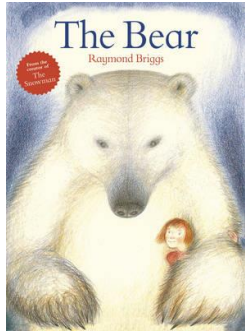


2014 Phoenix Picture Book Award

Raymond Briggs for *The Bear* (Julia Macrae Books, 1994)



Raymond Briggs's *The Bear* is delightfully affecting on all sensory levels and leaves one with much to ponder. The entire work is an outstanding example of venturesome creativity evidenced by the surprises of its page-turns, its movement and boundary breaking, its felicitous pauses, and the pitch-perfect dialogue that renders the drama and humour of child-adult and child-bear relations incisively while leaving the open the question of imagination versus reality. Briggs's captures the 'I love you' 'I hate you' of a young child as well as other emotions perfectly, especially through facial expressions; his lightly delineated pencil drawings are just right for depicting this memorable encounter. *The Bear* is a powerful metaphor for the emotional and social complexities and longings of childhood. This engaging and often humorous story, told mostly through the visuals, will never grow old or out-of-date.