



The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk

Thornton W. Burgess, Thea Kliros (Illustrator), Harrison Cady (Illustrator)

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When Jimmy Skunk curls up to take a nap in an old barrel, the imp of mischief gets the better of Peter Rabbit. Tons of trouble plague the long-eared prankster after he decides it'd be great fun to see the barrel — with Jimmy inside — roll down from its resting point high on a hill.

Reddy Fox gets the blame for Jimmy's wild ride (as well as a dose of the skunk's "perfume"); Peter gets his comeuppance for playing nasty tricks; and before the day is out, Jimmy Skunk and Unc' Billy Possum go egg-hunting and wind up in a pretty pickle in Farmer Brown's henhouse.

Children will delight in these warm, whimsical adventures that combine all the interest and excitement of a good story with gentle lessons about nature, wildlife and such virtues as courtesy, kindness, and preparedness.

Newly reset in large, easy-to-read type, the text is enhanced by six black-and-white illustrations by Thea Kliros, based on Harrison Cady's originals.

The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk Details

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Author : Thornton W. Burgess , Thea Kliros (Illustrator) , Harrison Cady (Illustrator)

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From Reader Review The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk for online ebook

Shannon Smith says

I really have no idea why, but Thornton Burgess books are just adored in my household. My 4 year old (who is easily distracted during read-alouds) is riveted by this author. We chose Jimmy Skunk after finishing up Blacky the Crow because it was \$1.00 on Amazon (shipped Prime) and all the rest were \$2-\$3. The chapters are short and you learn a lot about the habits of the actual animals in the process of reading the narrative.

Helen says

Loved reading allowed this book to my sons who are 3 and 5. Perfect for littles who love animals and parents who want good, quality literature to read to said littles! We are looking forward to reading lots more of these books!

Noella Van Looy says

Nog een verhaaltje voor het slapengaan van Burgess. Jimmy Skunk, het stinkdier, beleeft vele avonturen met zijn vrienden en medebewoners van het bos, de wei en de boomgaard.
Het leuke is dat verschillende dieren telkens terugkomen in de verhalen, zoals Peter Rabbit, Buster Bear, Billy Possum, Sammy Jay... En ook de boerderij van boer Brown en zijn bewoners speelt een rol in het leven van de dieren.
Ik hou wel van deze verhaaltjes.

John Kenworthy says

Thornton Burgess books are guilty pleasures to be sure. I was a somewhat sickly child growing up - missing over a third of my first grade year due to bad ear infections. Like so many bedridden kids before me, I learned a love for reading and writing during those convalescent days. And much of my appreciation therein can be attributed directly to the works of Thornton Burgess. I remember with great fondness my father bringing me an armful of Burgess books from the corner library. They might have been ones I read before - but I didn't care a whit - they were great friends to me.

I know that Rose Kennedy was famously dismissive of future President John Kennedy's love for the Burgess books as a child and referred to them in the most condescending of terms. These are not works of great erudition to be sure. But neither do they aspire to be. They are simple homespun tales showing the anthropomorphosed interactions of the natural world. Old Man Coyote does indeed try to eat Peter Rabbit, Sammy Jay does indeed squawk and steal glittery objects. But yes, they do wear clothes and speak. It is perhaps inevitable that we try to put the animal world in a human context - why even the beloved Jane Goodall does that with her studies of the Chimpanzee in Gombe, Tanzania. Harrison Cady's drawings in the original reinforcing this humanizing by placing the animals in country-style overalls that give the characters

a sort of folksy-ness that Burgess aspired to.

"The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk" is one of my most favorite of the Green Forest series of books by Burgess. Ostensibly it is two simple stories tied together in one fast paced book. The first story concerns the misfortunes of Reddy Fox who is blamed for waking a blissfully sleeping Jimmy Skunk (though Peter Rabbit is responsible) and the second concern Unc' Billy Possum and Jimmy trying to get an easy meal of eggs in Farmer Brown's henhouse.

Like many of the series, "The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk" is a cautionary tale. The morality of the stories is reinforced through the consequences of actions and some not so subtle, though quaintly apropos epigraphs:

"Tis little things that often seem
Scarce woth a passing thought.
Which in the end may prove that they
With big results are fraught."

But it is the fun of the language that made me return to the stories again and again. Even now I get giddy at the prospect of new releases from Dover Thrift Editions to complete my collection. For one thing - how many kids books use the word 'fraught'? How lovely! Just great simple storylines written with an elegance and flow that draws one in effectively. Beautiful, beautiful books.

Tena Mae Holmgren says

Great read

Great read with my 4 year old son. My son is now obsessed with skunks. And keeps reminding me that they eat beetles and eggs

Ann says

We read an absolute boat-load of Thornton Burgess's stories when our two children were little ... they absolutely loved these adventures. One of their favorites was this one about Jimmy Skunk. Thornton Burgess's tales are so sweetly written with enough misadventure to satisfy young appetites !!

Rachel says

We are continuing to love these books. I think the appeal lies in a few things for the kids. They are funny, the illustrations are well-done, and the author does a great job of drawing us into the story and creating believable adventures for the animals that live in the Green Meadow, the Green Wood, and Smiling Pool. I love the language, and how the stories tell moral lessons without getting preachy. It is woven into the story and, I think, situations that my kids can relate to. Highly recommend for the elementary years.

Karin says

my 7 yr old gave this a 5. I agree. I liked the way morals were told in an entertaining way. I bet my daughter didn't feel she was being moralized at because she wanted to hear the whole book. I've tried others that had a distinct 'moral' or 'value' and she hates it.(Books that go ... is thankful or ... learns to be honest. blah.

Burgess books are interesting entertaining and a good read. Hopefully the little lessons learned by the animals were also learned and put away in the back of my daughter's mind!

But if not, that's ok. A book is meant to entertain and if it did that, that works for me.

The books themselves:

Adventures of Jimmy Skunk: Jimmy is the butt of a bad joke gone wrong by Peter Rabbit. See how he deals with Peter. Jimmy loves eggs but his disappointment of not finding any at the henhouse ends up with him and Billy Possum in a funny fix. Enjoyable for an adult to read to a child.

Jonathan Marshall says

The Burgess Books

This is a phrase that brings a smile to my face as often as I hear it. As a young child, I would lose myself for hours in the simple world of the wood and pond inhabited by Little Joe Otter, Buster Bear, Grandfather Frog, and terrorized by Farmer Brown's Boy. I can remember the very shelf, even the exact spot in the little library in Felton, CA where these books were kept. I would return practically every week with a new armload to last me until our next trip to the library. Often I would carry out stories that I read several times before, just so I could once again escape into this imaginary world of furry mischief.

I remember these books well in concept, though the specifics of most of the stories elude me. It was easily fifteen years ago when I began reading them and has been over a decade since I last picked up one of Burgess' stories to read it. That being said, this review is being written as a look back.

These stories are very simple and very fun. Of course, they are children's literature, so that's to be expected, but these stories strike me as especially so. Even still, I can remember some fascinating things I gleaned between the their covers.

For one thing, Burgess did a fantastic job of presenting the ideas of perspective and motivation in simplistic terms. For example, "The Adventures of Danny Field Mouse" would cast Old Man Coyote as a vicious, mean creature wishing to prey on Danny and his friends and family. Yet, pick up instead "The Adventures of Old Man Coyote" and you'll see that when the story is told with him as the protagonist, those pesky field mice are annoying and useful for little more than a snack. After reading both books, you're no more inclined to think of Old Man Coyote as a villain than you are to think of Danny Field Mouse as a pest that should be exterminated. (Note: This is a generic example. I do not recall if Old Man Coyote plays a role in Danny Field

Mouse's story or the other way around, but this concept was presented several times. It made an impression on me.)

The only characters consistently presented as antagonists were Farmer Brown and his boy. This would be one of the only things that I chalk up as odd, or maybe just a little "off" in these books. Humans and their influence on nature are presented as a negative influence on nature and animals - always. It's interesting to note though that while humans are seen as a negative, humanity is lauded and held up as virtuous. All of the animals take on not only human personalities but characteristics, traits, and mannerisms. From a frog with a monocle and an otter with a handkerchief tied to a stick, to a busy-body Jay and a reclusive owl who desires only to be left alone, humanity and its traits keep cropping up.

Which would be another thing of value I feel that I saw in the Burgess books. These stories are full of social interaction and personality conflicts, even if they are caricatured more often than not. We see over and over again a working out of peace, if not harmony, between conflicting personalities. It may not always be easy to point out a scripture to reinforce the lesson implied, but social harmony is presented and more often than not, resolution is through reconciliation, forgiveness, or a similar method that is not only laudable, but distinctly Christian in action if not motivation.

All in all, the world created by Thornton W. Burgess is imaginative, innocent, fun, and educational. My recommendation? Grab a handful from your local library, gather a group of kids as an excuse, and lose yourselves in childhood imaginations as you read aloud the stories that have captivated several generations of young readers with the antics of our furry, albeit elusively human, friends.

(Disclaimers: As I said, it has been over a decade since I actually read one of Burgess' books. As such, there may be a specific example that's a little off in this review or something that I would have noticed as an adult that my childhood memories are missing. Also, all of these books say I read them in 1998. While I'm certain I read several of them that year, I'm sure I read some before and after that date as well.)

Amanda says

Was overjoyed to find the books of Burgess at Librivox.com. My favourite book as a child was The Adventures of Little Joe Otter, so it this was purely a nostalgic read/listen. This book was fun and full of hokey morals and great characters and silly situations. Great stuff.

Anna says

Love how the author puts in character lessons throughout the story of the animals. And how Farmer Brown's boy doesn't have a name, but he knows the animal's names. Hah!

Jessica Bartolomeo says

Awesome book I loved it It was the best book I ever read!!!!!!!

Loved it.....just the best book ever, Jimmy skunk obviously was my favourite character, and I have a

suggestion you should make a book called the adventures of Peter rabbit.

Melissa says

This one focused much more on Peter Rabbit for the first plot, and more on Ol' Billy Possum for the second plot than it did on Jimmy Skunk. I would have liked to learn more about skunks, but maybe there just isn't much to learn: everyone knows they're mainly nocturnal, and they spray a horrible smell when threatened. But the charm of the characters was still there, and the good lessons for children (don't play practical jokes, karma, and don't lose your temper) were present as well.

Jimyanni says

The Thornton Burgess series in general is quite an endearing series of children's books, which do a fine job of being readable by young readers and having interesting plots and introducing young people to a variety of animals in a semi-anthropomorphized way. This particular entry, "The Adventures of Jimmy Skunk" is excellent, and it's a delightful read for a youngster, or for an older person who is willing to be a child again for the hour or so that it would take to read it. Strictly from a literary perspective, I might find fault with the fact that the early part of the book pays more attention to Peter Rabbit than it does to the title character, and the last few chapters focus on Unc' Billy Possum to the exclusion of the title character, but even at that, the story is interesting and enjoyable. Certainly, I have no objection to other characters appearing in the story, but it did seem that Burgess got a bit distracted from his main character occasionally.

Shawn Thrasher says

Do kids still read Thornton W. Burgess? I still have my beloved childhood set, with a place of honor on a bookshelf at home. My father used to occasionally read a chapter or two aloud at night. I think I developed a love and appreciation of nature and animals from Burgess. Jimmy Skunk is a standard Burgess. A teensy bit preachy, but also cute and funny too. What's interesting about Burgess is that no one is purely good or bad - all the animals have shades of dark and light. In this book, Peter Rabbit, who you think would be a good guy, pulls a trick on Jimmy Skunk, and then gets a comeuppance for it. Jimmy Skunk and Unc Billy Possum would be portrayed as bad characters - creatures of the night, eaters of eggs - but they also have good characteristics. So to Sammy Jay. I like that about these books. Animals can stand in for people, and we can learn something from their mistakes. That said, these books are never overly moralistic, or perhaps less so than other books from the same time period. I think it's high time these books make a come back!
