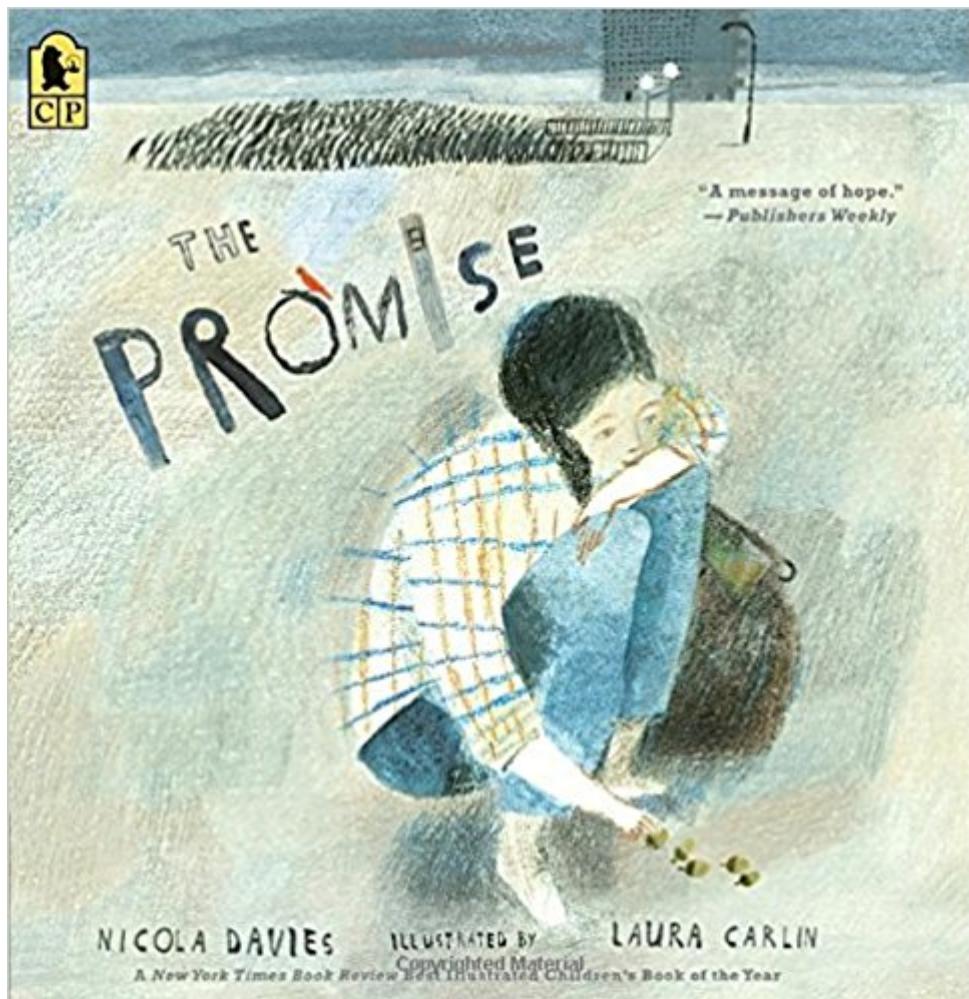


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# The Promise



## Synopsis

An allegorical tale of hope takes on new life in this stirring, gorgeously illustrated story. On a mean street in a mean, broken city, a young girl tries to snatch an old woman's bag. But the frail old woman, holding on with the strength of heroes, says the thief can't have it without giving something in return: the promise. It is the beginning of a journey that will change the thieving girl's life • and a chance to change the world, for good. Here is the story of a magical discovery that will touch the heart and imagination of every reader, young and old. In an exciting collaboration, author Nicola Davies joins forces with illustrator Laura Carlin to create a contemporary tale inspired by Jean Giono's 1953 story, *L'homme qui plantait des arbres*.

## Book Information

Paperback: 40 pages

Publisher: Candlewick; Reprint edition (March 28, 2017)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0763693030

ISBN-13: 978-0763693039

Product Dimensions: 9.9 x 0.2 x 10.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 5.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 13 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #128,730 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in Books > Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works > Recycling & Green Living #158 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Where We Live > City Life #185 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Nature > Environment

Age Range: 5 - 9 years

Grade Level: Kindergarten - 4

## Customer Reviews

K-Gr 4 • This contemporary retelling of Jean Giono's *L'homme qui plantait des arbres* begins on the mean streets of a city, depicted in muted browns and dismal grays. The character admits to stealing from people. When she targets what she perceives to be a frail old woman, her life changes. The old lady gives the thief her purse, which is filled with acorns, and the girl realizes that she has made a promise to plant them all. She keeps her word and plants them everywhere in the gritty, ugly city, "among rubble, ruins, and rusty railings." As trees slowly start to grow, the people

begin to smile, and they plant flowers, fruits, and vegetables "in parks and gardens, on balconies and rooftops." The illustrations turn to glorious full color as the world becomes a better place. The endpapers reflect the change from a sad story at the beginning to the positive, life-changing event at the end. A thoughtful book, told with simplicity, with a poignant message.  Janene Corbin, Rosebank Elementary School, Nashville, TN --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

**\*Starred Review\*** A girl, with no name and of no particular age, describes a place as gritty as its people are hard: When I was young, I lived in a city that was mean and hard and ugly. She lives by stealing, and one day, she wrestles with an old woman for her bag, which the lady finally lets go of, with a condition: If you promise to plant them. Though the girl dreams of money, what she finds in the pack are acorns. But now she understands the promise: I held a forest in my hand. So she plants, trees start to grow, and people come around to touch them and talk and form a community. Inspired by Jean Giono's 1953 story, *L'homme qui plantait des arbres*, this sturdy tale is made even more emphatic by Davies' terse writing style. The text is heightened in every way by Carlin's outstanding mixed-media artwork. Making use of unexpected perspectives, the evocative pictures capture the early sense of isolation in dull colors and stark strokes. As the neighborhood blossoms and when the narrator travels across the continents spreading her message and planting trees so does the artwork. Bright hues and plenty of greenery enliven the pages and lift the spirits. Lots to look at, think about, and discuss here. Grades 3-6. --Ilene Cooper --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

I liked this book a lot however its a little dark for younger children. I got it to read to our kindergarten age Girl Scout troop. The main character a girl starts out as a thief and her heart softens. I had to skip several parts of the story. At least one other mom was not pleased with my choice. My daughter likes the book . The promise is kept, the thief's heart is changed in a very zen like way. The girl does not however live an easy life she instead lives a lonely life fulfilling the promise. It would actually be a great book for discussion with older children ages 8 or 9.

This is a fabulously written book; however, it's more geared towards older children. My 4 year old loves it, but he doesn't understand the thematic implications at all. It's one of those children's books that means more to you as you grow older. It's beautiful.

part of the United Methodist Women reading list this year

The students in my room (4th-6th grade) loved this book! Beautiful moral, as well as realistic view of today's society.

Beautifully illustrated, the story shows how our lives may affect many more than we know through a "pass it on" action.

great

As an elementary school counselor I've been looking for community builders for next year that I can read to K-5 grades. This one absolutely knocked my socks off. It's 'bucket filling' at a deeper level.

When a girl steals a purse from a woman she finds it is filled with acorns. The woman allowed her to take the purse on one condition, "If you promise to plant them, I'll let go." This is not a story about planting trees. It's about planting love, care, kindness, happiness....all of the good. And the girl does just that. She goes from communities to cities to neighborhoods...planting. And all the while, touching people's lives and bringing with her a light to erase the darkness people feel. This book really touched me. Highly recommend.

This book is an amazing first-person fable about the importance of keeping a promise and how having a positive purpose can change one's life. The illustrations by Laura Carlin enhance the text, as they change from black and white to color as the main character's promise is fulfilled. Change does not happen overnight; patience is required. The underlying message of "if you don't like it, change it" empowers readers of all ages, and encourages all of us to leave a positive legacy.

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