

A paean to grouchy Guses everywhere presented with pouty piratical aplomb.

THE GRUMPY PIRATE

BY CORINNE DEMAS & ARTEMIS ROEHRIG • RELEASE DATE: JUNE 2, 2020

It is a glorious thing to be a pirate grump.

Part of the appeal of pirates, many might feel, is that even as they're robbing and pillaging and performing acts of mayhem, they're upbeat about it. Not Gus. From the moment he steps aboard a seaworthy vessel with his fellow crew members, Gus cannot keep from grumping and grouching. His gripes and grouses and general whining begin the moment he wakes up and continue through every last one of his chores. His mates, all generally good-natured, finally turn to their Pirate Queen (brown-skinned and bedecked in a Prince-worthy array of purple) for help. The queen, in turn, hands Gus a parrot that will imitate his every word and syllable. Learning ensues. The gentle, rhyming text doesn't try for anything too complicated, and the same could be said for the book itself. The art is cartoony and appealing. It won't take much searching for kids to recognize themselves (or their siblings) in Gus' general poutiness (and a picture of him moaning while lying sprawled on the deck is sure to trigger many memories). While Gus presents white, the crew is multiracial and includes a child with a prosthetic leg and a crab with a hook.

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Kirkus Reviews Issue: April 1, 2020

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