The Tale of Pale Male: A True Story
by Jeanette Winter

High-Flying Fun

Here is the incredible true story of a Red-tailed Hawk that makes himself at home in the most unlikely of places--atop a high-rise apartment building in New York City. Named Pale Male by his many fans, this majestic bird not only endures in this urban environment, he thrives. But when the residents have Pale Male's nest removed from their building, a historic battle--and triumph--ensues, uniting bird lovers everywhere.

With Jeanette Winter's beloved folk art-inspired illustrations and soulful insight into the spirit of this beautiful hawk, this is a book that will delight nature enthusiasts of all ages. Includes an authors note.

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My Personal Review:
"The Tale of Pale Male" is a gussied-up true story for the Picture Book set. Remember Pale Male--a Red-tailed hawk--and his Fifth Avenue perch? (Mary Tyler Moore lives in his building.) Remember how Pale Male brought his gal pal Lola to his favorite spot and they built a nest? Remember the birdwatchers down below and the momentous birth of two "hungry chicks"?

Pale Male and Lola set off a media storm when they build their huge nest and begin circling the skies of Manhattan. People lined the street to watch the birds fly and the chicks hatch. Winter chronicles their story and their abrupt eviction from 927 Fifth Avenue when downstairs neighbors complain of the "evidence of Lola's meals" falling on "to the balcony below." (Note: Winter includes only bones, leaves, and twigs in this "evidence." ) Media and public outrage follow culminating in the restoration of Pale Male's home.
Winter successfully combines two stories in "The Tale of Pale Male." On the one hand it's the story of people standing up for nature even in the heart of Manhattan. On the other hand, it's a nature story--we learn how Red-tail hawks build nests, what they eat, and how they live.

Winter's pallette of grays, purples, and teals beautifully suits Pale Male's city life, especially when contrasted with the opening pages illustrated in the greens, blues and browns of a Red-tailed hawk's life in nature. An "author's note" at the end of the book gives us the straight story.

"The Tale of Pale Male" is best suited for readers ages four to eight. School-aged children in kindergarten through second grade will especially like "The Tale of Pale Male" at story time. Its dual story line will appeal to city slickers and nature lovers alike.

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