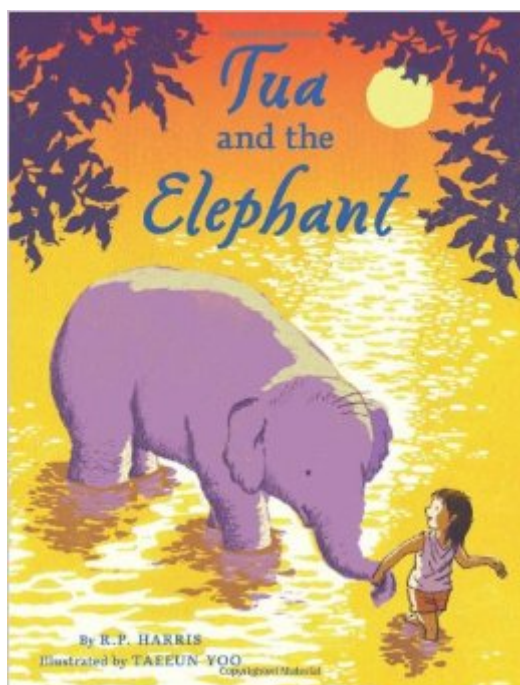


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Tua And The Elephant



Synopsis

One day, Tua makes an accidental acquaintanceâ€”one with wise, loving eyes and a very curious trunk. And this elephant needs her help. From the bustling night market to the hallowed halls of a Buddhist temple and finally, to the sanctuary of an elephant refuge, this clever girl and her beloved companion find that right under their noses is exactly what each has been searching for: a friend.

Book Information

Paperback: 208 pages

Publisher: Chronicle Books; Reprint edition (October 22, 2013)

Language: English

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Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 0.5 x 7.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 7.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (22 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #144,207 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #115 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Animals > Elephants #143 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Asia #5161 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Action & Adventure

Age Range: 8 - 11 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

Customer Reviews

I bought Tua and the Elephant because it is a Texas Bluebonnet nominee for 2013-2014, and I wanted it available for my fourth graders to read next year. Better still, I'd just finished The One and Only Ivan (also a nominee), which also features an abused elephant liberation story. Ta-dah! A chance to compare parallel plots - perfect for 9 or 10 year old readers. I'll probably still use it in my classroom as a companion to The One and Only Ivan, maybe, I don't know...Tua is a weak book. There are points about this book that will recommend it to readers. For one, it's set in Thailand and includes some Siamese words and a splash of cultural decoration. Yay for that; books set in faraway places offer the next best thing to travel. However, apart from mention of banana rotis and a Buddhist temple, little about the book opens the reader to Thai culture very deeply. The part about Tua receiving a bracelet from a boy at the monastery and passing it along to the village boy does touch slightly on the idea of the circularity of fate. The Thai setting and inclusion of elephants, saffron robes and mahouts seems more a flavoring than a main ingredient. Lost opportunity. Tua's

character (protagonist) does not develop. She begins as a spunky girl in Chiang Mai, has spunky girl adventures, and ends as a spunky girl who now lives on an animal sanctuary. She begins as an animal lover, loves Pohn-Pohn the elephant all through their adventures, and ends as the same animal lover she always was. Tua steals an elephant and never has a moment of self-doubt, shame, remorse, wondering whether she did the right thing, or thinking twice. No character in this story changes. Well, maybe the elephant develops because she overcomes her aversion to getting onto trucks.

A delightfully diverse middle grade read, *Tua and the Elephant* is a story about a young girl named Tua who "adopts" a young elephant, and their adventures together. Set in the bustling back drop of Thailand, Tua's story offers authenticity and richness to a culture not often found in books for young readers. I really enjoyed getting a glimpse into the culture through Tua's daily adventures through the market, and her wondering around. Debut author R.P. Harris did a superb job at capturing my attention with his descriptions of Thailand's sights, smells and sounds. He also includes some Thai words in his story. As a reader, I loved how easy it was for me to picture the setting that made up Tua's story, and feel like I was getting a glimpse into it. Tua is a character readers will enjoy getting to know. Not only is she a young female Thai protagonist, but she's a pretty clever girl. Given that her mother is often times working to support them, Tua is often times left to wonder the market and visit her other family members. The thing I loved about Tua is her big heart, which leads her to rescue Pohn-Pohn, the young elephant she finds and frees. I loved the bond these two had. It seemed like they immediately hit it off, and understood each other to a degree. It was refreshing to see a different kind of friendships formed in this story, and it was one that given the setting felt realistic to me. Tua rescues Phon-Phon from some pretty horrid guys who abused poor Pohn-Pohn, and end up pursuing Tua and Pohn-Pohn through out the book.

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