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How to Heal a Broken Wing

Books Reviewed:

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

In an almost wordless tale, Bob Graham transposes the story of the good Samaritan to the square of a nameless modern city, where dignified municipal buildings from another time are dwarfed by the blank glass faces of skyscrapers; and grey people hurry by head down, huddled up, looking neither right nor left and certainly not at the wounded pigeon with the broken wing at their feet. Only little Will sees him, picks him up and persuades his mum to let him take him home, where the pigeon is cared for until well enough to be taken back to the square and released. This is an unabashedly sentimental story, in which Will's initial act of compassion is illuminated by a golden glow. But so skilful is Graham at lifting it with humour and grounding it in real relationships ? see the consternation on the face of Will's parents when he presents them with the pigeon ? and at pacing the story and changing the point of view, from the pigeon's dizzying fall to the pavement to his soaring rise to wheel above the square, that it never stalls in schmaltz or mawkishness. This is a story that suggests an adult world which can seem wrapped in its own anxieties, indifferent, or even sometimes downright cruel ? see the fighters roaring silently in formation across the TV screen in Will's living room and the tank on the cover of the newspaper in the pigeon's cardboard box bed. In such a world, this simple good deed shines with a child's transforming faith. Will also appeal to older readers.

Running Order:

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