



How the Elephant Got Its Trunk : A Retelling of the Rudyard Kipling Tale

By Jean Richards

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

PreSchool-Grade 3-A simplified and sanitized retelling of Rudyard Kipling's classic. Long ago, when elephants had only bumps for noses, a curious young elephant is determined to find out what crocodiles eat for dinner. When the youngster sticks her nose out too far, a hungry crocodile seizes it and stretches it into the long trunk that elephants have today. This tale is no substitute for the original, as it lacks Kipling's rich use of language and subtle humor. Richards eliminates all mention of the Elephant's Child's many spankings, for example, or misuse of words such as "promiscuous." However, this picture book does make the story accessible to a wider audience. Children can enjoy it either through independent reading or as a read-aloud, and it could easily be adapted for creative dramatics, reader's theater, or puppet plays. Gorbaty uses stencils and rolled ink to create bold, colorful scenes with simple shapes, and the spreads are easily seen across a room. Unfortunately, the title of the original story and its source, *Just So Stories*, are not mentioned.

Eve Ortega, Cypress Library, CA

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About the Author

Jean Richards is an actress and the author of several children's books, including *God's Gift*, a Book-of-the-Month Club Main Selection, illustrated by Norman Gorbaty. She has recorded over 200 children's books and is a graduate of the Yale Drama School. Ms. Richards hopes people will read this book aloud with lots of expression and many voices. She lives in New York City.

Norman Gorbaty is the illustrator of *Earthdance* and *God's Gift*, among other books for young readers. An award-winning graphic designer, he received his master's degree in fine arts from Yale University and has taught at several colleges and universities. Mr. Gorbaty lives in New York City with his wife, Joy.

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