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Shorty & Clem

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Book Review

Shorty & Clem

The lure of an unexpected and brightly wrapped package is almost universal, and Shorty the shortysaurus is certainly not immune to curiosity. There’s just one problem: the package is not for him! It’s addressed to his quail friend Clem. Shorty imagines what might be in such a fun-looking box, all the while trying his utmost to resist opening it. Unfortunately, he eventually gives in to temptation, opens the box, and must then apologize and explain his mistake to Clem. But as it turns out, Clem reveals a delightful secret that makes everything better: the package is actually a birthday gift for Shorty!

Shorty & Clem gives a highly relatable depiction of the temptation to open a package that belongs to someone else and presents an ethical resolution of the acted-on temptation. Shorty has an engaging personality which is amplified through the geometric illustration style. The artwork conveys meaning in onomatopoeic words and presents playful, expressive characters in a vibrant color palate. The big, bold characters, combined with an uplifting moral message and the book’s large, chunky font make Michael Slack’s book an appealing choice for preschoolers and elementary school children.