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Sweet Moon Baby: An Adoption Tale



Synopsis

This is the story of one baby's journey from her birth parents in China, who dream of a better life for their daughter, to her adoptive parents on the other side of the world, who dream of the life they can give her. A turtle, a peacock, a monkey, a panda, and some fish shepherd the baby as she floats in a basket on a moonlit, winding river into the loving arms of her new parents. Perfect for bedtime reading, Karen Henry Clark's poetic text, reminiscent of a lullaby, and Patrice Barton's textured and gentle-hued illustrations capture the great love between parents and children and the miraculous journey of adoption.

Book Information

Hardcover: 32 pages

Publisher: Alfred A. Knopf; 1st edition (November 9, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375857095

ISBN-13: 978-0375857096

Product Dimensions: 10.4 x 0.3 x 8.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 56 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #528,089 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #210 in Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Family Life > Adoption #404 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia

Age Range: 3 - 7 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 2

Customer Reviews

PreSchool-K • A lyrical fantasy about a Chinese infant's magical trip to her adoptive parents. Her birth parents declare her "perfect," but are unable to provide for her. Thus they place her in a basket and set her adrift: "We must trust the moon. Only good things will happen to our daughter." Helped by a variety of animals as well as a beneficent-looking moon, the baby girl floats down the "winding river" to her adoptive parents, who have been preparing for her arrival by planting vegetables and trees, building a new bedroom, and buying books. Their hands are shown parting reeds to reveal her smiling up at them from her basket. The vibrant watercolors capture her journey and her delight in her new family and home. Although most youngsters will understand that the journey on the river is a fantasy, adults should be prepared for questions from literal-minded

children who may wonder why a baby had to make a solitary voyage and depend on the kindness of wild animals in order to reach her destination. Ann Turner's *Through Moon and Stars and Night Sky* (Harper, 1990) also features poetic language and tells the story from the child's point of view.

Clark's book would be a good choice where demand for adoption stories, especially those about international adoption, is strong. — Deborah Vose, East Middle School and South Middle School, Braintree, MA (c) Copyright 2011. — Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

"For a young child beginning to make sense of her past, *Sweet Moon Baby* offers a safe doorway into a deeper understanding." — *Adoptive Families* magazine

This is beautifully written and illustrated book. It captures the essence of a parent's desire to love and nurture a child and that child's ability to return love tenfold. It's a story about fate - the moon acting as a conduit, joining kindred souls, separated by only distance and the timing of a miracle. It also addresses pain. The inexplicable heartbreak of birth parents entrusting their most precious gift from G-d to a family unknown, far away. Their selfless act is one of abounding faith that their child will live a happier and healthier life. Karen Henry Clark creates a "level playing field" where one set of parents is not better than the other, and by the grace of destiny, a new and loving family is formed. For the adopted child, this magical journey affirms that she has always been loved from the moment she was born. We are left with the sobering reminder that in life there is both pain and sacrifice - those brave souls who dream and endeavor to provide a better life for their children, as well as those patient, loving souls who answer that dream.

As a school librarian, having worked with children for over 28 years I can say that *Sweet Moon Baby* is an excellent addition to children's literature. It is a story about adoption, but also a story about love. It is sweet, gentle, and very moving. Many adopted children have problems about their birth parents thinking that he/she (adopted child) was not wanted. This story explains to a young child that the birth parents wanted a better life for the child, one which these parents couldn't provide. The interpretation, therefore, is that the child was given up out of love...and of course, taken in out of love. The story is beautifully written and illustrated.

I am a pre-published children's author and illustrator and fell in love with this book last year. My soon-to-be 11 year old BOY also loves this book. He wants to read it every night before bedtime

(yes, he is almost ELEVEN!) It is beautifully written and illustrated-- Patrice Barton is one of my favorite illustrators. I'd highly recommend it, whether or not you've adopted a child (my boy is NOT adopted but still loves the fairytale-like story and the words and the pictures). Truly one of the best picture books of its kind.

Sweet Moon Baby is a love story. It is also a story of faith that shows a world where we are all connected. It is a story of hope that we all care enough to take care of one another. It is a story of difficult choices and yearning for a better world for our children. It is an adoption tale with a tender heart, and it is a story all children will enjoy. I know families who have adopted baby girls from China, and they love this book. I imagine that the parents in China who sent Sweet Moon Baby on her journey would love it as well. Together, the author and illustrator have created a gem for all of us to enjoy.

My very favorite adoption book, and I have many. So beautiful in words and illustrations.

Lovely story for adopted children or for children who are expected to be infertile

I love the illustrations in this book and the story chokes me up just a little each time I read it. It is lovely how the author explains the reason the baby needs a family in a simple and loving, non-assuming way. It describes tenderly the way the hopeful family looks and looks for their child and how the baby gets to them safely with the help the moon and the animals along the way. It talks of being happy and sad at the same time and refers to the birth family just a little at the end. I absolutely love this book and gift it to friends adopting internationally, specifically China.

Telling someone the story of how he or she came into the world can be told many ways. There are those who believe that facts are the only story that should be told. Then there are those who see the romance, the joy, the love in creating a tale that inspires imagination, captures the essence of folklore, perhaps incorporates the myths and pageantry of a child's heritage, and makes a birth something more than bare facts. To understand our humanity, our existence, our beginnings, fiction has always presented us with the best words, the best stories. In the end we are our stories and not simply a collection of facts. To any child who reads this, it's how the story is told that's important. Karen Henry Clark's Sweet Baby Moon gives the child the gift of adventure, the romance of myth, the nobility of becoming part of a family. It is a lovely fairy tale for the young who want to

know how they became part of a loving family without the gritty, ugly details that actually occur with adoption. This a magical story, with beautiful drawings by Patrice Barton. In the end, read this book, whether you or not you are part of an adoptive family.

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