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Battle Bunny

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Editorial Choice:

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

5

Battle Bunny is original, hugely enjoyable and, in what it assumes about the nature of boys, slightly disturbing. Fans of Jon Scieszka will not be surprised to see his name on the cover, because this is a book which plays with its expected format and slyly comments on the nature of storytelling. *Battle Bunny* looks for all the world like a run-of-the-mill, bland and slightly sentimental early reader, which its boy owner has outgrown and which he has imaginatively and extensively altered to tell a story that he finds much more exciting and in which he has a starring role. With a lot of crossing out, the addition of much hand written text and speech bubbles, and with elaborate tampering with the illustrations, *Birthday Bunny* is transformed into *Battle Bunny*, a Rambo-like figure whose motto is 'Power is Good. Power is Mine?'. In Alix's new story, this malevolent force goes (c)hopping through the forest, fighting every animal he meets, wielding or encountering megatron bombs, a chain saw, and robot killer bees (?to sting your butt?), and wreaking havoc on the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty. Only super-agent, and badly drawn, Alix can save the world from the devastation of the world's ecology and architectural heritage in a final birthdoomsday struggle.

This is a book which took me back to my childhood and the battles which my brother (not me!) drew on the endpapers of my mum's copy of **A Christmas Carol**. Both the original *Birthday Bunny* and Alix's adaptation are so convincingly realised, down to the illustration style and colour palette of the 'original' and its frayed edges, and the naïve anarchy of the inscribed story, that I can imagine unwary library staff being dismayed at the inspired felt pen crossings out and additions. If they worry that it gives the wrong message about how to treat books, they might also reflect on its celebration of the power of story and children's creativity.

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