



The House That Crack Built

By Clark Taylor

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With a beat reminiscent of hip hop or rap music, a well known nursery rhyme is brilliantly transformed into a powerful poem about the tragic problem of illegal drugs and its victims. From the harvesting of the coca plants to dealers and gangs to the innocent crack babies born everyday, cocaine's journey is starkly traced from beginning to end. The rhythmic text, which is realistic but not moralizing, will appeal to teenagers and adults. But it is also accessible for even very young children, making this a valuable resource for parents, teachers, librarians, caregivers, and everyone else who is looking for a way to broach this difficult subject. A list of organizations is provided for those seeking help for a loved one or a way out for themselves. A foreword by children's advocate Michael Pritchard teaches us that we are all victims of this debilitating drug but reminds us that we also have the ability to change our world.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A familiar nursery rhyme takes a decidedly dark turn in this sobering picture book. Written in a hip - hop rhythm and based on "The House That Jack Built," the new cumulative rhyme focuses attention on the drug trade and abuse of crack cocaine. No stone is left unturned as the text demonstrates the drug's ripple effect that begins with exploited South American coca farmers--"These are the Farmers who work in the heat"--and ends up invading urban neighborhoods also infested with gangs, violence, despair and hopelessness: "This is the Street of a town in pain"; "This is the Girl who's killing her brain." Dicks uses muted, somber colors and almost cubist figures and images to illustrate crack's lethal potential. The picture book format is well-suited to presentation of this subject matter to a wide audience--younger readers can readily digest the sparse text and ask questions about the art, while older children and adults may use the book as a jumping off point for more involved discussion. All of the publisher's proceeds from the book will go to drug education, prevention and rehabilitation programs that specifically help children. All ages.

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From School Library Journal

K Up-- A picture book that uses the patterns and rhymes of the traditional "House That Jack Built," this tells of the despairing trail of crack/cocaine from the cultivation of "... the plants that people can't eat," to the addicted mother and baby, the overworked cop, and the other victims and villains of the inner-city drug trade. The handsome, somber modernist paintings echo Picasso's earliest proto-Cubist work, and will appeal to an older age group, although the strong line, touches of bright color, and representational style do make them accessible to younger children. It will work best for any age when introduced by an adult and used as the basis for serious discussion. An afterword for adults by PBS activist Michael Pritchard and a brief list of national organizations working in addiction services are appended. This is a unique book, disturbing but valuable. The challenge will be where to shelve it and how to introduce it. --Rosanne Cerny, Queens

Borough Public Library, NY

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From Kirkus Reviews

A harrowing takeoff on "The House That Jack Built," this cumulative rhyme takes readers from a large, comfortable house somewhere in Latin America, through the network of cocaine production and distribution, to the "Girl who's killing her brain/Smoking the crack that numbs the pain" and the "Baby with nothing to eat/Born of the girl..." The haunting, rhythmical text is enhanced by stylized, shadowed color illustrations featuring desperate-looking figures roaming an urban landscape, their heads cocked or even upside-down. The message is reinforced with a closing appeal by drug counselor Michael Pritchard, plus information about five national anti-drug organizations. An effective, non-preachy tool for drug educators at any level.

(Nonfiction/Picture book. 3+) -- *Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Lisa McCann:

Do you have favorite book? In case you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each book has different aim or goal; it means that e-book has

different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time for you to read a book. They can be reading whatever they have because their hobby is usually reading a book. How about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, man or woman feel need book once they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will need this The House That Crack Built.

Lenora Dryer:

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