

John Patrick Norman McHennessy: The Boy Who Was Always Late

By John Burningham

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Every day John Patrick Norman McHennessy sets off along the road to learn, and every day strange and improbable happenings make him late. To make things worse, his teacher, Sir, never believes his stories. One day, John Patrick Norman McHennessy is able to make it on time and finds that an improbable and strange thing has happened to Sir. Just how the tables are turned provides a twist every child will relish.

A Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies
An IRA Children's Choice
A Horn Book Fanfare Honor Book

From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Every morning, John Patrick Norman McHennessy sets off along the road to learn and is waylaid by very unusual occurrencesa lion in the woods, a crocodile in the river, a tidal wavethat, according to his teacher, simply couldn't have happened. So, every afternoon he must stay after school to write out his punishment. But one morning as he hurries along, nothing happens, and he arrives at school on time. His teacher, however, is being held up in the roof by a great big hairy gorilla and demands help. John Patrick Norman McHennessy replies, "There are no such things as great big hairy gorillas in the roofs around here, Sir." And off he goes. Is this a fable about the learning of self-deception, a sort of variation on the boy-who-cried-wolf theme? Has John Patrick Norman McHennessy, long punished for telling the truth, uncovered the value of of lying? While children will enjoy the hero's telling off his teacher, adults may find a deeper meaning in Burningham's humorthat knowledge of what is real and what is not can be fickle next to tried-and-true experience. Ages 4-7.
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From School Library Journal
Grade 1-4 ``John Patrick Norman McHennessy set off along the road to learn.'' Along that road, he encounters crocodiles, lions, and tidal waves, all of which proceed to make him late for school. However, true to form, his teacher (an ugly, formidable figure) re fuses to accept his outrageous excuses, exclaiming that there are no such things along the road. When John Patrick fi nally manages to make it to school on time one uneventful morning, he finds his instructor being kidnapped by a gi ant gorilla. But John Patrick doesn't panic. After all, he knows there is no such thinghis teacher told him so. Burningham uses mixed media here to create boldly-colored illustrations which do a marvelous job of reinforcing the text. The storyline is a simple one, but it is filled with irony. Kids will iden tify with the unfairness depicted here and will enjoy the twist of fate which brings this ogre of an educator his come-uppance. Deb Andrews, Koko mo-Howard County Public Lib . , Ind.
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Review
"The story has interesting undercurrents. Burningham is saying something very serious about schools and education."--Kirkus Reviews (pointer)

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Phyllis Kelly:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Sure, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their particular spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or read a book allowed John Patrick Norman McHennessy: The Boy Who Was Always Late? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You realize beside

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Alejandro Colon:

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