



FUN ZONE



BOOK
THE FIX-IT MAN
 By Dimity Powell
 and Nicky Johnston
 ★★★★★
 Reviewed by
 Sandy Fussell
 sandyfussell.com

The Fix-It Man is a thoughtful, caring, picture book story exploring how grief and loss affect a young child. Dad is an amazing fix-it man. He's handy with a needle and thread, with glue and a hammer. He's always repeating things.

"Don't worry, I can fix it!" says Dad. "It's what dads do."

There's one thing he can't fix. His peach and honey brew makes Mama feel better but she's still sore inside.

When the truly terrible thing happens and they have to face life without her, everything feels broken. Even Dad. Although he doesn't have any cracks or holes, something is wrong.

When teddy bear Tiger needs attention, sticky tape doesn't help so Dad finds his needle and thread again. Something else is found, too.

Needles, thread, glue and even tea aren't the necessary tools for the biggest fix-it job. What's needed is the love between a dad and daughter. "We can fix things together, just Dad and me."

This is an important book. It's hard to discuss grief and loss with a young child. The Fix-It Man provides a way to do that. For ages 3 to 7.

BOOK

THE BLUE CAT
 By Ursula
 Dubosarsky
 ★★★★★
 Reviewed by
 Sandy Fussell
 sandyfussell.com



The war was a long way away, but it's creeping closer. Battles are being lost in Europe. People are talking about Japan invading Australia. Sirens sound for air raid practice.

Two more unsettling things happen in Columba's world. A blue cat appears and a new boy arrives at school. Ellery doesn't speak and dresses oddly. The headmaster explains he has escaped the war in Germany. Columba befriends Ellery but he still doesn't talk. Something sad has happened. She writes a letter to him from his absent mother, hoping it will help.

When the blue cat disappears, Columba, her best friend Hilda, and Ellery search the harbourside. At Luna Park, Columba is separated from the others. Lost and confused, her world darkens. She sees the cat. Then she sees Ellery and his family running from soldiers. Columba recovers from illness to discover Ellery has left, the circumstances as clouded as his arrival.

Throughout the book, historical photos of documents and objects help tell the story. Before Ellery arrives, the reader sees a government notice about refugee aliens.

This is an unusual work of historical fiction seamlessly blending narrative and primary sources — informative, entertaining and haunting. Almost surreal at times. For ages 10 to 14.

FRIXION WINNERS

Tia Killick, 6, Branxton
 Lucy Casserley, 5, Glenmore Park
 Matilda Russell, 11, Copacabana
 Ella Higgins, 8, Caringbah

Torkan
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TORKAN HAS TAKEN A JOB ESCORTING A CARAVAN NORTH AND EVEN THOUGH THE OWNERS HAVE ABUSED HIM THEY HAVE NOTHING OF REAL VALUE TO PROTECT, SOMETHING ABOUT THE COMPANY MAKES THE YOUNG NORTHMAN LINEASY

AFTER YOU'VE SEEN TO THE HORSES, BOY, GATHER SOME DRY WOOD FOR A FIRE

WHAT'P?

DID YOU HEAR WHAT THAT ARROGANT SON OF... PLEASE!

JUST FETCH THE WOOD... PLEASE!

BUT I'M NOT... PLEASE!

I'LL RAISE A TENT AND LAY OUT THE BED ROLLS

NO!

WE'LL RIDE ON FOR AN HOUR OR SO AFTER DINNER

I'LL FIND A MORE SECURE PLACE TO CAMP

SUCH A BIG FIRE WILL BE SEEN FROM LEAGUES AWAY

THAT'S THE WHOLE POINT

NIGHT FALLS AND IN THE DARKNESS A FORCE OF ARMED RIDERS FOLLOWS THE PATH THAT TORKAN'S SMALL CARAVAN HAS TAKEN

LOOK! THEIR COOKING FIRE STILL GLOWS

SURROUND THE CAMP AND BE READY TO STRIKE

NO ONE ESCAPES ALIVE!

THE PHANTOM
 CREATED BY LEE FALK

THAT WAMBES! VILLAGE IS NEARBY! LET'S HIT IT!

SAD IDEA! WE HAVE A PATTERN GOING!

HE'S RIGHT! ABOUT EVERY EIGHT WEEKS WE TURN UP THERE!

SO?

LOOK AT THEM! TAKING FOOD AS IF THEY WORKED TO GROW IT!

THESE PEOPLE SHOULD RESPECT US BY NOW! BUT LOOK AT THEIR FACES!

IGNORANT JUNGLE PEOPLE! SO WHAT?

Tony DePaol and Terry Ranczy 4-18-17

JUNGLE PATROL!

NO, IT ISN'T, PATROLMAN. IT'S NOT RIGHT, COLONEL!

HOW DID THE UNKNOWN COMMANDER KNOW THEY'D BE HERE?

HE HAS HIS METHODS.

IF ONLY I KNEW WHAT THEY ARE!

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THE FOOTLOOSE PRINCE VALIAN
 BY SCHULTZ AND HEATER

TENDED BY THE REFUGEES, VAL AND HIS COMPANY GRADUALLY RECOVER FROM THEIR STRANGE SUBTERRANEAN ADVENTURE, PERHAPS BECAUSE THE NEWS HAS SPREAD THAT THE CAMP NOW HOLDS WARRIORS. THERE HAS BEEN NO REAPPEARANCE OF THE BANDITS.

TO REPAY THEIR HOSTS, KAREN GIVES SIMPLE FISHING LESSONS.

... WHILE VAL, BUKOTA AND GIOVANNI PUT THEIR BACKS INTO BUILDING MORE DURABLE SHELTERS, WITH THEIR STRONGEST MEMBERS LONG TAKEN FROM THEM, THE REFUGEES GROW MORE AND MORE APPRECIATIVE OF THEIR MYSTERIOUS GUESTS.

4/16/17

... AND GIVES HIM FAIR WARNING. "WE HAD AN EXCELLENT HUNTRESS WHO CAME DOWN FROM THE HILLS— BUT WE LAST SAW HER A WEEK AGO. NO DOUBT THE BANDITS GOT HER."

NUMAIR CALMLY TESTS HIS NEW EQUIPMENT. THEN, AS A FORMER BANDIT MYSELF, I WILL DO MY BEST TO AVOID A SIMILAR FATE.

NEXT: Hunter and hunted

TELEFIZIOLPY - V1