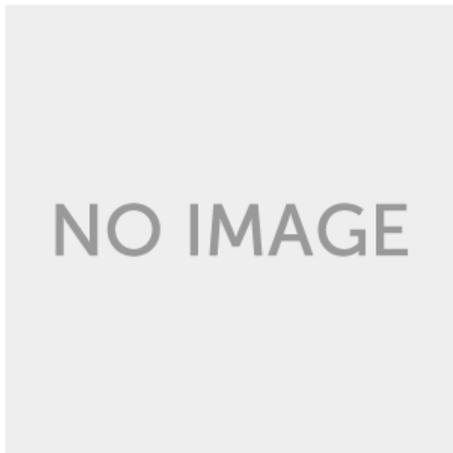


The Funny Thing (Wanda Gag Classics) *by* Wanda Gag



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Kind old Bobo changes the Funny Thing, an "aminal," from a doll-eater to a jum-jill-eater



Reviews of the **The Funny Thing (Wanda Gag Classics)** *by* Wanda Gag

HeonIc

When I was a child, I inherited from one of my parents an old book full of stories by many different authors -- mostly forgotten -- and this jewel was in it. I loved it so much and for years quoted it: "And very good they are. Dolls." Etc. Long after I had forgotten the name of the story (I never knew the name of the author) I quoted it and called animals "aminals". Yes, as a childless adult, when I suppose I should have outgrown such silliness.

Then I ended up with a little girl of my own and found myself desperately wanting to read her that wonderful story from that long-lost book. I turned to my good friend Google, on which you can find absolutely anything, and entered: "And very good they are. Jumjills." Wanda Gag came right up. I ordered the book for my little squirt for Christmas that year.

The best thing about getting her the book was that I got to discover Wanda Gag's illustrations for the first time. For some reason, the book in which I'd first read the story had used very pastel, very post-WWII illustrations that were largely pink and green -- all right, but not too memorable. Now, 30 years later, I was savoring the elegant, shapely, flowing, organic Artsy-Craftsy lines of Wanda Gag's work.

As an avid reader of children's picture books, I've noticed an unfortunate fact: The books with great stories that are good for reading aloud to small children are not necessarily the ones with beautiful pictures, and vice versa. But here is a book with a story that was fun and delightful with blase post-WWII illustrations, and here it turned up in my life again with truly gorgeous ones, by the author herself, no less. A book like that is a rare treasure!

Something that I find rather interesting is that this is the story about a little man named Bobo who lives in an underground house with a round door and offers seed puddings to a "Funny Thing" that is clearly a dragon. A different sort of children's book was published eight years later, a book about a little man named Bilbo who lives in an underground house with a round door and serves seed cake to dwarves who drag him off to steal treasure from a dragon. Hmm. I have to wonder if my beloved Mr. Tolkien saw this picture book and was influenced by it. It's in rather a similar style as his own beautiful drawings, too.

Kit

A wonderful and enchanting story. The pictures are gorgeous, especially the one of the cozy underground home of Bobo ("the good little man of the mountains"), and the story is one of my all-time favorites (that's saying a lot since children's books are kind of my *raison d'être*). I mean: the mysterious and silly Funny Thing calls itself an "aminal", and eats dolls - quite deplorably, in Bobo's opinion. Not only that, but he eats exclusively GOOD children's dolls (not just those of bad children, as Bobo hoped). But Bobo has a pragmatic and compassionate solution to this problem. He combines all the lovely foods he makes for the creatures of the countryside -- seed puddings for the little birds, cabbage salads for the rabbits, nut cakes for the squirrels, and little cheeses for the mice -- into little balls he christens "jum-jills". Jum-jills took on archetypal significance in my mind as a kid, and in our family lexicon. Also, ever since reading this as a family when I was small, the word "aminal" has been an important and affectionate part of our family vocabulary.

Aria

We love this book. We bought it after reading more about the author (Wanda Gag) of one of our family's favorites - "Millions of Cats." I'd never heard of "The Funny Thing" as a kid, but we loved Gag's other work and this book sounded fun. It has quickly become a new favorite for our kiddo. It has a great fantastical storyline and a nice tricky twist in it that my kid loves.

zzzachibis

A great book evidently because I've remembered it for 75 years. Couldn't wait to read it again and send it out to family children

Gaiuaco

The Funny Thing has been one of my favorite poems since I was a youngster and I love sharing it with my grandchildren.

Hurus

My mom used to read this story to me when I was little, so when I got a Kindle Fire, I decided to add it to my collection so I could share the story with my nieces and nephews. I was very disappointed in the grammatical errors and misspelled words that showed up on almost every page in the Kindle version. I was having to remember the story from memory in some places to figure out what it was suppose to be saying. I advise you to get the paper copy, not the kindle version.

Jaberini

And very good they are, jumjills.

This book is one of those golden childhood memories I share with my brother. We loved this book as children, borrowed it from the library many times, and I've bought a copy for my nephew because I want him to enjoy it as well so he can really understand our silly family language. It's actually how my brother and I compliment each others' cooking, 30 years later!

The story is sweet and wholesome, with nice morals about greed, fanity and generosity. The illustrations are lovely. And jumjills! What an awesome nonsense word!

if you agree with bettelheim (the uses of enchantment) you will love this book. if you are devoted to disney, forget it. it's too real.

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