

Bathe the Cat

Alice B. McGinty, illus. David Roberts
Chronicle Books, 2022

Reviews

- [School Library Journal](#) (Nov. 1, 2021): “Told in rhyming verse, McGinty’s silly yarn has charm to spare. Young readers will be tickled by the cat’s mischievous misdirects and the resulting pandemonium. Roberts’s pen and watercolor illustrations carry on the aesthetic tradition of Pat Hutchins and Judi Barrett, paying homage to the colors and fashions of the 70s. Each page is filled with well-conceived details that deserve close inspection. **VERDICT** Preschoolers will be in stitches reading this modern revelry told through a vintage lens. A recommended purchase for most collections.”
- [Kirkus](#) (Oct. 12, 2021): “McGinty’s jaunty, rhyming text makes for a fun read-aloud, but Roberts’ brightly colored, energetic illustrations are the real attraction. The increasingly frantic family, with light to dark skin tones, doing silly tasks from a muddled list will incite giggles.”
- [The Horn Book](#) (Jan. 31, 2022): “Cleanly rendered illustrations show the family dutifully following orders while things go hilariously wrong. Roberts’s (*Ada Twist, Scientist*) precise pencil and watercolor illustrations go beyond the entertaining premise to matter-of-factly portray a family at the intersection of a number of identities. The two fathers have brown skin, as do two of their kids. Sarah, who wears a T-rex costume, is white with red hair and freckles. Dad, who also has freckles, wears pink pants, as does Bobby. This diversity isn’t the point of the story but offers much to contemplate after the silliness is done — and the cat still isn’t bathed.” Starred review.
- [Publishers Weekly](#) (Sept. 2, 2021): “Clean-up time turns topsy-turvy when an interracial family’s mischievous cat jumbles up their to-do list in this sure-footed picture book. [...] Pencil and watercolor scenes by Roberts (*The Cook and the King*) emphasize the increasing goofiness of the family’s repeated efforts to get their mess under control, and light rhymes by McGinty (*A Story for Small Bear*) pair smartly with the amusing concept.”
- [Booklist](#) (Nov. 1, 2021): “Lively, expressive watercolor-and-pencil illustrations of the multiracial family and animated scenarios are the perfect accompaniment for the peppy rhyming text, humorously depicting the household-chores chaos (and kitty’s contributions) in this inviting, quite entertaining read-aloud friendly title.”

Awards

- [Bank Street College of Education’s Irma Black Award Gold Medallist](#), 2023

Lists

Response to Challenges

- Front Royal, VA resident Jay North, on attempts to remove books including *Bathe the Cat* from Samuels Library: “Samuels is currently under attack by those who seek to control the ideas and information that are freely available to the public. They wish to have books removed that conflict with their personal beliefs. Rather than exercise their rights and freedoms to choose what to believe, how to live and what to read, these folks seek to deny those rights to others. People who want to ban ideas they disagree with and control what information others have access to, pursue un-American ambitions.” ([Daily News Record](#))
- Jay North, in another interview on the same incident: “They’re trying to take out anything that mentions being gay and that is harmful to the next kid like me. [...] When you are part of a minority group, or any group that becomes the target of harassment, hate, violence and discrimination, you often feel alone, isolated and vulnerable. The ability to see others who are like you, to feel a sense of community, helps with that isolation and fear. Something as simple as a book, with characters like you, or people you know, helps you to see yourself as part of this world. It helps you know that you belong, that you are not alone, and that you matter just like everyone else.” ([The Winchester Star](#))

References

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