The Foggy, Foggy Forest by Nick Sharratt

Great Children's Book

Peek through each foggy vellum page to guess what lies beyond in an innovative novelty book that's a surefire page turner.

What can this be in the foggy, foggy forest? That's the question on every spread of this clever book, each depicting the black-and-white silhouette of a fairy-tale figure or scene. Readers may take a guess and turn the page to see if they're right — the answering image appears in full color (often sporting a funny twist). A unicorn playing a horn? An ogre doing yoga? They're just two of the characters lurking in The Foggy, Foggy Forest, a clear winner for curious kids.

My Personal Review:
A unique and delicate treasure, I can't remember ever seeing a book exactly like this. "Foggy" pages made of vellum paper display silhouettes of fairy tale characters, which are revealed in full color as the pages are turned. I love how the layers of translucent pages lend a chiascuro effect. There's a really magical feeling as you progress through the book, as one senses that you're slowly moving through the forest. I'll confess, I'm not sure how this book will stand up to heavy use at my library, but for the sheer delight that it provides I was willing to chance it and purchase it for our collection. There's not much of a narrative through-line for the story, but simply seeing favorite storybook characters appear in unexpected situations might be enough to carry the day. The simple repeating line, "What can this be in the foggy, foggy forest?" followed by a brief rhyme, "Three brown bears in picnic chairs," "Cinderella and Snow White, in a water-pistol fight," etc., etc. is charmingly satisfying. The translucent pages have the potential to come across as gimmicky, but the compositional skill required to orchestrate each spread, taking into consideration how it will appear dimly through the other pages is quite a feat. I highly recommend this unusual picture book.
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