

# Applesauce

and the  
Christmas Miracle

Applesauce  
and the  
Christmas Miracle

Glenda Millard  
Stephen Michael King  
ABC Books 2008  
9780733322495  
Hbk., rrp \$24.95

This book arrived for review just before Christmas and things being what they are, Christmas snuck by and it sat looking at me, begging for a review and being ignored. Now it seems the delay was almost prophetic for the first few lines are ...

“One orange evening, tiger-striped with blackened trees, a pig sat reminiscing. With eyes shut tight, she saw her valley as it had been: a breeze blew and the swing swayed, gently, from a willow bough. But then the raging bushfire had come and licked the earth bare. Applesauce sighed, dawdled up the hill and settled in the dust by the shed, where Joe and Marigold had lived since the fire ...

Applesauce is convinced that there can be no Christmas this year - her heart, where Christmas comes from, is as small as a gumnut and there was no Christmas in it at all. But then something special happens and Applesauce discovers that Christmas does not need to be all about glitzy decorations, fancy foods and expensive presents. It does indeed come from the heart.

This is a fabulous story that will give those affected by any disaster, hope. Even though Christmas may be some time away and they can't see past this day or, at most, this week, there is a strong message of life continuing, albeit it differently. Stephen Michael King's watercolour illustrations are delicate and haunting, some showing sights that have become too real for too many. But they are a perfect accompaniment to this story.

In the hands of a sensitive adult, this is a book to be shared with a little needing to know that things will not always be as bleak and black as they are now. If you know of such a little, send me their address offlist and I will send it to them.

Barbara

Barbara Braxton  
Teacher Librarian  
COOMA NSW 2630  
AUSTRALIA

