

Book review: Kevin and His Dad

Written by Kam Williams
Thursday, 02 July 2009 15:49

“What could be better for a young boy than to spend a whole day with his father! With mom away on a Saturday, that’s exactly what Kevin gets to do. First, he and his dad clean the house together, and then it’s time for some baseball and even a movie. Told in Kevin’s words, this lovely picture book evokes the excitement, pride, pleasure and love a boy can experience with a father who includes him in both the work and play of a weekend day.”

-- Excerpted from synopsis --

With Father’s Day looming on the horizon, I’m sure plenty of folks are starting to think about buying a meaningful gift for the man in their life. Well, any dad with a young son would undoubtedly appreciate this timeless classic, first published a decade ago, by Irene Smalls, the award-winning author of 15 children’s books and 3 interactive storytelling CDs designed with African-American youngsters in mind.

Over the years, Kevin and His Dad has proven to be increasingly invaluable given the unfortunate statistics on the state of the black family. For this reason, I heartily recommend this socially-relevant book which nourishes the notion of black boys bonding with their fathers. Neither sensational nor fanciful in tone, it rather relates a simple day-in-the-life of a father and son content just to be in each other’s company.

Delightfully-illustrated by Michael Hays, the matter-of-fact narrative unfolds in a way which suggests that Kevin takes all the pleasure in the world in such seemingly-mundane experiences as doing household chores, playing catch, or going to see a movie, at least when he’s next to his dad. Credit must go to the insightful author for subtly driving home such a salient point, for besides simply having a natural way with words, she’s a cultural historian with degrees from Cornell and NYU on her impressive resume’.

Ever so subtly, she weaves a richness right into the fabric of her carefully-crafted tale which reflects a deep understanding of how to touch on the African-American condition in an understated fashion while simultaneously exploring a very universal theme to which people of any ethnicity can readily relate. Ms. Smalls has dedicated Kevin and His Dad to the source of her inspiration, namely, her dear nephew Kevin who was adopted by his altruistic Aunt Irene at the age of 7.

I couldn’t think of a better Father’s Day gift than this truly touching tome.

To order a copy of Kevin and His Dad, visit: <http://www.irenesmalls.com/>

To hire Ms. Smalls to stage a storytelling presentation at your school, church or library, email: [! Smalls107@aol.com](mailto:Smalls107@aol.com)
or call (617) 266-0262.