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The Prince Who Ran Away: The Story Of Gautama Buddha



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Synopsis

On a night more than two thousand years ago, a prince was born in India. He could have been the most powerful rajah in all the world. But instead, the prince chose to become a common beggar, seeking a way to end the suffering he saw around him. He knew riches could not end suffering. He learned that deprivation could not end suffering. Then, under an enormous spreading fig tree, deep in concentration, he found Enlightenment. He understood Dharma, the law governing all things. He had achieved Nirvana, the peace that triumphs over suffering. And he found this knowledge and understanding inside his own mind, nowhere else. He became the Buddha, and taught his way of ending suffering to all who wished to learn.

Book Information

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Age Range: 7 - 10 years

Grade Level: 2 - 5

Customer Reviews

Amiri's (Babri) traditionally drafted, brilliantly colored Persian miniatures illuminate this retelling of the life of Buddha in every sense of the word. Paintings framed with pools of lotus blossoms and banks of swirling clouds follow the young man born to a rajah and his queen, as he leaves behind a life of wealth and searches for enlightenment. Showing several events in a single panel, Amiri paints the prince leaving his horse and servant, donning yellow robes, and cutting his hair. Later, as he sits under the famous great Bo Tree, he defeats a multicolored army of wild-eyed demons who tempt his resolve, and begins to preach and attract followers. Rockwell's (Only Passing Through) accomplished prose ("His hair was black and shining as the night, and his skin was burnished dark

gold like the morning sun") blends factual information with fanciful miracle tales. This multilayered picture book can be read on many levels, as a classic quest by younger readers or as a spiritual text that will spark discussion and reflection for more sophisticated readers. Amiri’s paintings serve, like mandalas, as a source of much of its complexity and depth. Ages 7-10. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Gr 2-5-Combining aspects of folklore and biography, Rockwell creates a life of the Buddha. By using traditional elements and eschewing more contemporary historically based investigations, she establishes a smoothly flowing narrative that avoids unanswered questions and the need for a more complete backgrounding in the Hinduism out of which the Buddha came or daily life in ancient India. Because Buddhism is by definition a critical response to Hinduism, there are occasional moments in the book to which Hindus might take exception, but Rockwell does not aim to critique or denigrate Buddhism’s parent but rather to present Buddhism as the Buddha might have seen it. Students interested in religion and those prone to ponder why things are as they are will find this an interesting and enlightening introduction to one of the world’s chief religions. Amiri’s illustrations are bright, expressive, and well keyed to the facing text.Coop Renner, Moreno Elementary School, El Paso, TXCopyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

I read a great review of this years ago in "Tricycle" magazine. Finally, I bought it (quick service in good condition). My son, age 8, read it and did not like it. Siddhartha’s encounter with death made my son sad, and he never read it again.More recently, my younger son, age 4, asked to be read it. He was okay, but when my older son heard it he got sad, again. The next day he began thinking that, one day, he will die. I know every kid thinks this at some point, but it was interesting that this book was the trigger.Colorful and well told (perhaps too well told, for my son). Inspiring and not insipid.

This is a must read for any parent, auntie or friend of a child who is interested in the story of Buddha-how his parents tried to protect him from the world, how he rebelled and what the consequence of that was!! He truly gave his life for the benefit of all beings!!

This book is well written, well done and informs on the life of Buddah. Absolutely fascinating. My 4-year old daughter wants this story every other night...

This is the first children’s picture book I’ve seen about the life of the Buddha, so I find it interesting for that alone. It is beautifully, though at times a bit garishly, illustrated but with the Mara depicted in it, this might have been what illustrator Fahimeh Amiri was going for. Regardless of subject, however, I sometimes think there are simply too many colors in a few illustrations when I believe a subject demands subtler colorings, but this is likely just a matter of personal taste. Besides that, the illustrations are fine except for the one of Siddhartha in his ascetic phase when he, in this picture, resembles one of those extra terrestrials I’ve seen in movies before. Also, in the illustration of the prophet looking at baby Gautama’s feet, the feet look to be half the length of the baby’s body. I say these things not to be picky but because they distracted me from the story, which I think is relevant. There are some perfectly beautiful illustrations too, that do not distract with either too much color or with distortions. One is of the Buddha meditating under the Bo Tree, when Mara is sending down fierce rains and the king of the cobras shelters Gautama from the rain. There’s a color theme at work here, too, rather than the clash visible on other pages.The story proceeds as is known--prince is born, mother dies, prophecy induces king to shelter prince from sorrow and pain, prince finds out anyway and, after a brief marriage, sets out to find the cure of suffering becoming, ultimately, the Buddha. No surprises here. Suffice it to say, however, that my 7 year old son is mad about this book, stares with wonder at the illustrations and listens intently to the story.As an introduction to the Buddha for elementary school kids, it’s a good choice.

This is a wonderful, simple story about the life of Gautama Buddha with beautiful illustrations. It covers all the basic "facts" of the story of Prince Siddhartha. The images (and story) are strong and I worried my 5 year old might be frightened as she is easily upset. However, she LOVES this book and is fascinated by both the story and illustrations.

This is one of the most moving and best books for children about Buddha’s life. There are many other good books, but this one is really straight forward and clear in his life’s details. I would use this books with others to teach about Buddha, but this book would be the cornerstone while teaching about his life on Earth.

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