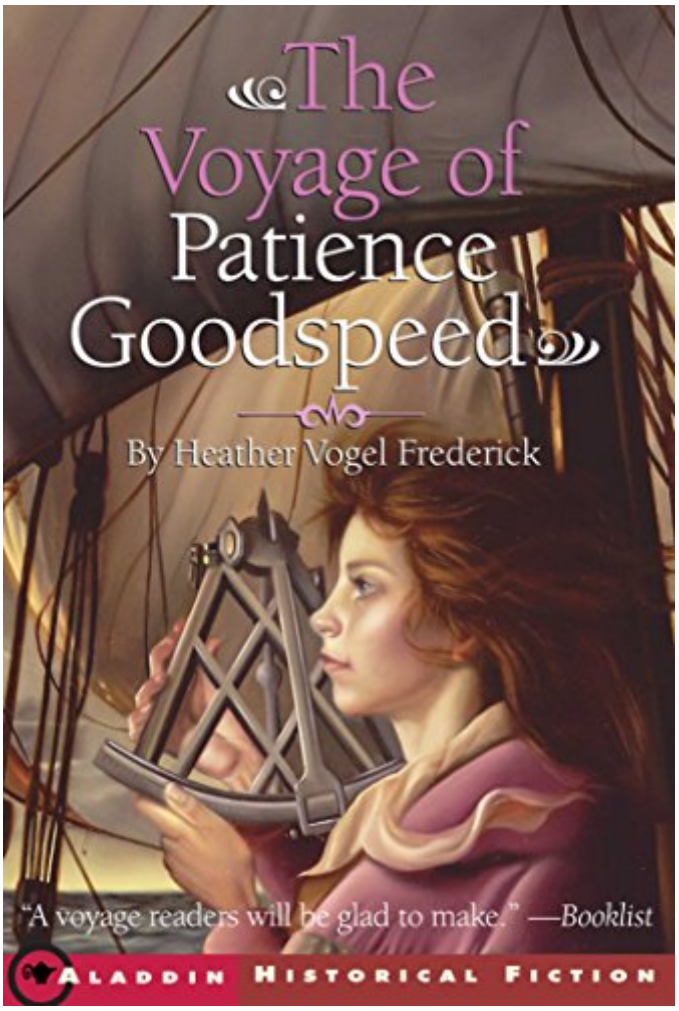
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The Voyage Of Patience Goodspeed



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Synopsis

October 1835. Patience Goodspeed, almost thirteen years old, departs from Nantucket aboard her father's whaling ship. Between kitchen duty and whale blubber stench, this voyage is far from a pleasure cruise. At least Papa lets Patience assist the ship's navigator since she's so good at calculations. But the smooth sailing doesn't last long. Mutinous mates maroon most of the crew, including Patience's father and brother, on a deserted island. Can Patience rescue everyone before it's too late?

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Customer Reviews

This is BY FAR the most amazing book I have EVER read, SUPER clean, terribly humorous, and it can be read over and over and over again, which is not something I can say for every book.

This is a great book to encourage middle grade girls to pursue their interests, even if they don't get parental encouragement.

I am reading this book now with my 3 kids (ages 10, 7, and 6) and we are thoroughly enjoying it. The story line is fun and captivating for myself and my children. But best of all is the writing itself. The author uses a lot of great descriptions and metaphors and it is a GREAT book for teaching/addressing those skills with young writers.

I read this book to my 8 year-old daughter and 6 year-old son and we thoroughly enjoyed it! I enjoyed reading it as much as they enjoyed listening to it. My daughter tried reading the book herself and had some trouble with it as she didn't understand what parts were diary entries and what parts were narration, and also some of he words were a bit old-fashioned--appropriate to the setting, however. But it was really very easy to know what was a diary entry as it was italicized.It's a great adventure and the girl, who is initially dismissed by her father, is the hero.

My daughter (13 years old) really liked this book...she said it was a good story!

One of my favorite stories! Great to have uplifting stories about fantastic girls!

Thirteen year old Patience Goodspeed accompanies her father aboard his whaling vessel during the mid-1800s. There she learns about life aboard a ship and assists the cook. It isn't until a new first mate comes aboard and stirs up a mutiny that things begin to pick up. Patience's father and the loyal members of the crew are marooned on an island and it is up to Patience to find a way to defeat the mutinous crew and rescue her father.I entered this book with the hope that Patience would be another Charlotte Doyle (from Avi's excellent "The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle"), and while that might have been an unfairly high standard to set, Patience didn't even come close. Patience is bland with no strong or admirable characteristics. There isn't anything wrong with her, but she doesn't shine or stand out in any way.The plot description on the back of the book made the story sound like it was going to be an exciting adventure, but it takes almost Ãƒâ Ã Â of the book before the mutiny even occurs. Everything prior to that point is a slow and uneventful account of life aboard the ship. This could have at least been interesting in an educational way, but there aren't enough details or explanations that teach the reader anything. Instead, Patience bakes a lot of biscuits and wins over the faceless crew by being vaguely nice and cooking things for them.When the mutiny and marooning finally did occur, they were resolved much too quickly and easily. Everything was handled too conveniently and there was very little suspense. We also never got to

experience or hear about what it was like for her father and the crew who were marooned.I may be overly biased because I read and loved the similarly plotted Charlotte Doyle, which was leagues above Patience in writing quality, character development, historical facts, and engaging plot. Still, even without the comparison, the characters, writing, and plot were weak. The book was ok, so I don’t recommend against reading this book, but I don’t recommend it highly either.

I consider myself quite the reader of children’s books. I devour the puppies with a great deal of relish and smacking of the lips, but there are some genres of kiddie lit that I simply do not know a whole lot about. Like children’s historical novels that are about whaling. Honestly, if you were to sit me down in a small darkened room with a single light bulb over my head and a piece of paper before me reading, "List every children’s novel ever written about whaling or a life at sea", I’d be up a creek. I picked up, "The Voyage of Patience Goodspeed", on a lark and found that this was one of the first books of this kind I’d ever encountered. Now, normally a tale of a child on a whaling vessel would contain a male protagonist or, alternatively, a girl protagonist disguised as a boy. Author Heather Vogel Frederick has taken an entirely different tack, however. In this book you see the world of seafaring through the eyes of a typical New England twelve-year-old. And while this is not the best written work of historical fiction ever conceived, you can tell that Frederick’s heart and soul went into this puppy.Patience Goodspeed is not happy. Not happy at all. It was bad enough that her mother died only a few months ago. It was bad enough that her father, the captain of a whaling vessel, was gone during that time and has only just returned. And it’s bad enough that he’s now so awash in misery and depression that he hardly pays attention to his brood. But now, suddenly, Captain Goodspeed has decided that Patience and her little brother Thaddeus are to accompany him on his next three-year voyage at sea. This jars violently with Patience’s own plans to stay in Nantucket and learn under the tutelage of the fabulous teacher Maria Mitchell. But when you’re a girl living in the 1830s, there’s not a lot you can do to prevent yourself from doing what those around you think is best. So off Thaddeus and Patience go on their father’s magnificent Morning Star. On their voyage they will encounter frightening storms, magnificent hunts for whales, death, fair sailing, boredom, mutiny, and celebration. And Patience discovers that her skills in mathematics have a practical application in the world of navigation and sailing as well.First of all, kudos to author Frederick for giving us a female protagonist who’s good at math. Girls are often fabulous at this skill (myself excluded) but it’s rare that you see a math whiz in a work of children’s fiction. So well done there. As for the book itself, it’s pretty good. I’m inclined to describe it as a kind of a "Moby Dick" for kids. Unfortunately, when I say that I mean it fully. Like Herman Melville’s classic, this book contains

quite a bit of dull ship information that has a tendency to slog down the action. Consider, for examples, sentences like, "Directly opposite, on the larboard or port side, is my boat. In front of it is the waistboat, which belongs to Mr. Chase". Fortunately, Frederick includes a glossary of whaling terms at the back of her book. She also doesn't rely on such passages too often, which is a relief.The writing itself is rather good too. You understand Patience's anger right at the start (though after seeing what she and her brother go through you still have to question their father's sanity in bringing them along). Thaddeus, unfortunately, is prone to falling out of windows and getting into typical "adorable child" type mischief. He, I could have lived without. And I did find it a little difficult to suspend my disbelief when Patience and Thaddeus ran afoul of some of the sailors aboard their father's ship. How believable is it that these kids would live in fear of two scalywags when their father is the freakin' ship's captain? Finally, I found it a little odd that Captain Goodspeed was just so doggone.... good. I mean, we're talking about a captain of a whaling vessel. Though brief mention is made of men being whipped with a cat o' nine tails, no one in this book ever is (including the mutineering jackanapes once caught). This is fairly hard to believe. I can only assume that Frederick left out such passages so that the captain would remain unambiguously good rather than a complex character. More's the pity.How interesting will kids find the world of whaling in this day and age? Fairly, I think. Despite the occasional dead patch, Frederick's first children's book (for so this art) is a lovely little work. In fact, I was saddened by the lack of a bibliography at its end. Each chapter begins with a lovely passage about whaling or sailing from a variety of different texts. A collection at the book's end of the full names and authors of those texts would not have been out of place. Here's hoping that in future Patience Goodspeed books such an action will be taken. Otherwise, I do feel that whether you've a boy reader or a girl reader on your hands, "The Voyage of Patience Goodspeed" will remain a crowd pleaser, regardless of gender. It has an occasional slip here and there, but all in all it's a good egg. Recommended indeed.

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