

Escape, let go, and cherish what you still can

My Grandpa is a Tree

INGRID GODON & KIM CRABEELS

A little boy really looks up to his grandpa, who is big and strong, like a 'hundred-year-old oak'. Grandpa knows everything about birds, and shares his knowledge with the boy. Like an old oak, grandpa sometimes gets tired, just for a little moment. Eventually, those 'little moments' take longer and longer. Grandpa becomes quieter, retreats into himself, declining further and further. According to the boy, a bird is building a nest in grandpa's head, which allows him to keep communicating a little with his grandson.

Godon's simple, dreamlike drawings are a perfect match for the story and the subject matter.

LEVEN IN LEUVEN

'My Grandpa is a Tree' is a playful, poetic story about a grandson and his grandfather, who is slipping into dementia. It's touching to see the boy do his best to get his old grandpa, a real tree of a man, back. He gives his grandpa water to keep him alive, and though it doesn't help, he still thinks he's a really lucky boy to have a grandpa like his.

Ingrid Godon portrays emotion like no other. Her large, colourful and raw illustrations, with the occasional smudge, imagine a world as seen through the eyes of the boy. First, we see the strong, dignified grandpa, but later we only see him in parts as he sits and stares. In this way, 'My Grandpa is a Tree' makes a sensitive subject approachable.

Godon is a master of using minimal media to represent emotional states.

ZILVEREN PALET JURY



AUTHORS



Ingrid Godon (b. 1958) enjoys international renown as an illustrator with her own style: stripped down and distilled to the essence. She is known for the sensitive atmosphere she creates. Her initial realistic approach gradually became more stylized, with sturdier figures and stronger lines and planes. Godon is an affectionate portraitist who experiments with various techniques, searching increasingly for the essence. *Photo © Margot Krizsa* **Kim Crabeels** (b. 1981) combines her work as an author of children's books with a job as a cultural programmer. In that role she puts together a programme of activities and performances for little ones. She writes stories for children aged 4 to 14, but her humorous texts with a sensitive twist appeal just as much to adults. Her work has been translated into Chinese, Korean, French, Polish, Russian and Italian. Her readings and interactive story-telling sessions generate interest in powerful books among readers of all ages. *Photo © Polaphoto*

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