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SKY'S AMAZING DREAM

Mark Stevens

CreateSpace (42 pp.)

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BOOK REVIEW

A golden retriever dreams of all the happiness he can bring in this picture book illustrated with photographs of the real-life canine.

Sky is a golden retriever who, like any dog of his kind, loves nothing better than to chase after items someone throws and return them. But somewhat confused by his owner/dad, who calls him “The Boy,” Sky sees himself as a human child; he dreams of going to school like a regular kid. But one day, Sky dreams really big—of having magical powers (like turning rocks into gold), a movie career, and a Hollywood castle, all devoted to making kids happy. (In real life, Sky does help children by visiting sick kids in the hospital.) The U.S. president even pronounces the canine King Sky, but at the dream’s end, the imaginative canine just wants to be home with his family. Stevens (*Your Marketing Sucks*, 2018, etc.) tells an entertaining story for young dog lovers, full of appealing fantasies: a hot-air balloon that takes sad, lonely kids to their favorite happy times, and the castle that always shows free movies along with serving complimentary popcorn and candy. Madison’s (*A Walk in the Woods*, 2010) photographs do a nice job of incorporating fantastical and real elements. But among all this dreaminess, the most moving photo is the one that’s the most realistic and diverse: Sky visiting the hospital, ears drooping and face serious. “If kids were sad Sky was sad too,” writes Stevens. Good dog.

The ability of dogs to connect emotionally with humans turns out to be the real magic of this sweet little story.

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