



The Circus Ship

Chris Van Dusen

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When a circus ship runs aground off the coast of Maine, the poor animals are left on their own to swim in the chilly waters. Staggering onto a nearby island, they soon win over the wary townspeople with their kind, courageous ways. So well do the critters blend in that when the greedy circus owner returns to claim them, villagers of all species conspire to outsmart the bloated blowhard! With buoyant rhymes and brilliantly caricatured illustrations evoking the early nineteenth century, Chris Van Dusen presents a hugely entertaining tale about the bonds of community—and a rare hidden-pictures spread for eagle-eyed readers of all ages.

The Circus Ship Details

Date : Published November 15th 2011 by Candlewick Press (first published September 22nd 2009)

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Author : Chris Van Dusen

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From Reader Review The Circus Ship for online ebook

Kelli says

When I pulled this book out for mystery reader at least ten kids said "I love this book!" Loosely based on a real shipwreck involving a circus off the coast of Maine, this book is tons of rhyming fun. Van Dusen has a distinct illustration style that brings a lot of giggles in the classroom. Colorful with its own little seek and find page and great ending, this is a winner with the kids. 4.5 stars.

Luisa Knight says

A fun story about circus animals that get shipwrecked. Though all the pages are really delightful, one in particular has a full page spread of hiding animals. Your children will enjoy seeing if they can find them.

If you're still not sure, watch Jack, age 6, tell you why it's so great!

Ages 4+

Cleanliness: someone infers another man is "daft." There is a picture of a lady's bloomers and corset hanging on the line.

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Milo says

It is official. I LOVE this book. I have memorized the whole thing. Mama will read the first line of a page and I tell her the rest of the page. Mama thinks this is so cool. I am getting tired of her carrying the book around to show everyone that I have memorized the book. I am not a trick pony.

What a great thing to have little buddies who like to read stories with their family too. Right now, this is one of my buddy's favorite books. He gave me a copy for the holidays. It is filled with fun illustrations that are colorful and capture my attention. I like to pull the book up close on my lap and look at the pictures and ask mama and papa questions about them. I also ask what part of the story my friend likes. It makes for a lot of fun conversation and allows me to broaden my perspective as I think about what someone might have experienced with a story.

LindaJ^ says

This was the third children's book I read today to be sure I'd chosen good books for gifts for children. While

not quite as good as the other two (I rounded up from 4.5stars), it is still a beautiful book. It seems there really was a circus ship in the late 1800's that broke up during a storm off the coast of Maine and at least one animal made it to a nearby island. This story expands on that story, having many animals make it to an island, where, after a bit of a rough start, bond with the residents who hide the animals when the circus owner comes to find them. The illustrations are nice and very colorful, and the story is heart touching. I think I need to read more children's books or at least those that show people being kind!

Jenny says

Inspired by a real event (but changed a great deal...the author's note describes the actual event) Van Dusen writes a humorous story about circus animals on a ship that sinks. The animals swim to shore, resting on an inhabited island. At first, the people on the island are concerned and dismayed to find a lion, tiger, bear, giraffe, monkey and other animals on their island. But soon, the animals win them over and they protect the animals from the horrible circus owner. The story is told in rhyme and the illustrations really bring it to life.

Laura (Book Scrounger) says

This is a fun story that, according to the end notes, is loosely inspired by an actual ship that sunk off the coast of Maine nearly 200 years ago. My full review here:
<https://www.theproblemsite.com/book-s...>

Becky B says

When a circus ship crashes the selfish circus owner saves himself instead of his animals. A nearby 1800s seaside town in Maine is quite surprised when the exotic animals start showing up. At first many of the residents are very concerned for their safety but when one of the circus animals makes a brave rescue the entire town has a change of heart and starts plotting how to save the animals from the mean circus master when he comes looking for them.

Such a fun historical fiction story. Of course, many of these animals would eat the town in real life, but their actions are clearly not true to life. Kids can definitely cheer for circus animals getting freedom and should enjoy the rhyming text. Oh, and the arrival of the circus master is quite funny (and provides a nice hidden picture hunt...see if you can find all of the animals on that spread...oh, and Mr. Magee and Dee too while you're at it..they must have traveled back in time to visit). I'm quite convinced that some of the Deckawoo Drive characters are direct descendants of this town. If you're looking for a whimsical story for animal lovers, this may be their next favorite book.

Kimberly says

I read this one to my superb little friends, Brielle and Zach. This book is so fun! I loved the illustrations and the rhyme scheme is perfect.

Tracy says

Fun art, good story. My kids loved looking for the animals and picking out the rhymes! They have even gone back to it several times to count the animals!

Shiloah says

This was a winner with my kiddos!

Susan Schuler says

One of my favorite read alouds for school visits. Kids love this book.

Sharon says

The beautiful artwork in this story introduces children to life in the 1800's. Based on an actual shipwreck, this story is a great way to engage in conversation about traveling circus animals, a ferry boat, and even an outhouse. This fun read-aloud has room for audience interaction as you search for the lost animals and a moral tale about kindness!

Suzie says

Beautiful illustrations, and especially fun to search for the hidden animals on one of the pages. I really enjoyed the words used in the book. There was a wide variety and none of the rhymes seemed like too much of a stretch.

Miss Ryoko says

Fantastic book! Chris van Dusen has great illustrations (if you're not familiar with his work, get to it) but the story was also great too! I want to live in that town!! Lol

Great work Chris! Loved it!

Ryan says

A bad storm has caused a ship to sink. Thank goodness the animals can rescue themselves. They try to hide

out in town, but it's pretty hard to hide an elephant. A tiger relies on his training of jumping through fiery hoops, and saves a town child from a burning barn. The towns people rejoice, and help to hide the animals from the evil zoo owner who left them when the ship went down. I love that the beginning of this book is based on a historical event. Even if the real event was not as fun or as happy as this picture book.
