



The Faithful Friend

Robert D. San Souci , Brian Pinkney (Illustrator)

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Clement and Hippolyte are handsome, sharp-witted, and as close as brothers. When Clement falls in love with enchanting Pauline, he bids Hippolyte to join his quest to court her, and the two friends set out toward danger and adventure.

Pauline is ward of the mysterious Monsieur Zabocat -- a plantation owner reputed to be a *quimboiseur*, a wizard -- and, defying his wishes, Pauline joins her new fiancé and his friend on their trek home. But the fruited fields and forests they traverse hide dark forces plotting to destroy the couple...and one night -- *Tam! Tam! Tamtam!* -- the distant sound of a drum lures Hippolyte into a deadly trap that forces him to choose between his friend's safety and his own.

Robert D. San Souci and Brian Pinkney again combine their talents to bring to life a West Indian folktale that draws upon African, European, and South American traditions and imagery. The result is an extraordinary tale of romance, intrigue, and incomparable courage in which the truest of friends remain faithful to the *very* end.

The Faithful Friend Details

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ISBN : 9780027861310

Author : Robert D. San Souci , Brian Pinkney (Illustrator)

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Download and Read Free Online The Faithful Friend Robert D. San Souci , Brian Pinkney (Illustrator)

From Reader Review The Faithful Friend for online ebook

Chrissy Ashoo says

The Faithful Friend is a beautiful retelling of a traditional West Indies folktale. Clement and Hippolyte are two inseparable friends who live on the island of Martinique. Clement falls in love with a woman named Pauline and Hippolyte agrees to join his friend on his journey to ask for her hand in marriage. Pauline's uncle, Monsieur Zabocat, is not happy about the arrangement. Monsieur Zabocat is said to be a quimboiseur (a wizard), and casts a spell on the couple as they head back to their town of Le Vauclin. To prevent the wedding, he leads them into many deadly traps. Hippolyte realizes that his friend is in danger and he puts his life on the line for his friend. This Caldecott Honor and Coretta Scott King award winner is a beautiful tale of loyalty, courage and love. Robert D. San Souci is an amazing storyteller and the illustrations by Brian Pinkney are phenomenal. Together, the two create a magical, diverse story of friendship that captivated me from start to finish.

This would be an intriguing read aloud for an upper-elementary classroom. This story lends itself to great discussions about friendship and morals. I feel young children will be engaged with the "magic" sprinkled throughout the book. Students would have fun learning about Caribbean culture and vocabulary.

Folklore is not a genre I tend to gravitate towards, however when I saw that this was a Caribbean tale, I was intrigued. I would highly recommend this book to folklore enthusiasts and those who love a "good over evil" type of story. I loved this book and its message of kindness and doing the right thing!

David says

Rife with rich imagery and dark magic, this wonder tale takes place around a sugar plantation on a Caribbean island in the late 1800s. A glossary that includes pronunciations is found on the copyright page to help reader get through the culturally appropriate language that is used. It should be mentioned this book is a Caldecott Honor Book--the pictures are intriguing. One of the two male protagonists travels to court a beautiful woman at the dismay of her evil uncle, Monsieur Zabocat. As the story unfolds, three "zombies" appear to cast spells to kill the young couple—three different times. The other young male protagonist is aware of the magic and successfully thwarts the evil. In the end of the story, the second young man is forced to reveal his knowledge, causing his death. Faithful friendship leads to sacrifice, and in the end an earlier good deed resurfaces to allow triumph over evil. This would be a great story for second or third graders, especially tying Halloween into a unit on folklore.

Melki says

A wonderful story of friendship in the face of adversity. I really liked Brian Pinkney's scratchboard illustrations - very unusual.

Katie Fitzgerald says

I was surprised by how much I liked this strange little book about a friend who does everything he can to save his friend and his intended bride from a zombie curse. It involves just enough supernatural elements to be creepy, but it also seems completely plausible. I love the Caribbean setting and the incorporation of the language of the West Indies. This would be a great read-aloud for some of the older elementary groups who visit my library, and it will add some diversity to my repertoire. I will definitely visit this one again in the near future.

Teegan Hite says

The Faithful Friend, by Robert D. San Souci is a West Indian traditional story, which highlights the journey of two close friends, as one of them goes to find and bring back his bride. This book could be classified under the subgenre of a fable because its purpose is to inform its readers about the importance of being a true friend. This lesson is taught throughout the book, but it is especially displayed at the end where one friend sacrifices his life for the life and happiness of the other friend and his bride.

The plot for this story is captivating and the characters encounter many challenges along their journey. Although this format or basic plot line for a story can be common among literature, the characters encountered unique challenges like ghosts and curses of being turned into stone. These obstacles faced by the characters made the story interesting to read and gave a familiar story line a new twist.

I also really enjoyed the illustrations used in this book. The pictures are bright and detailed, which draws in the reader's attention and helps add to the story. The pictures are realistic, which help the story feel more real, even though many of the events in the story are probably not realistic. Brush or pencil strokes are also shown throughout the pictures, creating texture and showing movement of the characters. Overall, *The Faithful Friend*, by Robert D. San Souci was an interesting children's book to read and it taught an important lesson about being a true friend.

SamZ says

1996 Caldecott Honor - Favorite Illustration: When the three zombies are cursing the mango tree and Hippolyte looks on from the bushes.

This is a wonderful re-telling of the Faithful Friend story. I especially enjoyed the author's note at the end where San Souci lists his sources and tells why he chose this particular setting/retelling. I love the way that the boys' kindness and thoughtfulness is repaid to them at a later date.

Dolly says

This is an intriguing tale of loyalty, courage, and love. The story has a Caribbean setting and the illustrations really complement the story. It's a fairly dark tale that is based on a classic Grimm story. We really enjoyed reading this book together.

This book was selected as one of the books for the November 2016- Caldecott Honor discussion at the Picture-Book Club in the Children's Books Group here at Goodreads.

Stefanie Burns says

This was a tale I never heard before. The note at the end said it can be traced back to Grimm's fairy tales though this one is a Martinique version. I thoroughly enjoyed it. The text and illustrations complemented each other nicely and both enhanced the other. This is one I would put in my fairy tale repertoire. It's different enough to peak interest, but follows a fairy tale theme which well support readers too.

Sara says

The Faithful Friend is a complex picture book in the folklore genre and would be a good fit for third grade. The book won the Caldecott Award in 1996. This book is about two friends, of different races, who remain faithful to each other despite being tested. One of the friends, Clement, falls in love with a woman whose uncle, a quimboiseur, does not approve of their relationship. The uncle tries to destroy the couple by cursing them. Hippolyte, the other friend, learns about the curses and risks his own life to save the couple. In the end, Clement shows the same loyalty to Hippolyte and the uncle is held responsible for his actions.

Third grade English language arts standards require students to analysis folktales for a central message and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text. This folktale would be a good fit for this standards because of the relevant theme of friendship and loyalty. Students could examine how loyalty is shown throughout the events in the book.

This was a WOW book for me because despite the many differences between the two boys, they were almost like brothers. The themes presented in this book can lead to valuable classroom conversations and teach students what it means to be a good friend. The illustrations also enhance the overall effect the book has on the reader.

Melissa Goto says

A shining example of loyalty and friendship, The Faithful Friend brings a West Indian folktale to life through a well written story accompanied by beautiful, exotic illustrations. Despite drastic disparity in class and race, Clement and Hippolyte are as close as brothers, and they go on a suspenseful adventure together to win over Clement's true love, Pauline. The trouble begins with Monsieur Zabocat, Pauline's disapproving uncle, who curses the trio's journey home in order to prevent Clement from marrying Pauline. Hippolyte alone knows of this secret curse, and this knowledge forces him to choose between Clement's safety and his own. Through Hippolyte's sacrifice for Clement, and Clement's return of the favor, the two reflect the irreplaceable value of friendship and loyalty until the bitter end.

Students in upper-elementary grades will be enthusiastic about this tale, and the book is perfect for an engaging read aloud for the whole class. Beyond an entertaining story though, The Faithful Friend delivers a treasurable moral for students. The actions of Hippolyte and Clement teach lessons of loyal friendship, sacrificial love, and the ultimate power of being selfless. These are positive traits that can be instilled in our students as they are inspired by the events and characters in this folktale. Additionally, this story will

heighten students cultural awareness as the tale takes place on a Caribbean island and specific vocabulary of that culture is infused throughout the book. Finally, the note at the end explaining the origin of the story proves informational for teachers and students alike.

After reading this book, I said "WOW" purely because of the lasting effects felt from the folktale itself. With an incredible story of friendship, this book makes readers of all ages and backgrounds internalize the importance of caring for others and emphasizes how that deep bond can make you go to great lengths to protect those who you love. I particularly enjoyed the unique setting, which was unfamiliar to me and added to the intrigue of the story. Throughout the story, I was hooked as the tale traveled on a thrilling path, and I was left touched by the satisfying conclusion.

Rosemary Sullivan says

What would you sacrifice for a friend, especially a friend who is in love? This story, based on a West Indian folktale is so romantic and exotic. It explores the themes of friendship and courage on the lush island of Martinique in the Caribbean Sea.

Clement and Hippolyte are such close friends, they are practically brothers, having been raised together from an early age. It is a friendship that crosses racial and class barriers. Clement falls in love with a painting of beautiful Pauline and vows that he must marry her. He asks Hippolyte to journey with him to the other side of the island so that he might court her. Among Hippolyte's reservations is the rumor that the girl's uncle, Monsieur Zabocat, with whom she lives, is a quimboiseur or wizard. But like a good friend Hippolyte agrees to undertake the trip so that Clement may find happiness.

Hippolyte's greatest fear comes true. After Pauline agrees to Clement's proposal, the disapproving, vengeful uncle banishes them from his house. Under an ominous night sky, the three venture home. But Hippolyte is the only one who knows the dangers of a life-threatening dark spell. Will he be able to keep both himself and his friend safe? Will Clement and Pauline survive to marry?

Robert D. San Souci's writing in this book just sweeps you into the story, where love and magic are as vivid and ripe as tropical fruit. There is a glossary at the front of the book to explain the French and Creole words as well as a further exploration of the story's origins at the back of the book, which adds to the richness of the cultural experience for the reader.

The sentences inspire a desire to travel there. "Everywhere vivid blossoms blazed against the bright green of sugarcane and banana and pineapple fields and the deeper green of distant mountains. It was a perfect setting for the young men's high spirits."

The illustrations by Brian Pinkney capture the beauty of such descriptions, from the verdant, untamed, mysterious countryside to the vast blue sea and sky. I delighted in the walled entrance of climbing roses and stone pathway to the plantation home where Clement and Hippolyte grew up together. The wraparound porch at Monsieur Zabocat's house looks inviting, even if its owner is anything but.

Ronyell says

“The Faithful Friend” is a Caldecott Honor Book and a Coretta Scott King Award winning book from master storyteller, Robert D. San Souci along with illustrations by Brian Pinkney. This story is about how Hippolyte, a faithful friend of Clement, tries to save his friend from the misfortune that occurs to him when Clement tries to marry Pauline. “The Faithful Friend” is definitely one of the greatest books about friendship ever written for children.

Robert D. San Souci has done a fantastic job at writing this book as it is based off the classic Brothers Grimm tale, “Faithful Joannes.” Robert D. San Souci has successfully delivered the message about how a true friend will help a friend in their time of need as Hippolyte stayed loyal to his friend Clement in order to protect him from the evil Monsieur Zabocat. Brian Pinkney’s illustrations are truly magnificent as the characters seem to glow in every page and even though the characters have some scratchy edges to their structures, they look extremely realistic and colorful that will mesmerize children to no end. The images that stood out the most in this book was the image of Pauline, Clement and Hippolyte leaving Monsieur Zabocat’s plantation in the middle of the night as the sky is clear blue and the characters effectively glow against the small moon in the image.

“The Faithful Friend” is the perfect for children who want to learn more about what it takes to be a true friend and who loves romance. I would recommend this book to children ages six and up since the book is a bit too long for smaller children to handle and there are some Caribbean words such as “Bonjou” and “quimboiseur” that younger children would have trouble understanding.

Review is also on: Rabbit Ears Book Blog

Jenny says

This is a wonderful folk tale based on a retelling from Martinique. I appreciate San Souci's author's note explaining the background of the tale. In this tale, two friends set off so that Clement can court a beautiful young woman, Pauline, the niece of Monsieur Zabocat. Zabocat is wicked and jealous and uses three zombies to attempt to kill Pauline and Clement but Hippolyte is a faithful friend and saves them three times despite the personal cost. I love that this friendship is a shared friendship. Hippolyte is a faithful and self-sacrificing friend...but Clement is just as faithful and self-sacrificing. I love the wonderful illustrations and the interesting setting and details in both the text and illustrations.

Chris says

Robert D. San Souci's Faithful Friend is a Martinique's version of the Faithful John, the Grimm story.

I like this version far more. In part, it is because of the ending. But also because the woman in the story, here Pauline, is far more active in this version.

Manybooks says

Robert D. San Souci's The Faithful Friend presents an enchanting and exquisite Caribbean variant (well actually, more a French Caribbean derivation, from the Island of Martinique) of primarily folktale type 516 on the Aarne-Thompson registry (*Faithful John, der treue Johannes*, which is probably its most universally known title, as collected/presented by the Brothers Grimm). And being much familiar with the Grimms' tale, I immediately and with considerable pleasure did notice the numerous and striking similarities between it and The Faithful Friend.

That being said, this Martinique variation of folktale 516 is actually in many ways a combination of two distinct folktale types, as there are also evocative and intriguing vestiges of folktale 505/506 present (*The Grateful Old Man, The Grateful Dead*) due to the fact that Hippolyte and also Clement (as well as Pauline) are ultimately saved by the reappearing beggar to whom they had given a proper Christian burial on their journey to Pauline's Uncle's mansion (and who has now received express permission by *le Bon-Die, le Bon-Dieu, the good Lord*, to return to earth to demonstrate his gratitude by helping Hippolyte, Clement, and Clement's bride Pauline, whilst also destroying Pauline's uncle, the evil magician Monsieur Zabocat and his power, his influence, once and for all). And really, as much as I have always enjoyed the Grimms' tale of *Faithful John*, I actually do now rather prefer the ending in The Faithful Friend, as the former ending, with the rescue, the restoring of faithful servant John to life at first being contingent on the required blood sacrifice of the prince and his princess' two children (to which the couple does readily agree, and it is ultimately the simple act of agreeing, that mere willingness to sacrifice the children that allows faithful John to be released from his bondage) has always seemed a trifle too potentially gruesome and strangely Old Testament to me (reminding me of God's command to Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac).

Robert D. San Souci's adapted narrative reads smoothly and touchingly, harkening both to the European origins of The Faithful Friend (the whole basic scenario, the fact that Hippolyte saves Clement and Pauline three times, and must, after being forced to publicly speak of his actions, of why he has acted such as he did, be turned to stone) and to distinctly Caribbean (and with that, of course, also potentially African) themes and influences. The drumming, the zombies, the entire scenario of the returning deceased beggar at God's command to show his gratitude to both Clement and Hippolyte moves The Faithful Friend far beyond a mere reimagining of a European *Faithful John* like offering (combining not only different folklore traditions, but also the Roman Catholic concept that doing good deeds, being helpful, caring, even to strangers, to an abandoned and deceased beggar's corpse will have or at least can have positive consequences for ALL and sundry).

As to Brian Pinkney's accompanying illustrations, they are simply glorious and as descriptive, as stunning, and with that, as informative as the author's text (as the printed, the recounted words of Robert D. San Souci's adapted narrative). Not only do the illustrations present an evocative, atmospheric feeling and scope of and for the Caribbean, of and for 18th and 19th century Martinique, they also and often rather expand on the narrative, the recounted plotline (showing visually what the text only hints at and sometimes does not even actually portray). For example, Brian Pinkney's illustrated zombies are NOT the standard modern depictions of zombies as gruesome monster like entities with rotting flesh. No, they are depicted as three gorgeous and in many ways enticing looking young women, three witches perhaps, but really, they are basically three beautiful women who as zombies are completely under the spell of the sorcerer, the magician who made them into his acolytes, his minions. The three are thus not depicted, not illustrated by Brian Pinkney as physically demonic looking entities, but simply as human beings under the all encompassing zombie spell of Monsieur Zabocat (and really, truly, that is what zombies originally were considered, were believed to be, normal, everyday humans under the spell and command of a wizard, a sorcerer, living, but

existing with no free will of their own, obligated, forced to perform their master's bidding).

A wonderful and magical, perfect marriage of text and image (highly recommended to and for anyone, both children and adults, and more than well deserving of the Caldecott honour destination it received for Brian Pinkney's pictorial renderings), the detailed and informative author's note at the back is an appreciated and wonderful added bonus (much increasing the folkloric, the teaching and learning values of The Faithful Friend). And although much of the supplemental information presented by Robert D. San Souci is, in fact, already known to me personally, I remain very much pleased and thrilled that there exists such an author's note, that such vastly informative an author's note has indeed been included (and when I remember the to and for me rather lacking and barely adequate author's note in San Souci's 1989 The Talking Eggs, I am both pleased and even very much a bit in awe that the author has obviously learned a lesson and decided that his folktale adaptations do require and need detailed, informative author's notes). For the supplemental notes provided in and for The Faithful Friend indeed contain very much appreciated and in my humble opinion folklorically even necessary, interesting information and details on the genesis and origin of this tale, and how a number of distinct folktale types were and remain successfully and beautifully, entrancingly combined in The Faithful Friend (in Robert D. San Souci's delightful and visually stunning Caribbean folktale adaptation).
