. A prison provides the perfect cover for a few minutes, and inside they discover a desperate baron. After liberating the baron, the three

friends "borrow" a boat and are floating along the Thames when they encounter none other than Queen Elizabeth herself.

The baron and Queen become quite interested in each other while the boy and bear have tremendous fun. But it is not to last. A furious Shakespeare steals aboard, running off bear and boy again. Bear leaves boy to return from whence he came. Boy finds himself immediately pursued by Shakespeare...again. This time he runs back towards the theater and through the front curtain and back to his own time.

Mary says

Wordless book, the pictures tell the story.

Ages 5-9 per Amazon

Andrew says

Super cute story about a modern day boy who winds up in Elizabethan England, disrupting Shakespeare performing, and chased throughout London by the Bard himself. Along the way, the Boy befriends and saves a chained Bear and a Baron (who later regains his standing with Queen Elizabeth herself) and escaping back to his own time. This would be a great resource after studying some of English History and culture, because the illustrations actually depict an honest 16th Century London (complete with the realistic heads on spikes on the Tower of London), as well as the rats and plague victims. Don't misunderstand me, the humor of this WORDLESS comic-style book is very funny and colorful. I personally LOVE that the illustrators weren't afraid to show off history as it was without sugar coating it TOO much for kids. The book features many iconic places, like the Globe Theatre, London Bridge, Palace of Whitehall, Thames River and more!

Marcie says

My girls (ages 4 and 1 1/2) love this book. I wasn't sure it was appropriate because the book is pretty scary. The story is about a boy who is transported back to Elizabethan London through an empty theater stage. He is chased by Shakespeare throughout the story. The Bard jumps out of bushes and boats and he catches the cape of the boy in a very exciting climax to the story. Earlier in the story the boy and his bear sidekick save the Baron from being beheaded and there are lots of heads on poles as the bear and boy cross over a bridge. All of these illustrations are incomprehensible to the girls since they have no frame of reference and since there are no words to this book I just focus the story on the basic story of a bear and boy being chased. My 1 1/2 year old really likes the bear, especially when he gets his cape and my four year old really likes the escapes from Shakespeare. The illustrations are fantastic and they certainly move the story along at a fast pace. We have the book from the library but I will probably be buying a copy soon.
