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The Yes

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

In days gone by, the world was a dangerous place and traditional advice was to proceed with caution: 'look before you leap'. In these more comfortable times (at least in our part of the world), despite our paradoxical obsessive fears for our children's safety, the accepted wisdom is that anyone can be what they want to be. This picturebook imaginatively conveys the injunction to say 'Yes!' to life. A solid red creature on three legs, the Yes, is beset by 'swarms, flocks and packs' of inky, squiggly, and smudgy Nos, as he sets out to explore the open spaces of Satoshi Kitamura's constantly changing idiosyncratic landscape. The Yes comes to a tree and wishes to climb it; he comes to a bridge and wishes to cross it; and so on. All the time the Nos, like flies, worry him with their doubts and warnings, but on he goes, defying them, until, climbing a hill, he shrugs them off altogether and there is 'only the Yes', monarch of all he surveys. It's an obviously didactic book but marvellously well-done by author and illustrator. Curiously, if the Yes had been female (like the book's author), the book might have been something more challenging than a statement of contemporary conventional wisdom.

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