



Moon Man

Tomi Ungerer

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"The bright, galloping illustrations are as effective as any Tomi Ungerer has done. This has some of the sting of Dr Strangelove but tenderized, the contemporary charisma of Where the Wild Things Are; it's great! Exceptionally highly recommended." Kirkus Reviews, 1967 In this gently satiric fable, Ungerer pokes fun at self-important adults who are afraid of anything or anyone unfamiliar, and reminds us that there is indeed no place like home. On its first publication in the US in 1967, at the height of the Space Race, Moon Man won the Book Week prize for books for children aged 4-8, and Maurice Sendak described it in Book Week as 'Easily one of the best picture books in recent years' Since then, it has been translated into 12 languages. Moon Man will be the next classic Ungerer tale to be turned into a full-length feature film, following on from the success of the award-winning The Three Robbers, which was shown in French and German cinemas in 2007 and is due to be launched on DVD in the English-speaking world in Fall 2008. Bored and lonely in his shimmering home in space, the Moon Man watches the people on Earth dancing and having a good time. Just once, he thinks, he would like to join in the fun. So one night, he holds on to a passing comet and crash lands on Earth. But the unexpected arrival of this mysterious visitor causes statesmen, scientists and generals to panic, and the Moon Man is thrown into jail. Alone in his cell, the Moon Man uses his special powers to slip through the hands of the law; it turns out that in accordance with the lunar phases, the Moon Man waxes and wanes. His left side starts to disappear as the Moon Man is his third quarter and as the moon grows thinner and thinner, so does the Moon Man. Finally, he is able to squeeze through the bars of his window and escape. Two weeks later, and once again fully formed, he enjoys his new-found freedom on Earth, and dances happily for hours at a party where all the other guests are wearing elaborate costumes and simply think he has dressed up as the Man in the Moon. But the police are on his trail, and a wild chase ensues. Fleeing through a forest, Moon Man finds a remote castle, where he is welcomed by an ancient, long-forgotten scientist named Doktor Bunsen van der Dunkel, who has been working on a space ship for centuries, with the aim of flying to the moon. Now too old and fat to fit into the completed rocket himself, Doktor van der Dunkel asks Moon Man to be the first passenger. Knowing that he would never be able to live on Earth in peace, Moon Man returns home to his planet, happy to stay there forever now that his curiosity has been sated. Back on Earth, Doktor van der Dunkel finally gets the recognition he deserves for his scientific breakthrough.

Moon Man Details

Date : Published May 1st 1998 by Roberts Rinehart Publishers (first published 1966)

ISBN : 9781570982071

Author : Tomi Ungerer

Format : Paperback 40 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Fantasy

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Mathew says

This is actually one of the very first books I remember from early childhood. It had been translated into Welsh and was one I enjoyed looking through repeatedly at Nursery. The Moon Man catching the tail of a comet and the saucer-eyed blue owl are images that I know will stay with me for all of my days.

I managed to return to it for my dissertation when I was looking at philosophy for children through picturebooks. You can tell, by this stage, that Ungerer is becoming a master of both image and text and story. Ungerer states in his book Tomi Ungerer: A Treasury of 8 Books that he sees creativity and the moon linked together and this book, as he states, is one the imagines a world where the moon himself, captivated by the people who populate it, decided to be with them and join in with their dancing.

On arriving, however, he finds himself segregated and jailed for his differences. Ungerer describes this as the same experience he had when he first arrived in New York. His image of the Moon Man being chased through the woods is also another nod to Ungerer's own escape from the Russian Army. Reading the connections between the story and Ungerer's own life just enriches the reading experience but I know, again, that it is his wonderful pictures and my imagination captured that will stay with me.

Lynn Davidson says

The man in the moon envied people dancing on Earth, so he caught a ride on the tail of a comet. At first his arrival on Earth wasn't as happy as he'd anticipated, but when the phase of the moon changed, things changed for him. Wonderful illustrations.

madziar says

Na ksi??ycu ?yje Ksi??ycolud - w niektóre noce mo?na dojrze? zarys jego postaci. Bia?y stwór marzy o tym, by kiedy? dosta? si? na Ziemi?, tam gdzie ludzie bawi? si? i ta?cz?, wi?c gdy tylko nadarza si? okazja, przy??cza si? do spadaj?cej gwiazdy i zachwyca wszystkim, co spotyka. Ale jest stworem z ksi??ycą, a zapatrzony w rado?? ludzi nie dostrzega tego, jak zwykli post?powa? z obcymi. Siedz?c na twardej ?awce w wi?zieniu, z kul? u nogi, zaczyna rozumie?, ?e tylko uznany za swojego mo?e wzi?? udzia? w ich zabawach. Znika, ale zanim zrobi to zupe?nie, bierze udzia? w balu przebiera?ów, by po ostatnim balu opu?ci? z pomoc? pewnego naukowca Ziemi? na zawsze.

Uniwersalna opowie?? o istotach wykluczonych z powodu swojego wygl?du, które marz? o tym, by grupa uzna?a ich za swoich.

W ilustracjach dominuj? kolory podstawowe, podobne do palety z dzieci?cych kolorowanek, na czarnym tle.

Irena Freitas says

O que eu gosto do Tomi Ungerer é que ele claramente se importa 0 com o que as pessoas vão achar das histórias dele. Dá pra ver que ele só conta umas historinhas sem noção porque isso faz ele feliz e fica por isso mesmo.

A arte do livro é muito linda e sou apaixonada pela paleta de cores que é super vibrante mesmo com tanto BG preto.

NoNieqa Ramos says

Caused my child an existential crisis. Under-the-skin creepy. Pessimistic.

Marta Pereira says

Não é à toa que foi galardoado com o Prémio Hans Christian Andersen (1998). Ilustrações e texto merecedores. Um clássico.

Mladoria says

Une histoire poétique et magnifiquement illustrée. Jean de la Lune s'ennuie là haut et décide de se rendre sur la Terre. Malheureusement, les hommes le craignent et le pourchassent. Mais tous les hommes ne sont pas semblables et un savant l'aide à rentrer chez lui.

On reconnaît au premier coup d'œil le style graphique de Tomi Ungerer : des couleurs assez sombres, tranchés et pourtant une poésie magique se dégage de cette histoire. Une ode à la tolérance, à l'imaginaire et à la découverte de l'inconnu. Au-delà des apparences, se cachent bien des secrets merveilleux. A voir également la superbe adaptation en film d'animation par Stephan Schesch.

Mari says

J'étais curieuse de découvrir cette version alsacienne d'un album de l'enfant du pays, Tomi Ungerer. Si je ne suis pas fan des images dans cet album, je trouve l'histoire toutefois touchante et jolie. Une belle lecture.

Oliver Jeffers says

As a child I was captivated by the vibrancy of the artwork in Moon Man. Returning to it years later, I discovered what a profound inspiration Ungerer had been to me as an artist. Revisiting the story as an adult also allowed me to take in it's message on a deeper level. I see it as a fairly heavy criticism of humankind, that we tend to destroy the things we do not understand.

Atziri says

This past June 2011, Tomi Ungerer, the author of Moon Man and Crichtor (another book I just recently reviewed), was interviewed at the Free Library of Philadelphia. The title of the interview was Tomi Ungerer Subversive Genius: The 80th Birthday Interview. I thought the title "subversive genius" was perfect, especially as it relates to the story of "Moon Man". In this gently satiric fable, Ungerer pokes fun at adults afraid of unfamiliar things. Moon Man watches the people on Earth and feels lonely. He catches a comet and lands on Earth expecting to be welcomed, but instead gets put into jail. Moon Man takes advantage of the lunar phases, and on his third quarter is able to squeeze through the bars and escape. He finds a costume party where he blends, supposedly wearing a Moon Man costume. He enjoys himself and dances all night. But, the police is on his trail and he escapes again. He finds a castle and meets a scientist who helps him get back to the moon, his home. This scientist is then recognized for his work and is selected chairman of some scientific committee.

I liked the book though it made me sad. Nonetheless, it's a great book that could be used to discuss some of the pitfalls of humanity, fear of the unknown, mistrust of difference, and how we humans use each other.

An interesting note, according to the London Evening Standard "[o]n its first publication in the US in 1967, at the height of the Space Race, Moon Man won the Book Week prize for books for children aged 4-8."

Yesha says

awesomely weird book that will fascinate my nephew!

Jodie says

Have you ever looked at the moon and seen a face peering down at you from above? Did you wonder who this moon face was? Tomi Ungerer introduces us to Moon Man; a curious character who is bored with life up there in his 'shimmering seat'. Moon Man longs for some fun and adventure. Fed up, he decides to hitch a ride on the tail of a comet so he can be with those 'earth people' below.

He meets trouble on arrival but soon escapes using his moon skills; ending up at a party dancing until he finds himself on the run again! Moon Man experiences life on Earth and finds a helpful friend - both help each other to reach their goal. Having satisfied his curiosity, Moon Man returns home to his comfort zone, never to leave again.

This book invites you into the world of Moon Man and provides a chance for children to think about those feelings of wanting something new; a curiosity to explore more. The 'grass is not always greener' seems relevant here while Ungerer also encourages one to adventure into new experiences and satisfy our curiosities. I would recommend this book to Key Stage one; encouraging an exploration of Moon Man's character and understanding his world, with an introduction into earth and space.

Seizure Romero says

Ungerer clearly has no grasp of astrophysics. A comet doesn't have a "fiery tail!" Ridiculous. He does understand people, though. "Alas, a grumpy killjoy complained of the late music to the police" is only the tip of the iceberg. Earth is no place for you, Moon Man. You are safer at home.

When I was in 1st or 2nd grade I read this in the school library many times, and it was amazing.

Whitney says

A library patron recommended this to me. It's a sweet, kind of sad story about how the man in the moon is lonely and wants to join the earth people. The illustrations were pretty and I enjoyed the story!

Mollie B says

It's okay. Good for storytime, but lacks pizzazz. Also, the artwork is kind of creepy.
