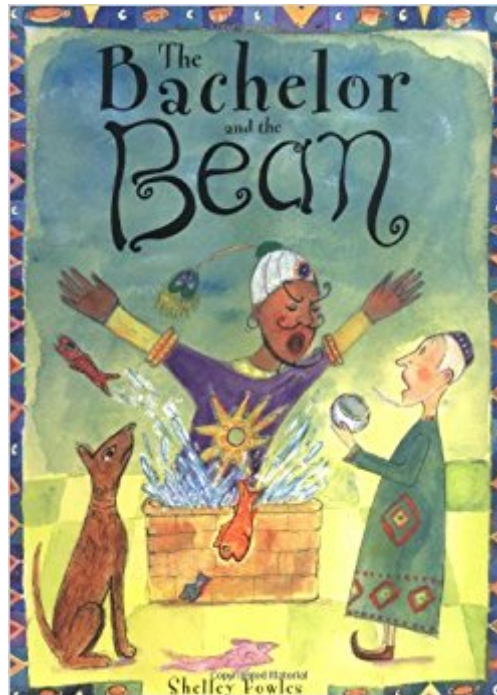




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The Bachelor And The Bean (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)



Synopsis

A Jewish folktale from Morocco When a grumpy old bachelor loses his last bean down a well, he is hopping mad. To his amazement, a devilish imp leaps out of the well and gives him a magic pot to keep him quiet. After hearing what the pot can do, a neighbor – a mean, jealous old lady – steals the bachelor's pot, replacing it with a useless one of her own. The grumpy old bachelor is incensed, but when he eventually butts heads with the grumpy old thief, it turns out she is more of a match for him than he had ever bargained for. The shenanigans in this sprightly illustrated folktale demonstrate with aplomb that romance, like magic, sometimes lurks in unexpected places.

Book Information

Series: Farrar, Straus & Giroux

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Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

Customer Reviews

We challenge you to find a lesson in this Jewish folktale about a grumpy old bachelor from Morocco who drops his bean snack down a well. Perhaps it is a morality tale condemning greed? One might think so, since the bachelor gets so upset about dropping one cooked bean that he incurs the wrath of the well-dwelling imp. But... no. The imp (who hates a racket) simply gives him a magic pot so that he can eat all the snacks he could ever want, bean or otherwise. Perhaps it is a lesson of discretion, since when the bachelor brags about his pot to all the villagers, a jealous woman steals

it. No. The imp just gives him another pot, this time one that will give him all the plates and cups he demands--gold, silver, the works. When the jealous woman steals that one, the imp gives him yet another one, this time a pot that reveals the reflection of the thief in possession of the bachelor's two pots. Ah. Will it be a lesson in justice? No. The bachelor who rushes to confront the old thief is so enchanted by her nasty temper and bad manners that he asks her to marry him: "And from then on, I am happy to say, their quarrels could be heard from one end of town to the other!" As charmingly perplexing as this tale is, readers will perhaps be most taken by Shelley Fowles's gorgeous, quirky illustrations, as rich and vibrant as anything ever painted on the side of a magic pot. (Ages 4 to 8) --Karin Snelson

PreSchool-Grade 3-A grumpy old bachelor drops a bean down a well inhabited by an imp. To stop his complaints, the imp gives him a magic pot that produces food on command. The bachelor's jealous neighbor steals the vessel and its replacement. A third pot reveals the thief's identity to the bachelor. But when he confronts the nasty old lady, he realizes that he has found a woman as bad-tempered as he, and their marriage results in a "quarreling ever after" conclusion. Loosely based on a Jewish folktale, the story is set in Morocco. The full-color, bright illustrations offer some sense of locale; the use of patterns in clothing design and in the borders for text blocks adds visual interest, and viewers can also follow the activities of the bachelor's dog. This is an acceptable addition for large folktale collections, but neither plot developments nor illustrations are compelling enough to make the book a first purchase. Kathy Piehl, Minnesota State University, Mankato Copyright 2003 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Full disclosure, my background is Jewish Moroccan and so this tale set in a Jewish Moroccan village definitely filled a vacant rare niche for my two year old's collection that I was desperate to fill. That aside, the art is delicious to behold. Vibrant painting like style with plenty of detail. My son and I found things to discuss in every part of every page, from various animals wandering around, to the jalabiya clothing worn by the people, to their detailed facial expressions etc.. I've read this book to him 10s of times and he still requests it. The main and side morals of the story are wholesome as well. Seeing a grouch who stays a grouch but still helps his fellow man gives the main character depth and his humorous interaction with the others kept my kid interested. The book being big helped us really take in the scenery and the experience of the town. It allowed me to play off the mood of the place when reading to him. A great book.

This is a fun book with beautiful illustrations. My students enjoyed the silliness and the good natured spirit of the story.

Not much story here and I thought the overall theme was uninspiring and mean. I wouldn't recommend this book to anyone.

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