Book Buddy, April 2024

“Word Up”

In April, we find nature blossoming and bursting to brilliant new life, inspiriting writers to create poetry that moves us with thoughtful wonder.

As a tie-in to nature’s rebirth, the Hive Queen has picked a trio of amazing books with a connection to stories and writing for her “Word Up” theme, each an absolute gem that will keep you glued to the page.

Why not carve out some time to lose yourself in a story outdoors, while enjoying our glorious spring.

Believe you, bee, the benefits will be bountiful.

Lotti might consider herself a loser if it weren’t for her love of literature. The little blonde with glasses is shy and doesn’t always fit with her buddies, in the classroom or on the playground. Solace comes for Lotti in the passion she has for books.

In “Books Make Good Friends,” by Jane Mount, the child shares some of the pluses reading provides: “Books can transport you onto the back of a unicorn, to the burrow of a tiny mouse, or to a shipwreck on the bottom of the ocean.”

No matter what activity Lotti takes part in, she’s always got a book along as a backup for down time—whether she’s hiking or cooking up a treat in the kitchen. When Lotti visits the library she not only leaves with a pile of books she can’t wait to crack open, she’s accompanied by a new friend who enjoys books as much as she does.

Using stacks of books, and characters and settings that come to life on pages that pop with color, this marvelous read highlights all the joy that books provide. Readers also might discover a title they’ve liked in the past on its pages and get ideas for other books to add to their must-read lists.

“The Little Book of the Little Brontës,” by Sara O’Leary and Briony May Smith, lovingly relates the true story of the Brontë clan, as children. The famed English family gifted us with classic books that have been embraced by generations of readers—books that include the much-loved “Wuthering Heights” and “Jane Eyre.”

The Brontë family had its share of tragedy, their mother passing when the siblings were quite small, and two of the little girls dying as well. Left to carry on was the Brontë father, and the siblings, Anne, Emily, Charlotte and their brother Bramwell.

To pass the time the children spent hours wandering the wild, windy moors of northern England where they lived. They were avid storytellers, and used their imaginations to create little books, folding and cutting paper, stitching the pieces together and using scraps of wallpaper to make covers.

When their father gifted Bramwell with a box of detailed wooden soldiers, “… the toy soldiers (became) the heroes of the stories they (shared) with one another.”

Rich, muted illustrations imagine the Brontës in their daily lives, and bring to light the bond that existed between them. Also included in this marvelous read are instructions that show how to make your own little book.

A talking typewriter is the star of “Olivetti,” a new book by Allie Millington that was written on a typewriter. After reading this charmer, about a magical machine named Olivetti, you’ll be clamoring to tap-tap-tap and hit that carriage for a return to yesteryear.

Olivetti lived in the Brindle household and was much-loved and used before The Everything That Happened. Ernest is one of four Brindle kids, the son of Beatrice and Alex Brindle. He remembers the good times when Beatrice wrote poetry and other writing on Olivetti. But life in the Brindle household changed after The Everything That Happened. Olivetti has been gathering dust, the family spends most of their time on their screens.

All except for Ernest, who walks around with his head down and his nose in his dictionary. The Everything That Had Happened affected sensitive Ernest who sees a therapist that Beatrice and Alex hope will help their son be happier.

Quite the opposite occurs when Ernest notices how his mother is affected by a phone call—dread that worsens when he hears news he isn’t supposed to. Right after that, his mother disappears, as does Olivetti.

Leave it up to Ernest to solve the mystery surrounding his mother’s disappearance in a touching book that’s a mixture of fantasy and real life rolled into one.