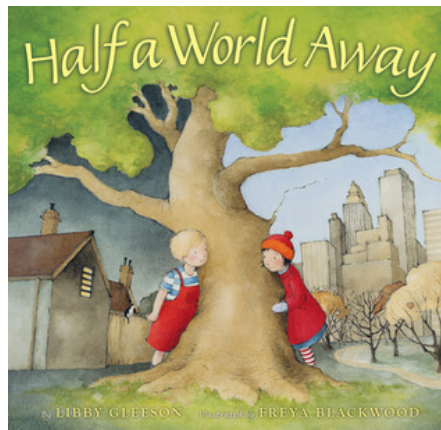




Half A World Away

Libby Gleeson , Freya Blackwood (Illustrator)

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The U.S. debut of an incredible new illustrator introduces two everyday friends whose closeness endures no matter how far apart they are.

"If I call Amy really loudly, she'll hear me, won't she?" Louie asked his mom.
His mom shook her head. "Amy is half a world away."

Amy and Louie are the best of friends. They build towers as high as the sky, they look for magical creatures in clouds, and they always greet one another with their special call: "Coo-ee!"

But when Amy's family moves far across the ocean, the color drains out of their lives---until Louie finds a way to restore their special bond.

A perfect book for any friends separated by a move, this is the unforgettable story of a friendship lost and found.

Half A World Away Details

Date : Published March 1st 2007 by Arthur A. Levine Books (first published 2006)

ISBN : 9780439889773

Author : Libby Gleeson , Freya Blackwood (Illustrator)

Format : Hardcover 40 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Fiction

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From Reader Review Half A World Away for online ebook

Graeme says

A beautiful book, a story of childhood friendship, my son loves this book and has me read it over and over again. We also have family far away, which helps to put the book into perspective. Beautifully illustrated.

Jack Kirby and the X-man says

A lovely book about a friendship challenged by distance.

Freya Blackwood does a fantastic job of the illustrations, using colour to highlight the emotions of the kids.

While it was lovely it didn't have the 'goose-bumping' effect the back-cover-blurb promised.

Surely a better way to rebuild their special bond wouldn't be to coo-ee to each other's dreams - but to pick up the phone, or email, or message them on Facebook, or follow each other's every move on Twitter...

Alice says

BFF...is truly what this book is about. Best Friends Forever! What happens when your very best friend in the world moves half way around the world. Will yelling their name really loud work? When you are asleep, it is morning there...what can you do....well you have to read it...nice sweet twist at the end!

Elisabeth says

I was so charmed by Freya Blackwood's illustrations in "Maudie and Bear" I was eager to see other things she has done. I liked this story much better and the art on some pages is just breathtaking. I'm a fan!

Dolly says

At the library today, we picked out a couple of books about moving just by chance, but I'm glad that we are starting to discuss this topic since we'll be moving ourselves in less than a year.

This is a good story about close friends who are separated by half the world - far too common for military families. The two friends still find a way to stay close, which is a glimmer of hope to young children in the same situation.

Gorgeous illustrations really capture the emotion of the tale. It's a great book to read aloud and we really enjoyed reading it together.

Melina says

I absolutely LOVED this book. Amy and Louise are best friends who create magical worlds together and keep in contact with a special call – ‘Coo-ee, Lou-ee’, ‘Coo-ee Am-ee’. Then Amy and her family move away, to the other side of the world, and the colour seeps out of Louis and Amy’s lives. Until, that is, Louise finds a way to use the special call to call Amy.

Amy and Louis is told beautifully in two ways. There’s the rhythmical, repeating language which shows the reader the special friendship between the pair in a minimum of words. Then there’s the illustrations, which focus on red, blue and neutrals to create the magical world which the pair have created in their friendship. I particularly love how the illustrations show the difference between the suburban world in Australia and the frantic, busy world Amy moves to (which I assume is New York)

This is a great book to read if you’re talking about moving, as well as talking about friendships. You can take some time to look for magical creatures in clouds, like Amy and Louis did, or use cotton wool to create your own cloud creatures. You can use maps to look at some of the wonderful places in the world where people live or, if you’re feeling arty, create neutral art works with just a little bit of colour.

This review originally appeared at Adventures of a Subversive Reader

Jill says

Summary:

Amy and Louie are best friends and do everything together. Amy moves across the world and they miss each other. Louie calls Amy with their special call, and Amy has a dream about it.

Reflection:

Illustrations are perfect and set the mood for the book. Great story line. This will be a perfect book for children to relate to.

Themes:

moving, penpals, friends

Ariel says

Amy and Louie are not only neighbors, they are the best of friends. Sometimes Louie climbs through the hole in the fence to visit Amy, and sometimes Amy climbs through the hole in the fence to visit Louie, but no matter where they are, they always have a lot of fun. Together they build “towers as high as the sky” and dig “holes deep enough to bury bears.” They dress up in costumes made from capes, rain boots, and the less ordinary, flippers, colanders and Kleenex boxes. They even have a secret language with which they communicate. When Amy and her family move far away, Louie wants to call to Amy in their secret language, but he doesn’t know if she’ll be able to hear. You’ll have to read this story, and take the time to delight in its classic illustrations, to discover how it ends. As someone who moved a lot as a kid, this book

touches my heart with every reading.

Andrea Gray says

Grades K-3

Half A World Away, by Libby Gleeson and illustrated by Freya Blackwood, is a story about an unbreakable bond between two friends. Amy and Louie were always together but when they weren't, and sometimes only as far as the other side of the room, they had a special call they would do to bring the other one near. One day Amy moves "half a world away" and Louie is lost without his friend. His heart is heavy and he is lonely. What he doesn't know is that Amy is feeling the same way on the other side of the world. Louie comes up with a plan, and with the encouragement of a few simply words from grandma, he gives it a try. The miles between Amy and Louie may have changed how often they get to play but never the feeling in their hearts.

The illustrations are unique to many children's books. There are many picture books that use bright colors to illustrate characters or a scene. Freya Blackwood went a different route and the subdued colors went along with the story being told. The illustrations, most in sepia tone with splashes of reds and oranges, sets the tone of the book and the sadness that comes when someone moves away. The illustrations are realistic and beautiful and all in all, add a lot to the story.

Half A World Away is a very sweet book that would be a fabulous addition to any classroom.

Louise (A Strong Belief in Wicker) says

I do love the look and feel of Freya Blackwood's illustrations. Cute style. She captures the simplicity of suburban living, possibly a bit more the suburban living of my childhood, rather than now. I've always liked finding the shapes in clouds. The story is simple too. Amy and Louis are neighbours, who play with each other daily, until Amy moves away, to a nameless city on the other side of the world, that looks rather like New York. Amy and Louis miss each other, and seem to be too young to have facebook profiles to keep in touch, so they have to figure out another way to remember their friendship.

Lisa Vegan says

Ah, this is a lovely story with lovely illustrations. Both story and pictures are so evocative of children's play and children's friendships, and also of feelings of loss, connection, and creative ways of coping too. It's a perfect read aloud book. Highly recommended, particularly to children who are about to move or have moved and miss their friends or for children who've had or are about to have a friend move.

I did check the publication date (2006) not only because this book has a sort of vintage feel to it, but because, unlike years ago, I'd think that today kids (at least those who are old enough to read and write) are finding it easier to keep in touch with friends and other loved ones who are far away. I guessed how these kids would find a way to keep in touch, but that correct prediction didn't detract from the charm of this story.

On three occasions between kindergarten and sixth grade I had to temporarily attend out of state schools, and I did have friends who moved away too, so I was definitely able to empathize with Amy and Louie.

4 ½ stars

Oh, and I forgot to add that I LOVE the pictures of the cats!

Nicole Fellows says

I chose to read this book for one of the picture books published in 2006. It is a very sweet story about two best friends who live half a world away from each other after one of them has had to move. They have a special call they would use together and even though they are far apart, they can see each other in their dreams at night.

I really like this story. It had great illustrations that were fun and creative. I really liked that the pictures changed from color to black and white when Amy's family moved away because it added to the emotions that the author was trying to portray. They then changed back to color when the friends realized they could see each other in their dreams. Very cute story!! I really think kids would like it!

Tanika says

This is a very sweet book about two best friends named Louie and Amy. They did everything together. One day Amy's family moves half way around the world and both the kids become so sad. But one day Louie missed Amy so much that he cried out for her as loud as he could. By the next day Amy woke up with a dream that Louie called for her and while she is getting her day started Louie is at home sleep, smiling, thinking that Amy heard him. This would be a wonderful story to tell because it shows friendship that is so strong distance could not separate them.

Danica Midlil says

Liked it but wanted more of a resolution. As it is, it's pretty sad!

I think I liked a little better.

Christine Turner says

...Two everyday friends whose closeness endures no matter how far apart they are. "If I call Amy really loudly, she'll hear me, won't she?" Louie asked his mom. His mom shook her head. "Amy is half a world away." Amy and Louie are the best of friends. They build towers as high as the sky, they look for magical creatures in clouds, and they always greet one another with their special call: "Coo-ee!" But when Amy's family moves far across the ocean, the color drains out of their lives---until Louie finds a way to restore their special bond. A perfect book for any friends separated by a move, this is the unforgettable story of a friendship lost and found.

Subjects

Best friends -- Juvenile fiction

Friendship -- Juvenile fiction

Moving, Household -- Juvenile fiction
