



Reviewed by Jon Michael Miller for Readers' Favorite

Ruby's Camping Adventure by B.A. Tomka, a mother and child writing team, is a charming little book for pre-school and early-school children. It's about Anna, a little girl, and Ruby, her pet sheba inu (a type of Japanese hunting dog). This kind of dog is known to be especially playful, or as the story puts it— "trouble." Not long after they establish a campsite, Ruby is off chasing a rabbit and gets lost in the forest, much to Anna's dismay. Then the point of view crosses to Ruby's problems in the woods where the creatures there—a ferocious bear, a moose, and a beaver—all think she is a fox. And they don't like foxes. It's a case of mistaken identity, and Ruby's rejection causes her sadness. She wants to be reunited with Anna as soon as possible. But will Ruby make it, and if so, how?

This little book is fabulously illustrated by Natia Gogiashvilli in large double-page images in brilliant color. Besides the pictures of Anna and Ruby, there are forest images of plants and animals. As I was going through it, I thought of my great-granddaughter and of how captivated she will be with the bright colors. I look forward to sitting with her as she reacts to all the trouble and scary situations Ruby gets into. There are great words to talk about also, such as cuddly, steals, boreal, temptation, and even the Northern Lights. We can also talk about how sometimes others misjudge us because of our appearance. Ruby's Camping Adventure by B.A. Tomka is a terrific book as a holiday gift for any preschooler.



Reviewed by Philip Van Heusen for Readers' Favorite

It turns out that humans are not the only ones who suffer from projecting stereotypes. In *Ruby's Camping Adventure* by B. A. Tomka, you will see the animals of the northern forests are also guilty of judging based on biases and stereotypes. Bonnie Tomka and her young daughter, Anna, collaborated to produce a wonderful little children's book about their Shiba Inu named Ruby. I thought I knew all the different breeds of dogs recognized by the AKC, but I had never heard of a Shiba Inu. They are from Japan, and they enjoy having fun. Anna and Ruby go on a camping trip when Ruby becomes separated from Anna. Ruby meets many different animals and is judged by their biases. They tell her to leave instead of trying to get to know her. This is a fantastic book for you to use to instruct your children that they need to learn to accept others as they are and not judge them according to preconceived notions.

Natia Gogiashvili does an excellent job illustrating the story of *Ruby's Camping Adventure*. Her artwork will entertain as your children read, or have read to them, this remarkable little story of adventure. There are so many lessons that can be taught from this story. But, first, you can teach your child about discrimination. It is wrong to judge people just by how someone looks. Next, you can teach about loneliness. You can also explain to your children how important it is to be close to your family. How about talking to your child about family fun? Do they like camping? What animal finally accepts Ruby and helps her find her way back to Ruby? Why do the other animals fear Ruby, thinking she is a fox? Pull your child into your lap and spend time discussing family and acceptance with them.



Reviewed by Foluso Falaye for Readers' Favorite

Being wrongly accused or labeled is an experience nobody appreciates. Thankfully, people are becoming more aware of the power of labels and prejudice in today's world. However, there is still more work to be done. Ruby's Camping Adventure - a fun, bubbly children's book - teaches children the importance of truly understanding others before making conclusions and how hurtful wrong assumptions can be. Lost in the forest and looking for her best friend Anna, Ruby the Shiba Inu meets different animals who mistake her identity and call her a fox. However, Ruby is a cute, cuddly puppy. Will any animal recognize Ruby for what she is and help her to get home? The book is written by the mother-daughter writing team B.A. Tomka (Bonnie and Anna Tomka), illustrated by Natia Gogiasvili, who has more than 50 books to her credit.

Ruby's Camping Adventure is one of those children's books whose messages encourage values that bring about a more peaceful and accepting world. The book is pure fun and adventure, and it includes different cute animals - a bear, a moose, and more. Each page of the story is illustrated by Natia, who is a highly skilled artist, as the details in her pictures are quite impressive and pleasing to look at. Since it spreads positive values and engages the reader with colorful pictures and a likable dog character, this is a fantastic book for children and should be in preschools around the world. Future leaders, activists, and change-makers will have B.A. Tomka and Natia Gogiasvili to thank for teaching them such important values as genuine curiosity and caring for others at an early age, no matter their differences.



Reviewed by Emily-Jane Hills Orford for Readers' Favorite

Puppies and children often have the knack for getting themselves into mischief. Ruby is no exception. A cuddly Shiba Inu puppy, Ruby loves to chase squirrels and rabbits. So, when her best friend, Anna, takes Ruby on an overnight camping trip in the forest, Ruby is distracted by a rabbit and chases it, managing in the process to get lost. The forest animals aren't too welcoming and they're certainly not helpful. They all think Ruby is a fox and they try to shoo her away, but Ruby doesn't know which way to go. Finally, a friendly owl offers to help. He recognizes Ruby as a puppy, not a fox. Why? Because, as he explains. "A fox would be happy to hunt alone in the forest. But you're sad and lonely. It's obvious you're a little dog with a big heart."

B.A. Tomka's picture book story, *Ruby's Camping Adventure*, is a simple but sweet story that will capture the hearts of both the young and the young at heart. The simple language will help young readers follow along and improve their reading skills. Natia Gogiashvili's illustrations are spectacular: bright, bold, and colorful. The illustrations bring life to the story and help move it along. The plot is full of adventure, but it's also full of relevant lessons about acceptance and being careful not to stereotype others. It also points out the importance of staying close to family and loved ones and not go wandering off on one's own. And, young readers will learn about some of the different animals who live in the forest. Beautifully told and presented.