



2008

Emmaline and the Bunny

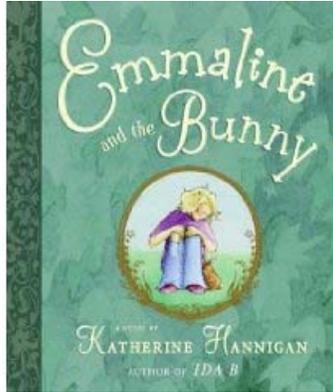
Marsha D. Broadway

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Hannigan, Katherine. *Emmaline and the Bunny*. Illustrated by Katherine Hannigan. Greenwillow, 2009. ISBN 9780061626548. \$14.99. 94 p.

Reviewer: Marsha D. Broadway

Reading Level: Primary, Intermediate

Rating: Dependable

Genre: Fiction; Fantasy fiction;

Subject: Orderliness--Juvenile fiction; Individuality--Juvenile fiction; Rabbits--Juvenile fiction;

Books--Reviews;

Emmaline is a messy child who lives in Neatasapin, where everything and everyone are too tidy. Emmaline likes to dig in the dirt, splash in puddles, and “scoot-skedaddle” under shrubs. Her parents correct her untidy behavior, and other children refuse play with her. Emmaline is lonely, and she wants a bunny to huddle, cuddle, and snuggle. So begins her quest to find a bunny. To claim the bunny, Emmaline is instructed by the Old One to return home and make an invitation, or an appropriate environment, to welcome the bunny and other wildlife. Emmaline persuades her parents and triumphs over an overbearing mayor.

Hannigan employs double and triple verbs, such as “stamp-stomped” and “thump, thump, thumping;” inverted modifiers, such as “happy, mostly;” and onomatopoeic words, such as “goo-googled” as elements of exaggeration; however, the word play becomes a distraction instead of an enhancement to the storytelling. The theme of individuality is supported by the back story of a town that is too tidy to be green and nature friendly. Hannigan uses watercolors to clearly show how drab the tidy town is and what colorful diversity is added by characters who are individuals, animals that enrich the surroundings, and an environment that is green. The final illustration of a verdant landscape with a wildlife-filled border bears the words, “You Are Invited,” to encourage all readers to be more environmentally conscience. Readers who relished *Ida B* (2004) will find fantastical natural elements but flatter, less-engaging characters in this chapter book.

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