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Creekfinding: A true story

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Review

Many years ago, a creek ran through the Iowan countryside. It teemed with fish and insects, attracting local wildlife to the creek’s plentiful banks. All of that changed when a farmer bought the acreage and bulldozed the creek away from its natural course. For years the land was farmed until a new owner, Mike, bought the property. Mike wanted to restore the parcel to its original wildness by bringing back the creek. Many thought Mike’s plans were foolish, but he moved forward, confident in his vision. After much research, hard work, and help, Mike found and restored the creek to its original glory.

Creekfinding is a unique children’s story quaintly illustrating Mike Osterholm’s real life undertaking. Though the narrative is simple, this story’s message is not naive. Martin takes on the massive debate of man verses the earth and effortlessly switches it to man working with the earth as she relates Osterholm’s tale. Using scratchboard, watercolor, and dyes, McGhee exhibits the colorful process of rediscovering and nurturing wildness. Similar to Henry Cole’s On Meadowview Street, Creekfinding will have young readers thinking how they can find and support their own wilderness in the places they live. A thought-provoking, fun nonfiction read for ages five and up.