

Librarian's Shelf by Brad Hruska

“And the 2012 Winners Is...”

The votes have been cast and the winner announced for the 2012 Caldecott Medal Award. This prestigious recognition was named after English illustrator Randolph Caldecott, who was one of the most influential artists during the nineteenth-century. Randolph's illustrations were quite unique for that time period because they created a sense of movement and action in the stories they accompanied.

The Caldecott Medal is presented annually by the “Association for Library Service to Children” to the artist of the most distinguished American picture book written the previous year. This year's medalist is “A Ball for Daisy” by Chris Raschka.

In this heart-warming tale, brimming with primary colors, readers meet a lively beagle pup named Daisy who is obsessed with her new toy...a bright-red rubber ball. The canine spends most of her waking hours playing with the new object! Daisy chases it around the living room, wrestles with it under the kitchen table, and flips it in the air with her hindquarters and catches it in her mouth. The little pooch loves her new plaything so much that at night Daisy will often snuggle up close to it and fall asleep.

One afternoon, Daisy and her owner venture to the local ball park for an invigorating game of fetch! The two playmates enjoy their time together lopping the red ball back and forth until it is mistakenly catapulted over a tall, rod-iron fence.

By the time Daisy makes it over the obstacle, the rubber ball is picked up by a large, brown retriever. The big dog begins roughhousing with the red ball and accidently punctures the beloved rubber toy. Daisy is devastated!

For the next few days, all the heart-broken pooch can do is mope around the house and sulk on the big green and blue sofa over the broken object. Hoping to lift her spirits, Daisy's owner decides to take her out for a walk. They end up making their way back to the ball park.

As Daisy and her owner approach the play area, they notice the brown retriever and his owner coming toward them. Within seconds the retriever's owner presents Daisy with a gift...a bright-blue bouncy ball! Our furry friend is so happy with the new blue toy that she soon forgets about the destroyed red one and begins playing and loving on her new blue, bouncy ball.

“A Ball for Daisy” by Chris Raschka is not just a great book for children about friendship and forgiveness; it is also a text that adults can use to teach little ones about the wonderful world of watercolor illustrations. Raschka does a fantastic job depicting movement and emotion in the pictures created for this heartwarming tale. After cracking the cover of this book open it will be very obvious to readers why Chris Raschka was named this year's 2012 Caldecott Medal Winner!

If you have any questions about this year's Caldecott Medal Award winner or would like information on other honor books, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.