



[Home](#) > Fantastic Mr Fox

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# Fantastic Mr Fox

Books Reviewed:

[Fantastic Mr Fox](#) [1]

Issue:

[116](#) [2]

Reviewer:

[Clive Barnes](#) [3]

~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

This early Dahl title has been given new illustrations by Quentin Blake, the illustrator of Dahl's later novels. **Fantastic Mr Fox** is one of the most satisfying of Dahl's stories, not only in its content, in which greed, power and cruelty are outwitted by daring and cooperation, but in its elegant construction: the increasingly desperate attempts of the farmers to kill Mr Fox, followed by his sweet revenge and a great feast, which brings together all the underground animals ? while the farmers wait in vain above, dripping and shivering in the dark (?And so far as I know, they are still waiting?). If the countryside lobby has a banned books list, this should be top of it.

Blake can match Dahl for drama, panache and wit; and he has a gentleness and irony that softens Dahl's Grand Guignol vulgarity and adds another dimension. Not only does he humanise the vile farmers but he has a wry look at the fox family. Mr Fox looks suitably dashing in kerchief, purple frock coat and yellow waistcoat, but Mrs Fox looks improbably confined, and very mumsy, in a white polka dot smock dress with a high collar. Is this a suggestion that Dahl has reversed the images of human and animal to such an extent that the foxes have become almost a parody of the perfect male dominated nuclear family?

This edition is expensive, and is intended as a gift book, but you get at least one Blake colour illustration a page, which is not bad value.

Running Order:

53

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[1] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/childrens-books/fantastic-mr-fox>

[2] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/issue/116>

[3] <http://pop.booksforkeeps.co.uk/member/clive-barnes>