2005

Gooney Bird and the Room Mother

Irene Halliday

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr

BYU ScholarsArchive Citation
Available at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/cbmr/vol26/iss2/12

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the All Journals at BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Children's Book and Media Review by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
Spirited, imaginative second grader Gooney Bird Greene is back—just as engaging as in Lois Lowry's 2002 novel featuring this highly entertaining young lady. Young readers will readily identify with the atmosphere and activities of a 2nd grade classroom as Thanksgiving looms. The children are hard at work on a pageant to celebrate, when two major problems present themselves:

1) Everyone wants to play the role of Squanto, but only one person can be chosen.
2) Cupcakes for refreshments after the pageant are supplied by the room mother, but the 2nd grade class is the only class in the school without a room mother.

The teacher, Mrs. Pidgeon, has a flash of inspiration. The role of Squanto will go to the student who finds a 2nd grade room mother (and therefore pageant cupcakes). Gooney Bird excuses herself for a few minutes from pageant rehearsal and returns to announce that she is Squanto; she has found a room mother, whose name must be INCOGNITO until the day of the pageant.

The reader, whether young or older, is joyfully transported right into a classroom of children as varied in personality and point of view, as unique, and, occasionally, as frustrating as those in a real classroom. Gooney Bird's irrepressible enthusiasm for story telling, new vocabulary words, and unusual clothing combinations, coupled with a "can do" attitude, make for a thoroughly likeable and engaging heroine. The pageant day excitement continues right up to the very last page, when the identity of the mysterious room mother is finally revealed in a touching and very satisfying finale.

The Middy Thomas illustrations add just the right touch to a humorous and slightly sentimental story that will certainly leave readers wanting another visit with Gooney Bird Greene!