



Sweet Moon Baby: An Adoption Tale

Karen Henry Clark, Patrice Barton (Illustrator)

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This is the story of one baby's journey from her birth parents in China, who dream of a better life for their daughter, to her adoptive parents on the other side of the world, who dream of the life they can give her. A turtle, a peacock, a monkey, a panda, and some fish shepherd the baby as she floats in a basket on a moonlit, winding river into the loving arms of her new parents.

Perfect for bedtime reading, Karen Henry Clark's poetic text, reminiscent of a lullaby, and Patrice Barton's textured and gentle-hued illustrations capture the great love between parents and children and the miraculous journey of adoption.

Sweet Moon Baby: An Adoption Tale Details

Date : Published November 9th 2010 by Knopf Books for Young Readers (first published September 28th 2010)

ISBN : 9780375957093

Author : Karen Henry Clark , Patrice Barton (Illustrator)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Parenting, Adoption, Family, Cultural

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From Reader Review Sweet Moon Baby: An Adoption Tale for online ebook

babyhippoface says

Oh. My. Goodness. I am in love with Patrice Barton's illustrations. This is the sweetest baby I have ever seen, hands down. If I knew a family who had adopted a baby girl from China, I would buy one copy of this book for them, and a second copy so I could cut the pages out and frame them for their nursery walls. They're that gorgeous.

A perfect baby girl is born in China to parents who dream of more for her than they can provide. So with both happiness and sadness, they set her afloat in a basket in the river to save her life, like the Biblical Moses. The moon guides the baby girl and animals help her along her way to the other side of the world, where another couple is waiting for the daughter of their dreams. To prepare for her arrival they plant a garden and trees, build a house with a room for her, and look at the moon for a hopeful sign. Eventually, the moon leads them to the baby girl in the water, and they take her home. The final spread leaves the reader with the sense that it has all been an imaginative bedtime story the girl's adoptive parents tell her about how she came to join their family. Patrice Barton's digitally-altered pencil sketches are absolutely beautiful, lending a gentle sense of peacefulness to the story. This book would make an excellent gift for adoptive parents.

Tasha says

This is an adoption story that takes a more fairy tale approach. In China, perfect baby is born. However, her parents don't have enough food for themselves and worry about the future of this tiny baby. So they put trust in the moon and send their baby away down the river. On the journey, several animals help that baby. While she sleeps, she is carried by a turtle, flown high by a peacock, sheltered by a monkey, and guided by a panda. On the other side of the world, a family is waiting for a child. While they wait, they prepare for her. They create a garden, plant trees, build her a room, and fill it with pretty things and lots of books. They know she is there, but where? They travel long distances following the moon's path. And when the moon paths of the baby and the family meet, so do they.

So often adoption books are about the concrete steps taken from one family to the next. It is a pleasure to read a book that is whimsical and magical about adoption. Clark's writing celebrates the connection between child and new family while paying homage to the birth family as well. The entire book is suffused in a gentle beauty that allows anyone reading to know immediately that this is a joyous tale.

Barton's illustrations are particularly fine. From the first two-page spread of the new baby and her bright-eyed beauty, the illustrations are captivating. They have a subtle humor to them as well as a soft touch that matches the tone of the book. Done in sketches and then digitally, the images have interesting textures.

A very successful fairy-tale telling of the adoption story, this book may not answer the questions of how an adoption takes place, but it does speak to the magical nature of love. Appropriate for ages 3-5.

Dorine White says

This is an absolutely adorable picture book that tells the story of a baby girl who is born in China. Her parents want the best for her, and trust the moon to find it. On the other side of the world is a couple praying for a baby. They follow the moon across the world and find their new baby daughter waiting for them.

First the story- it is an imaginative tale where the baby floats down the river sound asleep, drifting to her new parents. Along the way a turtle, peacock, monkey, panda and fish help her stay safe. Children will love each wonderful animal as it comes to the rescue. There is also repetition, giving the child something to look forward too.

Now the illustrations- the first thing that catches your eye is how cute this baby looks. She is an angel in a basket, and as the reader you can't help but root for her safety. There is so much emotion and beauty in each illustration, it is breathtaking.

This book makes a beautiful bedtime story. It is full of love and hope. Definitely one to add to your picture book collection.

Deb (Readerbuzz) Nance says

A family in China barely has enough food to feed themselves so they send their new baby girl off in a basket on the river. The moon guides the baby's basket to safety. On the other side of the world, a man and a woman prepare their house for a new baby. The two follow the moon's glow to find the baby in the river.

“One summer night in China a baby girl was born. She was perfect.

‘We have barely enough rice to feed ourselves,’ the father said.

‘She should have pretty things,’ the mother said.

‘She should learn to read,’ the father said.

They were happy and sad at the same time.”

Heather says

The first thing that struck me about Sweet Moon Baby is the beautiful illustrations. They are enchanting and whimsical in water color. Patrice Barton has amazing talent. She worked on them for the author, Karen Henry Clark who adopted a child from China and had no story to tell her about her young infant life before she came to America. Clark uses prose to tell the tale of a family in China who doesn't have enough food to feed their baby and want to give it a better life.

In the mean time, another family across the globe in America is preparing their home for a baby by planting a garden and filling a room with books and toys, still no baby comes. Both families have to rely on the moon

to carry their wishes. Sweet Moon Baby is a wonderful book for parents with adopted children and children who wonder why their biological parents would give them up. I recommend it for all ages and can honestly say it will be a favorite in our home.

Kathryn says

3 stars for the story

5 stars for the illustrations

Spoilers: This is a lovingly told adoption story with a fanciful twist. A baby girl is born on a summer night in China. Her parents love her, but believe she should have a better life than the one they can give her. So, they set her adrift in a basket on the river. Along the way, she is cared for by various animals who help her on her journey. Meanwhile, a couple on the other side of the world want a daughter. One night, the moon leads them to find the baby girl in the basket.

I really wanted to love this story. I think it is told from the heart (the author adopted a baby girl from China and dedicated the story to her) and it is beautifully told. However, I was a bit troubled by some of the elements and, in looking at other reviews, find I am not alone. The baby's birth parents seem irresponsible just letting her drift off in a basket down the river, thinking she will find a better life that way. Moreover, I'm not sure that reasons such as not being able to give her "pretty things" or "teach her to read" are very good reasons for giving up a child. It is hinted at that they don't have much food, either, but I think the other reasons seem a bit shallow. The illustrations really impressed me, though. I absolutely love them! Beautiful, touching, full of life, rich in details that connect and enhance the story. Wow!

I would recommend that parents with adopted children preview this book before they share it with their children. I believe it is supposed to be a reassuring tale of adoption, showing that both birth parents and adoptive parents love the baby girl. But, it is also a very fantastical portrayal and the baby being set adrift could upset some children (and parents!).

Barrie Evans says

Parents give their children a story. It begins with, "you have always been loved."

November is National Adoption Month. Parents, family and friends are looking for storybooks they can give to the adopted children in their lives. Sweet Moon Baby: an Adoption Tale, written by Karen Henry Clark and illustrated by Patrice Barton, is a wonderful book meant to be read to a child too young to read on her own. It is published by Knopf Books for Young Readers (ISBN: 0375857095).

If you've adopted a girl from China, you know her birth story is short on facts. Parents who violate China's One Child Policy face severe penalties that restrict a parent's chances for employment, good housing and even their child's educational opportunities. To complicate matters, giving a child up for adoption is considered abandonment and is illegal. Birth mothers leave their babies in places where they will be found quickly; outside of police stations, factory gates or, in the case of my own daughter, an open-air market on a morning in June. Any identifying information left with the baby can be used to track down the parents and

punish them.

As parents, we feel a need to give our children stories that tell them that they are loved and have always been loved. Clark's book, *Sweet Moon Baby*, answers this need. *Sweet Moon Baby* begins with a child born under a full moon. Like all babies, she is perfect. Her parents are pictured as caring, thoughtful people who want more for their baby than they can give her. They send their off on a long journey down the Pearl River. What can they do but trust?

The lyrical illustrations of Patrice Barton allow us to travel downriver with the baby. Guardian animals keep her safe in spite of wind, rain and rough water. The full moon watches over all. Blues and greens predominate, are bright and have depth. It's obvious that the natural world of water, earth and sky are conspiring to bring the child from one set of loving parents to another. The red of the baby's blanket stands out in these pictures. Red is the color of good fortune in Chinese culture and its richness keeps our focus on the baby girl as she makes her way to a new home.

On the other side of the world, a couple is wishing for a child and make their home ready for the daughter they hope will come. They begin a journey of their own when they realize the moon in the night sky can see their baby, wherever she is. They trust they will find her and are ready to overcome great obstacles. The adoptive parents find their daughter as they search along the riverbank. Like Moses, she is plucked from among the reeds.

For those of us who have adopted, we know something more than "random chance" has brought us together with our child. In Chinese folklore, a red thread connects us to everyone in our life; those we have met and those we have yet to meet. Whatever you believe brought you to your child--fate, a miracle or Heaven--in the end it is a mystery as to how you came together to make a family. The story of *Sweet Moon Baby* is a reminder, too, that parental love and the capacity to give of yourself--these are what make a family.

Disclosure: A mutual friend asked if I would be interested in writing a review for this book as she knows I have a daughter who was born in China. I was given a review copy by the author. My compensation was really the chance to review a book I wish had been available when we adopted our own daughter.

Rcltigger says

In China, a baby girl is born and her parents aren't able to care for her:

"We have barely enough rice to feed ourselves...she should have pretty things...she should learn to read..."

So they place her in a basket and put her in the river, placing their trust in the moon that only good things will happen to their daughter, while on the other side of the world, a husband and wife yearn for a daughter.

I really wanted to love this story--the illustrations are just gorgeous. But I feel that the story could confuse younger adopted children, particularly in the way that the little girl is given up by her parents. Also, I wasn't fond of the reasons given as to why she was given up: she should have pretty things? She should learn to

read? REALLY? That's why they gave her up? To me, it trivialized the complex reasons why children are placed for adoption.

As an adoptive parent, my recommendation is to admire the illustrations, but skip this book if you are trying to help your young child make sense of his or her adoption.

Michael says

The most beautiful book ever about Chinese adoption. The writing is subtle, the art is stunning.

Mymbooks says

My Review: I don't know if you can fall in love with a book but I did when I first read Sweet Moon Baby. Sweet Moon Baby An Adoption Tale written by Karen Henry Clark is a story of love, hope and faith. This story is about two couples, one who could barely afford to feed themselves and their new born child and the other who wants a baby. As they await the arrival of their baby girl from China, they set about preparing for her by planting a fruit tree to building a house with a room just for her. Back in China, the child is placed in a basket by her parents as they trusted the moon to guide their baby down the river. As the baby floated away she slept peacefully throughout her journey while her adoptive parents waited.

Anyone would love this book and you don't have to be adopting a child or have an adopted child to love this book. The watercolor illustration by Patrice Barton captures every scene in the book. A must have for all parents who are adopting and a perfect bedtime story.

FTC Disclosure: I received a review copy of this book from the author in exchange for a fair and honest review. I was not monetarily compensated for my opinion in any way.

Relyn says

I loved this sweet and tender book. The illustrations were marvelous, as well. Each year I have at least one student who is adopted or waiting to be adopted. They always love, enjoy, and appreciate books about adoption. It helps them tell their story to their peers. The books seem to make them feel as though someone else understands. This book is a tender look at adoption using a myth created by the parents. To use it in class, we would have to discuss that of course, no parent really put their child afloat on a river. We would have to explore what author was really trying to say - a great lesson on theme - by the way. Just a precious, lovely book.

Erik This Kid Reviews Books says

Opening and Synopsis –

“On a summer night in China, a baby girl was born. She was perfect.”

A little girl was born on a summer’s night in China. Her parents were poor and they wanted her to have so many things that they couldn’t give her. The little girl’s parents made the decision to set their little girl sailing in a basket and they trusted that “only good things will happen” to her. The little girl goes on a long but peaceful journey. On the other side of the world a husband and wife wait for a daughter and the little girl finds her way to them.

Why I liked this book – I thought this book had a really cute story. It is more of a fairy tale about an adoption (not a re-telling of an adoption story) and I really like that. I think the story idea is really different (it being a fantasy tale about adoption). I think it would make a great bed time story for any kid! The author wrote the book for her daughter who she adopted from China. The illustrations in the book are excellent! I loved seeing the little girl floating in her basket!

Brenna Call says

This is a fairy tale type story about a little chinese girl who was adopted by an american couple. The illustrations are absolutely beautiful. It's been quite some time since I've enjoyed illustrations so much. I also liked the story but it's definitely a fairy tale and not for those looking for a realistic story about adoption. Overall it was a joy to read.

Mundie Moms & Mundie Kids says

This is such an adorable story about the adoption of a sweet little girl and the parents who have longed to have her in their family. This is not an in-depth story about adoption, but a beautiful, heart warming story about the journey of a baby girl born in China, and her whimsical journey to her new home. The illustrations are absolutely amazing! They capture the feeling of this story perfectly. The story's prose and the beautiful illustrations make this the perfect bedtime book for young readers, infant and older. It's one of those books that you'll want to read again and again.

Laura says

Appropriate for grades prek-1. The Chinese parents give their baby girl up for adoption because they couldn't feed her, so they send her down a river to find a better home. Along the way animals take care of her until she ever so perfectly meets up with the American parents that are anxiously awaiting for her arrival. The story line is just not realistic and would be misleading to young children about the adoption process. The most realistic part is showing how the family prepares and waits and waits for the baby to come. The

illustrations in this book are beautiful though. I would not use this book in the classroom because it does not provide accurate information about the adoption process.
